

5 Scriptural Principles to Keep You From Sin's Enticing Entanglements

I've heard it over and over again. "The Bible is an ancient, mythological book irrelevant to modern culture."

Is it? The Christian community would disagree. Those who do not follow Christ are not convinced.

We could lock horns and argue about this until Jesus returns.

But our local headlines recently exploded with the results of a months-long investigation into sex trafficking, an investigation that began in our own county and stretched across state and international boundaries.

And as I watched developments unfold—and they're still unfolding even now—I couldn't help but think of a hard truth from that "ancient, mythological book."

"Be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. 32:23).

This was a true statement when it was written several thousand years ago, and it is true today. We have only to listen to the news to confirm its accuracy.

Celebrities. Corporate giants. Philanthropic role models. And of course, "regular guys." Upstanding members of the community. Husbands, fathers and sons. They all learned the hard way that while we may hide our sin for a season, the darkness of all sin will someday be revealed.

So what can we learn from their failures ... and our own, too?

We can start with some hard truths from the Bible:

1. Start with a new nature.

“For the will to do what is right is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. ... Who will deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom. 7:18b, 24b).

Relying on our own strength will doom us before we begin. But when we surrender our life to Jesus Christ, His Spirit dwells within us to guide, convict, and empower us to do what's right.

2. Don't believe your own press.

“The heart is more deceitful than all things” (Jer. 17:9a).

No one is immune to temptation. The more we try to convince ourselves that we're stronger and better than the next person is the moment we'll stumble and fall. And if people say enough nice things about us, after a while, we start to believe what they say.

But an accurate assessment of who we are does not come from what people say about us. Rather, it is found in measuring ourselves against the plumb line of God's Word.

3. Be accountable to at least one other person—find your “Nathan.”

“Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful” (Prov. 27:6b).

King David needed the prophet Nathan to speak truth into his life (“You are this man!” [2 Sam. 12:7b) after he sinned with Bathsheba. We also need people who will courageously speak the truth in love, regardless of how we might initially receive it.

4. Choose your friends wisely.

“Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company corrupts good morals’” (1 Cor. 15:33).

Sad words that describe a downward spiral of sin and defeat, a spiral that might have been halted with the right friends to encourage us in righteousness.

5. Start small and go long.

“My son, keep your father’s commandment, and do not forsake the instruction of your mother” (Prov. 6:20).

People rarely wake up one morning and decide, “Today, I will schedule a moral failure.” It happens as we distance ourselves from God instead of surrendering to Him and immersing ourselves in His Word.

Think about a dirt road. If the road is not graded regularly, two ruts will appear from the repeated path of the car tires. By nurturing a habit of obedience in seemingly inconsequential areas, we create ruts or paths of obedience. This builds our self-control little by little until we’re able to withstand bigger temptations.

The Bible was relevant when it was written, and it’s relevant now.

What will you do with the hard truths of God’s Word today?
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