

Three Thorns - 1 John 2:16

Glancing through the news highlights will show some interesting stories. The Republican Convention is going on in Florida this week, and the Democratic one next week. The GOP was delayed by a storm called, Isaac.

You could see the deep disappointment in some of the media that there was not complete devastation, like Katrina.

And then, there is an account of royal indiscretions. Not another one, you say. Yes, Dirty Harry got caught again.

This kind of behaviour is not a new thing, but has been going on for a long time. In fact, the History Channel had a series some years ago on that very subject. What is the reaction when they are exposed? Some pretend to be sorry; but not most. It seems that there is no more shame for the ungodly things that are done.

Zephaniah 3: 5 - The just LORD is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame.

Now, most people are only sorry that they got caught, not that they did anything ungodly. In fact, it is so commonplace, that it makes a good plot-line for a movie or book. Years ago, The Prisoner of Zenda was about that.

There are even accounts in the Bible about those kinds of ungodly action.

2 Samuel 16:20 - 22 - Then said Absalom to Ahithophel, Give counsel among you what we shall do. And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto thy father's concubines, which he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou art abhorred of thy father: then shall the hands of all that are with thee be strong. So they spread Absalom a tent upon the top of the house; and Absalom went in unto his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.

This kind of conduct was getting into the Early Church. Instead of compromising with the pagan standards of the world; Paul took definitive action.

1 Corinthians 5: 1 to 13 - It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are

gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

The difference is; we are in the world, but not of it.

Philippians 2: 14 to 16 - Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

Even if the media splashes it all over the place; we do not have to watch or read it. Do not rely on them for good and wholesome material. The worse it is; the more it gets coverage. They are only out for the money, and to survive. Many have gone out of business lately, and many more are just about there. TV is just as bad. Prime Time Viewing has become a cesspool of amorality. The incidents of nudity have sky-rocketed, even in the last few years. If Christians want to be pleasing to Our Lord Jesus Christ; they are going to have to stay away from that stuff.

Proverbs 5: 1 to 23 - My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding: That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge. For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell. Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them . Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.

Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house: Lest thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel: Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth; and thy labours be in the house of a stranger; And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof; And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me! I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly. Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets. Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee. Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love. And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings. His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, & he shall be holden with the cords of his sins. He shall die without instruction; & in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

So if you are locked in that trap, do not despair. Our Lord Jesus Christ has shed His Blood to pay for your sins, and He wants to help you.

First, there's repentance; and then deliverance.

Mark 2: 7 - When Jesus heard it , he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

This is one of the thorns that stick almost everyone, some way or another. I hope that believers have been not caught in that trap; but let's face it; too many have fallen. And if you have not succumbed to those desires; how close has it been?

Matthew 5: 27,28 - Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

In this world of sin and corruption, it is extremely hard to not be soiled with what's going on. Lot only had a fraction of the possibilities that are available to-day; & look what happened to him & his family.

2 Peter 2: 7,8 - And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful

deeds;)

To-day, modern technology has made available many more temptations; video games, computers, internet, social sites, the media in general etc. There are a lot of snares out there, just waiting for the unsuspecting soul to walk into.

1 Timothy 6: 9 - But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

That is why God set up pastors and priests; so they could warn the church of ungodly things.

Ezekiel 22: 26 - Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.

Ezekiel 44: 23 - And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy & profane, & cause them to discern between the unclean & the clean. And the onus is really on us; not any one else. There are many books written by those who have come out of bondage. But be careful and prayerfully study them. If this thorn, the lusts of the flesh was the only one to watch out for; it would still be formidable. Paul has some useful advice.

2 Timothy 2: 22 to 26 - Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

But there are 2 other thorns, and they altogether form a strong 3 fold cord. **Ecclesiastes 4: 12 - And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.**

1 John 2: 16 - For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. We have considered the lust of the flesh; but the lust of the eyes provokes the other. If you couldn't see; there would not be as many temptations. And when people get mired in them, Our Lord Jesus Christ tells of the drastic action needed to be free from them.

Matthew 5: 29 & 30 - And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should

perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

Our Lord is not telling people to mutilate themselves. He is only showing how hard people will have to resist those ungodly impulses to see and do evil. They are evil spirits, and can be cast out, in Jesus' Name.

The lust of the eyes has something else helping it. Have you heard the expression; curiosity killed the cat. Well, it has got a lot of people ensnared, and in trouble.

Acts 19: 19 - Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men : & they counted the price of them, & found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

Why do many get involved in the occult?

Acts 8: 4 to 11 - Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city. But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.

Whatever Simon Magus used, he was able to peak their curiosity, and so bewitched them, that they thought that he was god.

Now that's strong delusion. I have heard that there are some illusionists that have such strong mind control, that they can mesmerize large audiences. Have any of them ever got into politics or preaching?

Revelation 17: 12,13 - And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

If people were manifesting the lusts of the flesh and of the eyes; what would happen?

2 Peter 2: 14 - Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous

practices; cursed children.

And if the lust of the eyes was combined with occult bondage; what would you have?

Galatians 3: 1 - O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

If these were so dangerous, why were people not warned?

Exodus 20: 14 - Thou shalt not commit adultery. V17 - Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

And Our Lord Jesus repeated them again.

Matthew 19: 16 to 22 - And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is , God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

And if that is not bad enough, the devil has a third leg of the stool; the pride of life. It causes trouble everywhere it appears.

Proverbs 16:18 Pride goes before destruction, & a haughty spirit before a fall.

Hosea 5: 5 - And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face: therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah also shall fall with them.

1 Timothy 3: 6 - Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

And when pride gets in the heart; there are big problems. Jeremiah 48: 29 - We have heard the pride of Moab, (he is exceeding proud) his loftiness, and his arrogancy, and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart.

Daniel 5: 18 to 21 - O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept

alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.

And there is an even greater example.

Isaiah 14: 12 to 15 - How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

What should be done when pride is causing trouble?

2 Chronicles 32: 26 - Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah.

These three sins do not have to linger on. Confess the sins, and be washed in the Blood of the Lamb.

1 John 1: 7 to 10 - But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

And then with deliverance, those thorns or demons can be cast out, in the Name of Jesus Christ.

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