

# 2 REASONS WHY WE NEVER SEE SIN COMING

(ARTICLE WRITTEN BY JOHN FAST)

[In my last post I gave the first of five reasons why self-examination is indispensable if a Christian is to live a life that is pleasing to God.](#) Today we will look at a second reason. Self-examination is necessary to make sure we are not harboring a secret sin or living in sin because of ignorance or mistaken principles. This is the deceitfulness of sin; it presents itself to the mind as something other than what it really is.

We live in an age where virtually every sin has been redefined or euphemized into an illness, disorder, or addiction of which we are a victim, not a sin for which we are responsible and required to forsake. We live in a society that has turned sin into a virtue and sinned the shame and sinfulness out of sin ([Jer 6:15](#)). The professing church is plagued with inept and corrupt leaders, unbiblical practices, a false sense of security, and has become so sinful that God's word no longer has any impact. As Christians we should be concerned to know whether we live in any way that is offensive or displeasing to God.

The prophet Jeremiah wrote, "Let us *examine* and *probe* our ways, and let us return to the Lord" ([Lam 3:40](#); cf. [Ps 119:59](#)). This is a probing, not a superficial self-examination. The Hebrew word translated "examine" has the idea of "put to the test", to measure against some objective standard to see if something is genuine. The word translated "probe" always connotes a diligent, strenuous, sometimes painful probing, not just of behavior but of character and motives. We can deceive our own hearts, but God is never deceived ([Jer 17:10](#)).

We should be concerned to know whether we are living to gratify some lust, either in our practice or thoughts; whether we rationalize or self-justify living in some known sin; whether we engage in activities or behaviors that are indefensible and inconsistent with our profession of faith and not appropriate for a follower of Jesus Christ; whether the pattern of our life honors or brings reproach to the name of Jesus ([Rm 2:24](#)); to see if we have

strayed so we might return to the Lord. There are several reasons we should be concerned to know this.

## FIRST, WE SHOULD BE CONCERNED BECAUSE WE HAVE A NATURAL TENDENCY TO GRAVITATE TOWARD WHAT IS SINFUL.

The heart of man is naturally prone to sin and there is still much of this proclivity in every true Christian. The Apostle Paul stated, “For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh...I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good” ([Rm 7:18, 21](#)). Notice Paul said that this indwelling propensity to evil is *a principle*; it is *a law* of human nature.

A correct view of the true nature of man finds very little place in the thinking of people today. Instead we are told of the intrinsic value and worth of man, our own innate goodness, and our infinite self-worth. The source of his most violent and vicious actions is attributed to a lack of self-esteem or blamed on some psychological or psychiatric cause, or some social disadvantage, anything other than his own sinful nature.

This misdiagnosis of human nature is simply another example of how deceptive the human heart is and how adept people are at inventing ways to avoid taking personal responsibility for their actions. But our hearts are so full of sin that they betray us at every opportunity. That to which people are prone, they are apt to get into before they are aware. We are so prone to sinful ways that without maintaining a strict watch over ourselves, nothing else can be expected than that we will walk in some way of sin.

## SECOND, WE SHOULD BE CONCERNED BECAUSE OF

# THE *BLINDING AND DECEITFUL* NATURE OF SIN.

Not only are we prone to sin, but sin itself, being deceitful, has a blinding and corrupting nature. All sin has a darkening effect on the mind, and the more it influences a person's thinking, the more it darkens and deludes the mind.

The Pharisees were blinded to their sin by their own self-righteousness ([Jn 9:40, 41](#)). Jesus said they were blind guides of the blind ([Mt 15:14](#)). Satan blinds the mind of the unbelieving to the truth of the gospel by misrepresenting sin and their true condition ([2 Cor 4:4](#)). Sin always results in spiritual blindness ([Rm 2:1](#); [Jn 2:11](#)). This is why it is so difficult for us to know whether we are living in some sinful way that is dishonoring to God. It is not from a lack of instruction, or lack of truth, or lack of spiritual light; it is not because God's word is not clear or His commands ambiguous; but it is because of the blindness within us.

The light of God's word is clear enough – too clear for most people – but they reject the truth in favor of their sin and personal lusts. People do not like the consequences of sin, but they refuse to give up the sin they love, so they work tirelessly to find ways to avoid the consequences without giving up the sin, even to the extent of murdering their own offspring. They are darkened and blinded by the sin which dwells within them.

