

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 7



DANGER OF SINNING WILFULLY

Scripture Texts: Proverbs 1:23-33; Hebrews 6:4-6

To rebel against God is tragic. God chooses many souls and anoints them with His Holy Spirit. Some are to preach, some are to teach, and some are helpers. All are responsible to fill their places in obeying God's Word. But some do not listen closely. They take things into their own hands, having a higher regard for their own way and the opinion of the people and too little for God's. They refuse to humble themselves before God. They openly turn their backs on God. As a result of this rebellion, God turns His back on them, and they die in despair and tragedy.

To turn down the precious light of truth opens the door for every deception of Satan to come in and work in that heart. It is possible for a once-saved person to get to a place where he cannot be saved again.

MEMORY VERSE: *He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. —Proverbs 29:1*

God's Promise

Proverbs 1:23 Turn you at my reproof: behold I will pour . . . I will make known my words . . . God does this for every person who opens his heart. All receive light. Some receive more than others. But all are responsible to walk in that light—to obey it. One is not required to walk in another's light.

The Tragic Response

Proverbs 1:24-33 Because I have called, and ye refused. These ones took a rebellious attitude against the leading of God. **But ye have set at nought all my counsel . . . I also will laugh at your calamity.** This is God speaking. Yes, there can come a time when one calls on God, and He will only **laugh** and **mock** when we desperately need Him. We refuse to hear Him, and He will refuse to hear us.

Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer . . . Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. God allows them, and helps them, to be wrapped up in themselves. Notice the difference found in **Proverbs 1:33 from the rest.**

The Position Once Held

Hebrews 6:4-5 For it is impossible for those . . . those who have come to an immovable wall. Those who (1) **were once enlightened.** They have heard the Gospel and understood it. They know God's commands. (2) **Have tasted of the heavenly gift**—have had salvation from sin, been born again. (3) **Were made partakers of the Holy Ghost**—been filled with the Spirit. (4) **Have tasted the good word of God**—experienced the meaning of God's promises and warnings. (5) **Have tasted the powers of the world to come.** God gives His people a foretaste here of blessings which will be fully experienced in the next life. They have seen the powers of Heaven, of God, exercised here in behalf of His children. The Holy Spirit is the **earnest**, or prepayment, of the saints' inheritance (**Ephesians 1:13-14**). The people in question have felt the Spirit's power in their lives. They have been in the highest position opened to people on earth. They have dwelt in the holy of holies. They have had the greatest privileges. They are not ignorant. They have known God and His way (**2 Peter 2:20-21**). The more we know of God, the more responsible we become for what we do with that knowledge.

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An Impossible Position

Hebrews 6:6 If they shall fall away—from this position, if they turn from God, it is impossible **to renew them again unto repentance**. They may wish to turn back to God but cannot because a spirit of pride renders them unable to humble themselves with a true repenting attitude. God could and would save them if they would repent, but they cannot. They themselves have cut off the lifeline to God. They sinned **willfully (Hebrews 10:26)**. They have separated themselves from Christ's atonement because they cannot repent. They refused the only remedy. There is no other sacrifice to atone for their sin.

It is a serious sin that brings so dire a consequence. To knowingly turn from this most blessed place in God is to **crucify Christ afresh**. It is to **put him to an open shame**. It is treading **underfoot the Son of God**. It is counting His **blood . . . an unholy thing**. It is doing **despite unto the Spirit of grace (Hebrews 10:29)**. Also, refer to **Matthew 12:31**. Can there be a worse sin? Yet this can all be done inside one's heart with, perhaps, no outside, visible act. It is not only the sin that brings the despairing problem, but the attitude of the heart.

Repentance Is a Blessing

Repentance is valued too lightly by the majority of people. Do we look upon its discipline as a curse or a blessing? Paul asks, **Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? (Romans 2:4)**. Should we seek to escape from or welcome the arrows of conviction and chastisement of God? The Apostles at Jerusalem **glorified God** for having **granted repentance unto life** to the Gentiles (**Acts 11:18**).

Different From Mistakes

Does this warning make God seem a hard taskmaster and the regaining of Christian life impossible? No, God is full of mercy, and He **remembereth that we are dust (Psalm 103:14)**. Not all sins are willful rebellion from the highest position in grace. **There is a sin not unto death (1 John 5:17)**. Some sins are stumblings in weakness. One may be overtaken by sudden temptation in an unguarded moment and slip into sin, but this is not rebellion. God watches in compassion and patience for those ones to repent and come back into good standing. He gives us chance after chance. He chastises to bring us back (**1 John 2:1**). If one sins, quickly **remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will . . . remove thy candlestick**—no place now for Christ to place any more light (**Revelation 2:5**).

Remember that the devil is an old deceiver. If he can, he will discourage until one throws away the hope he has, thinking he has it not and that there is no use, and thus may finally put himself beyond hope. **Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward (Hebrews 10:35)**. Jesus said, **Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation (Matthew 26:41)**. What must we watch? What must we pray? Read **Jude 24; John 15:4-7; Philippians 4:7**.

JUST A THOUGHT

It can be said that pride is the cart rope which drags man's sins behind him.

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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