

THE SIN OF OMISSION

Rev. C. W. Ruth

To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.—(James 4:17).

And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. (Luke 12:47).

To indicate that this is the tenor of Scripture throughout, let me give you a few references from the Old Testament: "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion" (Amos 6:1). What are they doing? Nothing! Note again, "Curse ye Meroz, said the angels of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty" (Judges 5:23). A battle was to be fought in the province of Meroz. The Philistines were encamped against Israel. And the people said, "It is not our battle, let them fight it out. We will be neutral."

From these passages, and many similar ones, from both the Old and New Testament, it will be seen that the sin of omission just as certainly brings the displeasure, and the woe, and the curse of God, as does any sin of commission. The child who fails to do what he is commanded to do, is just as guilty as the child who does what he was told not to do.

Right here lies the danger of multitudes who boast of their morality and upright living who may not feel guilty of any overt act of sinning, who nevertheless are not doing what God commands them to do. It is not what you do, it is what you are not doing, that imperils your soul. We fear that with the multitude of church people, this is the chief cause of backsliding.

"For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;" while it is said, "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation" (Heb. 3:14, 15). It is not sufficient that you have had a glorious conversion, or a miraculous experience somewhere in your yesterdays. It will be necessary that we continue steadfastly to the end.

Verse fifteen as quoted introduces us to the history of Israel on their journeyings from Egypt to Canaan, the Promised Land. They had a most miraculous deliverance from Egypt in crossing the Red Sea, and in their passage through the wilderness until they reach Kadesh Barnea, which was right on the border of the land of Canaan; but here they called a halt and doubted and questioned the promise of God, and stopped short of what God intended them to have. They failed to make the second crossing, and God was grieved and disappointed and provoked. This is referred to as the times of provocation, "And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness" (Acts 13:18).

Jude tells us, "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not" (v. 5). (This does not sound much like the modern teaching of eternal security. Although they had been saved, when they failed to obey God and go forward, he destroyed them even though he had previously "saved" them). It was not what they did, but what they failed to do. They were satisfied with less than God provided for them, and God was grieved and provoked and God destroyed

them. No one can retain the favor of God and fail to do his will.

As Canaan is illustrative of the fullness of blessing, or the sanctifying grace, we see here that there comes a time when the Christian must walk in the light and seek and obtain this experience.

It is not a question of having a little religion, or more religion. It is a question of obeying God, and obtaining this experience, or by reason of disobedience forfeiting any grace previously obtained.

HOW SPIRITUAL POWER IS LOST

E. E. Shelhamer

We all admire anything that is powerful—for instance, a horse, an engine, or Niagara Falls. On the other hand, we pity weak and sickly things. Now let us notice how a Spirit-filled saint can become a weakling.

In Thought Life. "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." He is no better than the thoughts he entertains. No difference if he does appear well when preaching, singing, or praying. If he allows himself to dwell upon unkind, unclean, or uncharitable thoughts, he is already prepared to go further. Samson was shorn of his power and was not aware of it until the crucial test came. Be astonished and alarmed, O man, if you can allow yourself for one moment to cherish thoughts that you would not want spoken aloud! Inward purity gives poise and prestige that cannot be had by sitting before a large audience.

Too Much Talk: Like an engine, there must not be needless escaping of steam. Lincoln said he traveled on a crude steamboat up the Ohio River, and the whistle was so large that when they blew it, the change in the speed of the boat was noticeable. Yes, a big talker is usually weak in pulling heavy loads at an altar.

Lack of Solitude. It was when "Jacob was left alone" that the angel met him. He had to get away from his family, servants, and cattle. Valuable as these are, many a man has allowed them to crowd out communion with God. The result is loss of spiritual power. One can bring on leanness of soul by being too much in public. So, as sure as one mingles too freely with worldly-minded people he will be contaminated.

After having spent a "pleasant evening," have you not often gone to your room dejected in soul? Do you not frequently awake in the night, or early morning and feel like saying, "Lord, forgive me for talking and laughing too much?"

Self-Indulgence. It was when David "tarried still at Jerusalem," ate big dinners, mingled freely with politicians and was inactive, instead of being at the forefront of the battle, that he lost self-control and went down like a big oak with a crash. One old writer said, "Self-indulgence is the law of death, while self-denial is the law of life."

France became weak before her enemies, principally because of wine and women and loss of all sense of purity in heart and life. Purity and power are inseparable. Friend, is there a lack of holy unction? If so, do not pray for more power, but rather for purity.

Holding a grudge. We are in a world of criticism and misunderstandings. When one is injured or misjudged he can do one of four things: (1) Flare up and answer back! (2) Be too refined to do this, but harbor and hold it!

(3) Be so Christlike as to forgive it! (4) Not only forgive, but forget it. It takes a magnanimous man to be able to say, "I am too busy minding God and winning souls to remember an insult. I study to forget everything that reflects unfavorably upon another, and on the other hand I study to remember everything that tends to his advantage." What a happy world this would be if we could measure up to this. Go thou and do likewise.

MUSIC IN WORSHIP

The best music was rendered under trouble. The first duet that I know anything of was given by Paul and Silas when they sang praises to God and the prisoners heard them. The Scotch Covenanters, hounded by the dogs of persecution, sang the Psalms of David with more spirit than they have ever since been rendered.

There ought to be a great multitude of men and women willing to sing the praises of God. Those who can sing must throw their souls into the exercise, and those who cannot sing must learn how.

Have you ever noticed the construction of the human throat as indicative of what God means us to do with it? In only an ordinary throat and lungs there are fourteen direct muscles and thirty indirect muscles which can produce a very great variety of sounds. What does this mean? It means that you should sing! Do you suppose that God who gives you such a musical instrument as that intends to keep it shut? Suppose some great tyrant should get possession of the musical instruments of the world and should lock up the organ of Westminster Abbey and the organ of Lucerne and all the other great instruments of the world—you would call such a man as that a monster. And yet you are more wicked if, with the human voice, a musical instrument of more wonderful adaptation than all the musical instruments that men ever created, you shut it against the praise of God.—T. DeWitt Tamage.

THE FUTURE'S KEY

God holds the key of all unknown,
And I am glad;
If other hands should hold the key,
Of if He trusted it to me,
I might be sad.

What if tomorrow's cares were here
Without its rest?
I'd rather He unlocked the day,
And, as its hours swing open, say,
"My will is best."

The very dimness of my sight
Makes me secure;
For, groping on my misty way,
I feel His hand, I hear Him say,
"My will is best."

I cannot read His future plans,
But this I know:
I have the smiling of His face,
And all the refuge of His grace
While here below.

Enough: this covers all my wants,
And so I rest;
For what I cannot, He can see,
And in His love I saved shall be—
Forever blessed.

—Sel.

No. 83

nd un-
ity he
ee him
winds
ny an
leader
But
coupled
d was
How
self-
end
disre-
om a

ought
ed to
s not
ward
next
step-
hand
him
ined
pon
ified
king
ime
and
ag-
but
nay
ict!

the

on
a
ab
ss
at
to
ad
nd
at
ne
o
l.
y
e
y