

A LOSING PROPOSITION

May 11, 2014

Proverbs 28:1-28

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.” Proverbs 28:13

There is only one solution for sin: confession. Confession is simply agreeing with God’s assessment of our action; an assessment made known to us by Scripture and also by conscience. It agrees that God is right and that our action is wrong.

True confession will have two results. First God will forgive: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (I John 1:9). Second, we will forsake our sins; “whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.” A long list of sins named in Scripture ends with the statement, “And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (I Cor. 6:11). If sin is not forsaken, can the confession be sincere and genuine?

This solution is not natural to us, for we are sinful creatures living under the curse of sin. Achan sought to bury the evidence of his sin, but was discovered and judged (Joshua 7). By “good works” and duplicity David sought to hide his sins, but could not succeed (II Sam. 11, 12). Ananias’ deception was not hidden from God, and when he refused to confess he paid a horrible price (Acts 5). When Cain murdered Abel, Abel’s blood cried unto God from the ground (Gen. 4:10).

Depraved instincts beget sins and yearn to repeat them, but not to confess them. Pride keeps us from admitting our guilt, answering with lies and cover-ups. Lusts crave temporary and elusive gratification, and increase sin to sustain its fading pleasure. Greed, never satisfied, drives a man to repeat evils calculated to enrich him. Hardened by sin, many deny that their actions are sin, as if they can revise God’s law. Desire for peer approval drives many to join others in sin. God warns, “Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment” (Ex. 23:2).

But every lie and cover-up of sin is futile, for sin cannot be covered. God saw Achan’s loot. He perceived David’s actions and their motivation. He knew the thoughts and intents of Ananias’ and Pricilla’s hearts. There are consequences to sin that are inseparable from it. “When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (Jas. 1:15). “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Gal. 6:7). “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper” (Prov. 18:13a).

“But whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy” (Prov. 28:13b). God delights in mercy. “Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea” (Micah 7:18, 19). There is but one covering for sin: the blood of Christ. He “loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood” (Rev. 1:5b). By confessing to Him and believing in Him, sin is covered forever.