

Sin Lieth at the Door

by

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November 6, 2011

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One of the challenges we face as Christians is the proximity of sin. It seems and often is very close to us.

Cain was upset in the 4th chapter of Genesis because Abel's sacrifice was acceptable to God and his wasn't. God warned him how close sin was. Gen. 4:7, *"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."*

This verse shows not only the problem of the proximity of sin, but also the solution. It is a simple, 4-part lesson to us, 2 parts warning and 2 parts hope. Hopefully we can learn the lesson more easily than Cain did.

We will look at these 4 parts in reverse order, so that we may begin with the problem, and end with the solution.

"Sin lieth at the door"

The basic challenge we are looking at is how close sin is to us. Heb. 12:1, *"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,"*.

One reason sin besets us so easily is that Satan attacks at our closest, weakest, most vulnerable points. 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."* Our flesh, eyes and heart are very close to us, and so very vulnerable to Satan's devices.

So, how do we let sin get so close to us?

"If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door."

Basically, we let sin get close to us when we get close to sin. We can apply this teaching in two different ways, both of them accurately.

First, if we don't do well, as in not doing good deeds, sin lieth at the door. James 4:17, *"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."*

Second, if we don't do well, as in doing bad things, sin lieth at the door. 1 John 3:4, *"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."* We can also get ourselves close to sin by pushing the envelope of right and wrong. 1 John 5:17, *"All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death."*

So we want to be sure that the things we do are pleasing to God. Eph. 5:10. *"Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord."*

And we need to avoid as much evil as we can. We cannot completely avoid temptation. But if we avoid what we can, it makes it that much easier to resist what does come our way. 1 Pet 3:10-11, *"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, (eschew means to avoid) and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it."*

"Shalt thou not be accepted?"

Yes we can be accepted with God come Judgment Day, as the profitable servant in Matt. 25:21, *"His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."*

And if accepted we will dwell with Him forever in Heaven. Jesus said in Rev. 3:21, *"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."*

How do we ensure that we will be accepted?

"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?"

Why did the profitable servant's lord tell him "well done"? Very simply, he told him "well done" because he had done well. Matt. 25:20-21. *"And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside*

them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

Our good works keep our faith strong. Heb. 4:11. *"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."*

And we will be rewarded according to our works, Matt. 16:27, *"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."*

So the 4-part lesson from Gen. 4:7 is a simple, yet vitally important one. *"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door."*

In Christian love,
Bro. Terry Warford

