

LET THE BIBLE SPEAK SERIES  
THE WAY OF THE TRANSGRESSOR IS HARD

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Many view the Christian life as one of severe deprivation, one that has few immediate rewards. They embark upon this venture with their mind made up that whatever joy or happiness they experience will be in the life to come. They are convinced that all the opportunities for happiness exist in the world, where one can drink deeply of the pleasures of sin and have a truly good time. In the opinion of this writer nothing could be farther from the truth. The bible does teach that the way to heaven is narrow (Mt. 7:13-14) and that those living godly lives will suffer persecution. (2Tim. 3:12). As the people of God we must abstain from the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21) but this does not imply that such a life is void of satisfaction or happiness. Solomon said "Let not thy heart envy sinners..." Prov. 23:17; "Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them." Prov. 24:1 "Fret not thyself because of evil men, neither be thou envious at the wicked." Prov. 24:19 Surely there must be a reason why God does not want us becoming envious of the wicked. There is. God knows, as all good men must learn, the way of the transgressor is hard. It is not easy to be a sinner, even though at times it might appear so. The life of an evil man is difficult. For this and many other reasons, it is in the best interest of man, to obey God. Many will admit this is true, especially in view of eternity. I believe, however, that not only is obedience good for us as it respects our eternal destiny, but it is also good for us in this life. Why?, you ask. First of all, God has given his commandments for our good and well-being. "And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always." Deut. 6:24 "The highway of the upright is to depart from evil, he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul." Prov. 16:17

Sin Has Its Consequences

One cannot sow to the flesh, and expect to reap the blessings of obedience. We pay for our sins, sometimes immediately, at other times in the future, but always in eternity unless of course we seek forgiveness thru Christ. "The integrity of the upright shall guide them, but the perverseness of the transgressors shall destroy them." Prov. 11:3 "...the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness." v.5 "Behold the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner." Prov. 11:31

The consequences of sin vary, depending upon the nature of the sin and the circumstances surrounding it. For example, when one violates civil law, punishment may be swift and severe. The judicial system is obligated to administer punishment and as a result, we may pay, at least to that system, very soon after we have committed an offence.

The Bible also teaches that wickedness may actually shorten our

life. "The fear of the Lord prolongeth days, but the years of the wicked shall be shortened." Prov. 10:27 Many have shortened their lives by sin. Insurance companies recognize the threat of certain habits to our lives, by offering coverage at reduced rates to people who refrain from such practices. Solomon reminds us in Prov. 5:22 "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of sin." Sin has a way of entangling its victims, making them slaves to their own lust. Peter said "while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption." 2Peter 2:19 How true. So many today seeking freedom from restraint and law, find themselves slaves of the evil one, bound hand and foot, as it were, by sin. The Prodigal of Luke 15 is an example. Done with the confinement of home he left to seek happiness in a far away world, only to learn too late that "the way of the transgressor is hard." What seemed so bright and alluring suddenly faded in the farmer's field when he gladly would have eaten with the hogs. Somewhere today, on a back street in some large city, a young person waits to steal or rob in order to buy another pill or shot. As he carefully pushes the needle into his arm to gain a measure of relief from the pain, he knows so very well THAT THE WAY OF THE TRANSGRESSOR IS HARD. Somewhere today, a young girl, buries her face in a pillow as she tries to put from her mind the baby she flushed from her body. She wonders if it was a boy or a girl, did it have blue eyes and long flowing golden locks, and in the bitterness of her agony as hot tears stream down her cheeks she knows THE WAY OF THE TRANSGRESSOR IS HARD.

### Sin Today

Sin manifests itself in many ways. It comes clothed in every conceivable garb.

Immorality: Many choose this lifestyle which causes disease, sterility, unplanned and unwanted pregnancy, abortion and other heart-rending sins. If one is married such a life leads to divorce, family conflict, emotional problems, guilt, and haunting memories. Children's lives are often disrupted and ruined. In the end all who play such games come to know that the way of the transgressor is hard.

Drunkenness: Most Americans drink, and many become enslaved to the bottle.

Alcoholics often lose their jobs, and the respect of their fellow-workers. Their family life is ruined, their self-respect destroyed. Those who drink have all kinds of problems including increased strife, arguments, fights, accidents etc. Some spend time in prison because of events they don't even remember. I can think of nothing more heart breaking than wasting away behind bars thinking of the innocent life I took while under the influence of alcohol. Surely in a situation like that the sinner must know how difficult it is to live with sin and its consequences.

Drugs: A large part of our society is dependent on drugs. Illegal traffic in this area represents a major crime problem in our country today. People addicted will

lie, steal, cheat, and even kill to satisfy their habit. Young mothers often pass on the same addiction to their children. The horrible consequences of poverty, deformities in children, and physical maladies testify to the fact that the way of the transgressor is hard.

Greed: The lure of materialism promises a happiness it can never deliver. "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house." Prov. 15:27 Those who chase after riches often become dishonest. Many who remain honest often value things more than they do people, which leads to all kinds of domestic problems. Children are forgotten, marriages neglected, the church forsaken, and truth slighted. Lives become twisted and meaningless. In the mad and rushing rat-race life seems empty and void of hope. In desperation people learn the hard way how deceptive sin really is.

Sins of the tongue: Many people never learn to control their tongue. Lying, gossip, whispering, flattery, and slander are used indiscriminately. Friends soon catch on to what is being done. They tend to shun the person. They have learned the hard way that the individual cannot be trusted or believed. When all the old friends are gone the individual becomes lonely because of isolation, learning the ever truthful lesson about the deceptiveness of sin.

### Conclusion

It is a grave mistake for anyone to think sin is rewarding and without drawback. It is also wrong to believe the life of a Christian is dull and full of burdens, without satisfaction. The devil has deceived many regarding this, and its time we began to teach otherwise. Solomon tells us "Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward." Prov. 22:5 God thru Hosea the prophet warned "Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths." God has ordained that "the way of the transgressor is hard" to think otherwise, is to be deceived.

We should give thanks for these warnings. Those who cannot be reached by the instruction of the word, often learn the hard way (like the prodigal). Some because of the temporal consequences of sin, will be led to salvation, after learning for themselves the difficulties sin causes. The wise person will learn from the experience of others, without "trying themselves", the ways of evil.