

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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The Seriousness of One Sin

(Jerry Fite)

The infallibly inspired Peter said the following concerning Simon’s spiritual condition: “. . . for I see that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity” (Acts 8:23). Simon desired the miraculous power of the apostles to confer to others miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. He had become a believer through the preaching of Philip. He no doubt saw the difference between the magical tricks of his sorcery and the true miracles worked by God. After his baptism, “he continued with Philip; and beholding signs and great miracles wrought, he was amazed” (Acts 8:13). But now he was amazed and coveted the power given to the apostles of the Lord. His request of Peter was, “Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit” (Acts 8:19).

Simon apparently did not understand that conferring to others the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit was exclusively given to the apostles. As Peter points out, “Thou hast neither part nor lot in his matter” (Acts 8:21). He was also trying to obtain the gift “with money”. Peter responds to this offer by saying, “Thy silver perish with thee, because thou has

thought to obtain the gift of God with money” (Acts 8:20). Peter further rebukes Simon by saying, “. . . for thy heart is not right before God” (Acts 8:21). His heart guided by ignorance blinded him to think money would move God to exalt him. He now needed to repent and pray that “the thought” of his heart be forgiven (Acts 8:22).

Some think that one sin is not that big of a problem. Think again. He had committed “wickedness” (Acts 8:22). Being separated from God in this one sin surely was as distasteful as drinking bitter gall. Through his one sin he was under the bond of iniquity, just as helpless as if he had committed many sins.

Sin is “lawlessness” or the transgression of law (I John 3:4). One sin is seriousness because it means we have transgressed the whole law. James writes, “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all” (James 2:10). The inclusiveness of all the specific demands of God is summed up in the single law of God. So, when we transgress in one part, the law, which considers all the requirements of God necessary, stands against us. As

James illustrates, “Now if thou dost not commit adultery, but killest, thou art become a transgressor of the law” (James 2:11). The same would be true if we committed adultery, and did not commit murder.

One sin is serious, because a perfectly “righteous” God cannot overlook any sin and remain “just” (Romans 3:26). The one sin in the garden triggered the eternal plan for the seed of woman to come and release all in sin from the power of Satan (Genesis 3:15). Jesus was the one sacrifice that would allow God to be just with sin and justify those who would believe in Him (Romans 3:22, 25).

When man sinned, regardless of who he was or the number of his sins, he was “under sin” (Romans. 3:12). He could not extricate himself from the consequences of transgressing God’s law (Romans 5:6). As a slave, he needed redemption. No amount of money can buy one from the slavery of sin. Only the precious blood of Christ can redeem man from any sin (I Peter 1:18-19).

From Simon’s experience, we know one sin is serious. How serious are you about one sin?