

EXCUSING SIN

1 Timothy 5:22 ... "Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure."

I had a discussion on Facebook recently with a Christian woman who claims that some instructions in the Bible are inappropriate. That makes it necessary for her to excuse certain sins.

I heard another person say recently: "It's easier to remember the truth, than to remember your lies." That is so very true. If you lie to someone, you will have to try very hard to remember that lie to keep your untruthfulness from being revealed later. But the truth is always true and easy to remember. We can apply this principle to the Bible and what it says about sin. The Bible lists many behaviors and acts of man that are sinful. If you disagree with the Bible, then you must create your own version of truth and explain why God is not truthful, and why your ideas are superior to his. Your personal excuses for sin will be more difficult for you to remember than if you simply accept God's explanation, which has stood the test of time for thousands of years.

Sin is difficult to excuse using your own intellect and theories. On one hand, the Word of God tells you that certain behaviors are sinful and it describes the punishment for practicing them. God has never been proven wrong. On the other hand, you have your own ideas that you claim are an improvement on the Word of God, or about which the Bible is incorrect. Using your own intellect, you justify certain behaviors the Bible calls sin. You decide the Bible is wrong when it calls adultery a sin, so you can practice adultery with a lighter conscience. You claim the Bible is wrong in calling homosexuality a sin when a loved one becomes a homosexual, because you are afraid of losing that relationship if you condemn their sin. You feel that drunkenness is not a sin if you only get intoxicated once a week. You excuse your anger if you only get angry under certain conditions. You feel that a small lie is not sinful; it is only a sin when you tell a big lie.

The woman with whom I discussed this, once believed the Bible's pronouncement that homosexuality is a sin. But, after her daughter announced she was a homosexual, the mother changed her mind. To keep from losing her relationship with her daughter, the mother decided the Bible is wrong, and that homosexuality is okay. The mother is now an enabler of her daughter's sin, rather than a truth-bearer. If you avoid telling a friend, spouse or child that they are making a mistake to keep from losing that relationship, you make your own emotions superior to the truth of God, and become an enabler of their sin.

I urge you to do two things: 1) If you are practicing a certain sin, accept God's judgment that you are out of his will and then repent and stop making excuses for your sin. That surrender of self, allows the Holy Spirit to begin influencing your thoughts and actions in accordance with the will of God. 2) If someone you know and love is sinning, make the truth of God's Word known to them and counsel them into an understanding that God is not wrong. You can do this in a loving manner that maintains respect for that person, while speaking God's truth to them. If you make excuses for their sin, you make yourself an enemy of God, which will have sad consequences both for you and for them.

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