

MAN'S GREATEST CONCERN

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The story is told of a preacher who preached a very graphic and descriptive sermon on sin. After the sermon, one "well meaning" and prominent church member approached the preacher with the following advice. The person said, "We don't want you to talk so plainly about sin, because if our children hear you talking so much about sin they will more easily become sinners. Call it a mistake if you will, but don't speak so plainly about sin."

Shortly thereafter the "well meaning" member was visiting the preacher's home. The preacher presented a bottle of strychnine marked "Poison" to his visitor. Reminding the "well meaning" member of the earlier advice given to the preacher, the preacher then said to his visitor, "I see now what you meant in your recent advice. You want to change the label. But suppose I take off this label marked 'Poison' and put some mild label, such as 'Oil of Anise,' can't you see what happens? **THE Milder YOU MAKE THE LABEL, THE MORE DANGEROUS YOU MAKE THE POISON.**"

Our Lord did not place a "mild label" on sin. He made it clear that sin is man's greatest concern, It is the responsibility of the church (gospel preachers in particular) to make sin as real and abhorrent to people as possible if there is to be any hope of convicting anyone of sin and thereby truly converting them to Christ.

First, we must realize that God is the only one who can evaluate sin properly. Let us, therefore, strive to see sin as God sees it.

Second, God defines sin to be "...the transgression of the law," as well as omitting what is authorized. (1 John 3:4). Sin separates men from God (Isa. 59:2; Col. 2:13). Hence, to die in sin is to be lost eternally in a devil's hell. (Gal. 5:19-24; Rev.2 1:8; Mat. 25:41-46).

Third, one should notice how God moves people to come out of a life of sin. Jesus had more to say about hell than anyone else we read of in the Bible; and the reason why is that He does not want anyone to go to that terrible place (Mat. 25; 2 The. 1:7-9; 2 Pet. 3:9-13; Rev. 22:17). Is it not obvious that one of the ways to understand just how God views sin is to understand the place that God has prepared for those who die in sin? Do we try to get people to see the eternal consequences of their sinful lives (Rom. 2:3)?

God's great love for sinful man is the other factor that helps us see sin as God sees it (Rom. 2:4). "But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8; John 3:16). To study in the Bible the loving, sinless life of Christ and to meditate on His agonizing sinless life of Christ and to meditate on His agonizing and shameful death is a great motivating factor for man. In so doing one realizes that Christ freely left Heaven

and the form of God to take upon himself to be tempted as all men are tempted, yet without sin (Phil. 2:5-8; Heb. 4:15).

Surely, few people meditate on what God has done for them that they never could do for themselves! If the consequences of a devil's hell for the sinner and the love of God to redeem sinful man will not move one to turn to God in penitence and obedience to the gospel. **NOTHING ELSE IS AVAILABLE TO TURN THE SINNER FROM HIS ETERNAL APPOINTMENT WITH THE FIRES OF HELL!**

People who take the Lord's name in vain, commit adultery and other immoral acts; who lie, cheat, gossip, steal, teach false doctrine, etc., are going to burn in hell eternally. The unfaithful members of the Lord's church who have ceased to worship according to the Bible; who do not study the Bible; who are covetous; who murmur and complain; who are immoral; who repudiate Bible authority; who are hypocrites and who hate their brethren who love and obey the truth will also suffer the torment of the raging fires of "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8; 2 Pet. 2:20-22). **ASSUREDLY, THE ELDERS AND PREACHERS WHO SEE A LOST WORLD AND SINFUL MEMBERS AND SO NOT TRY TO CONFRONT BOLDLY SUCH SINFUL PEOPLE WITH GOD'S TRUTH, WILL OCCUPY ONE OF THE HOTTER AND LOWER PITS OF HELL!**

If precious souls are to escape the horrors of hell we must do our part as Christians to get men to see what sin is. Let us not forget to set forth the Christ who is "...the way, the truth, and life:" (John 14:6).~