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Consequences



.... I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. Jude 1:3 NIV

Reviewed by: Dr. Lambert Duncan

Consequences

Galatians 6:7-8 (NIV) “⁷*Do not be deceived: God can not be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.*”

John 3:18 (NIV) “*Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.*”

More than likely, every believer and non-believer is either currently living with the pain, disappointment or devastation of a poor choice they made in the past or, they will at some point in their lives, be forced to deal with the consequences of their poor choices. Very few are able to escape the consequences of some poor choice made in their life. Our consequences are the price we pay or the benefit we receive from the choices we make.

Like it or not, for everything we do in life there are consequences, some good and desirable while others are painful and despised. There are at least three major choices most of us will make at some point in our lives that will have life long and/or eternal favorable or unfavorable consequences. Consider the following:

- 1) Our Choice of A Spouse – Each year, countless thousands of married couples, Christians and non-Christian, run into the office of a pastor or counselor with the typical cry, “I’ve had it with my spouse!” But what most fail to realize is the fact that they themselves chose their spouse (sometimes against the advice of others) and have nobody to blame but themselves for their choice. In fact, when they complain about their spouse they parade the obvious, they’re poor at making good choices. Unless they had an “arranged marriage” or a “shot gun wedding”, there is no way around the clear fact, they made a choice to be married to their spouse, there is nobody else to blame. Because of selecting a spouse that does not line up with biblical principles, many are now suffering the consequences of their choice in ways they never thought possible. Selecting a spouse because of appearance, financial status, academic accomplishments or job title alone, rare if ever yield favorable consequences. Paul tells us that if we sow to please our sinful nature from that nature we will reap destruction. All of the above are the typical things that please our sinful nature.
- 2) Our Choice of Company – There is an old saying that says, “If you sleep with a dog, you’ll wake up with flees.” In essence, this old saying is telling us that those we are closest to and spend significant amounts of time with rub off on us. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:33 (NIV) “*Do not be misled: bad company corrupts good character.*” Many of us wonder why we can’t get rid of some of our bad habits or why we seem to be

going nowhere fast when it comes to the things of God. The consequences for keeping bad or the wrong company are at least the following:

- a) Stunted Christian growth
- b) We begin compromising with the world
- c) Backsliding becomes more likely

Christians will do well when they start to prayerfully choose their company. Many saints have been talked into leaving their church, their spouse and the people God hand picked to be in their lives by ungodly company. The sooner we all realize the fact that everyone that calls themselves our “friend” does not have our best interest at heart, the better off we’ll be. Many folks look and sound like they’re good for us but are not. They seem to have all the answers for us, they may even quote scriptures (usually out of context) to support their answers.

However, Paul says in 2 Corinthians 11:14 (NIV) “*And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.*” Therefore, we must always prayerfully choose our company, considering the words of the apostle John in 1 John 4:1 (NIV), “*Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.*” The only acid test we have to determine good or bad company is God’s Word, the Bible.

- 3) Our Choice of A Church – For most, when looking for a church home, entertainment value is high on their list of priorities, if not at the top of the list. Not only that, most will become part of a church that tells them what they want to hear. More specifically, most want to hear their pastor tell them what God is going to give them and how they are in control of their destiny with their words that contain the power to make things happen. However, nothing could be further from the truth, it is only the sovereign God of the universe that controls our destiny, not our words. Choosing the wrong church has very serious consequences. Being part of a church that does not preach sermons that expose sin in our lives does us no good. The only way we become the people God wants us to be is through solid Bible based preaching and teaching; there can be no substitute. As a general rule, if you’ve been part of a church for five (5) years and find yourself doing the same stuff you did before joining that church, you probably picked the wrong church.

Some of us have made poor choices prior to accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of our lives. We think that because we are now saved the consequences for our poor choices automatically go away. Sometimes God is merciful and removes the consequences for the poor choices we made before getting saved. Other times, God allows us to reap the consequences for our poor choices even though our sins are forgiven. Consider the thief on the cross in Luke 23. This thief was being executed as a consequence for his crime. However, he got saved while on the cross next to Jesus. Notice, even though he was saved and his sins forgiven by God, he still died on the cross for his crime; God did not take away the consequences for his poor choice.

In closing, there are three actions we can take to avoid the painful consequences of our poor or bad choices. Consider the following:

- 1) Acknowledge God – Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV) says, “⁵ *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.*” Leaving God out of our decisions and choices in life is the perfect recipe for disastrous consequences. We can seek God’s will for us through prayer, the Bible and the saints of God he placed in our lives. However, special care must be taken when we get advice or direction from those that call themselves “Christians” or “saints of God”. As a general rule, those we look to for advice should have the following evident in their lives:
 - a) They live in a way that lines up with God’s Word, perfection is not possible but there should be very evident signs that they love the Lord and live to please him.
 - b) They must be regularly attending a healthy, well-balanced church.
 - c) They are people of integrity.
- 2) Wait on God to Answer – For some reason, waiting is a big problem for most Christians. For many, God just can’t move fast enough, so they feel the need to help God out. However, this is where their problems begin. In fact, a lot of our Christian brothers and sisters are going through some hard times, but not because the devil is attacking them, it’s because they moved before God said go. The consequences for moving ahead or before God are usually very painful and God rare if ever removes them. As the loving God he is, he allows us to learn from our hastiness.
- 3) Line it up with God’s Word – Solomon said in Ecclesiastes 1:9 (NIV), “...*There is nothing new under the sun.*” The choices we are faced with have already been dealt with by some biblical character. God’s Word serves as an example for us to live by. That said, we do well to follow the sound guidance we find within its pages.

Finally, of all the choices we make in life, there’s only one that will have eternal consequences. For anyone reading this that has not made the choice to accept Jesus Christ as both Lord and Savior, it’s time to make it now. The consequences for not accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is eternal separation from God in a place of conscious, eternal torment. John 3:18 (NIV) says, “*Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.*” Make the choice to believe!!

God Bless,
Pastor D. M. Duncan

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