Not only is sin blinding, but it is *deceitful*. The extent to which sin prevails, to the same extent it dominates a person's will which sways and prejudices their judgment. When sin has gained a person's will, it has also gained his judgment. The more any lust dominates, the more it biases the mind to approve of it and think it right.

This is seen in people who once they have rationalized some sin to be right, will make a pretext of seeking counsel, but will only listen to those who affirm them in their sin. The lust of their hearts prejudices them in favor of their sinful practice, and as such they begin to reason according to the flesh.

With all the subtlety of Satan they begin to invent arguments that justify their sin, and to look for loop holes and exceptions to God's clear commands. They imagine that their circumstances are so exceptional as to exempt them from God's prohibitions and principles.

They will search heaven and earth to find like-minded people who will affirm them in their sinful ways and justify their wicked actions so as to appease their conscience ([Jer 5:31](#); [Mic 2:11](#); [Lk 16:15](#); [2 Tm 4:3](#)). People are expert at making their beliefs and principles conform to their practices. Rather than striving to comply with God's clear truth, or even with their own conscience, they use all their energy to bring their consciences to conform to their practice.

Once a person has determined to pursue a sinful course, in order to avoid condemning themselves, they concoct respectable names for their sin. They will try to make them appear virtuous, or at least innocent. They make themselves out to be a victim of some disease, not the willing, guilty perpetrator of sinful practices. They blame their sinful actions on others and presume that God makes allowances for people in their unique circumstances. They claim their sinful course has been validated by an inner peace from God. They absolve themselves of willful disobedience by pretending God's word is ambiguous about their particular lust. Like King Saul, they congratulate themselves for partial obedience and think to appease their disobedience by promises of future sacrifice ([1 Kg 15:13-15](#)). Sometimes people become so accustomed to a sin that what at one time was considered evil, offensive, and detrimental is now considered harmless, even virtuous and courageous. The normalization of sin stupefies the mind and desensitizes the conscience so that sin loses its sense of being evil, and even biases the mind in favor of it. Things which the Bible clearly condemns and which God finds abhorrent come to appear innocuous or innocent and even necessary. Divorce, immorality, promiscuity, infidelity, sensuality, carnality, profanity, disrespect, disobedience, and inappropriate entertainment all have become normalized, not only in the culture but

among professing Christians as well. Thus, many who profess to be Christians habitually practice sins and live in ways that are displeasing and dishonoring to God.

This brings us to a *third reason* why we should be concerned to know whether we live in some way of habitual sin. There are many who live in such ways and yet are oblivious to it, or never pause to consider if they live in ways displeasing to God. In fact, many who profess to be Christians would find the concept that we are to live in a way that is pleasing to Him something of a revelation. Today many are told that God exists to please us and that His highest goal is our happiness. As a result many people are unaware or indifferent that they live in ways that are displeasing to God. David wrote in [Ps 19:12](#), “Who can discern his errors? Acquit me of hidden faults.” By “hidden faults” David means those sins which are hidden to himself and of which he was guilty, and yet unaware. The same lust that leads someone into sin also blinds them to the sin. The more someone lives in a way of sin the more sweet and pleasant their sin is, and the less inclined they are to see it as sin. For instance, when a church grows through pragmatic appeals to the flesh, it sees those appeals as necessary for its growth, and if they are necessary the church can be excused for adopting them.

The same can be said for every lust that is in people’s hearts. The more these lusts prevail the more necessary they seem for our happiness and the more inclined the person is to approve of them. After all, if God wants us to be happy, then He certainly wouldn’t refuse us that which makes us happy. All lusts are deceitful lusts ([Eph 4:22](#)).

Sin always has its beginning in the mind ([1 Cor 11:3](#); [Gn 3:13](#)), drawing the mind away and diverting it from God’s clear word ([Hb 2:1](#)). The failing of the mind is like the failing of the watchman in Ezekiel ([Ezk 33:6](#)), if it fails all is lost. Consider whether you have been drawn away and diverted by the deceitfulness of sin.

If your good intentions never pan out, if assurance of forgiveness makes you insensitive to the evil of sin, if you have fallen for any of the deceits mentioned, you are in danger of being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. By one way or another your mind has been diverted and drawn away from its devotion to Christ. The greatest preventative is to heed Paul's advice in [1 Cor 15:58](#). A steadfast mind is not easily diverted from walking in a manner worthy of our calling.