

If Your Right Pinkie Offends You...



by Steve Higginbotham
October 15, 2008

"And if your right hand causes you

to sin, cut it off and cast it from you... (Matthew 5:20). Jesus used this figurative illustration to demonstrate the depth of commitment one should have toward pursuing godliness and achieving eternal life.

Trevor Wikre, a guard for Mesa State College, put a literal spin on the words of Jesus when he literally had his pinkie finger amputated so that he could play football. Wikre shattered his finger in practice and needed season-ending surgery to repair it. Instead, Wikre decided to have his finger amputated so that he could continue to play. Imagine that! So committed to a game that he

would cut off his finger rather than to miss his season.

While I'm not sure anyone should be so committed to a "game" that they would be willing to take such extraordinary steps to play, it sure does help to bring into focus the words of Jesus. Just how committed are we to allowing nothing to stand in our way of getting to heaven? To what degree are we willing to sacrifice in order that we might remain holy? What price have you paid, or are you willing to pay to be a disciple of Jesus? Trevor Wikre sacrificed his finger just to play a game. What are you willing to sacrifice in order to go to Heaven? Give it some thought. ~

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Navarre, FL 32566

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Assembly Schedule Sunday

Bible Class for all ages ___ 9:00 AM
Morning Worship Service ___ 10:00 AM
Evening Worship Service ___ 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Class for all ages ___ 7:00 PM

VISITORS ARE WELCOME!

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NAVARRE MESSENGER

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Why Do People Sin?

By Ron Boatwright

We are free moral agents. God could have made us as robots, but He didn't. We have a choice in the matter. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). There are several reasons why people sin.

People sin because, "There is no fear of God before their eyes" (Romans 3:18). They have no respect for God, our Creator. But the "whole duty of man" is to "fear God and keep His commandments" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). Before we can keep God's commandments we must know what they are. But God says, "My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6). We must study God's word because, "Your word, I have hidden in my heart that I might not sin against You" (Psalms 119:11). We must develop an awesome respect for God and His word so we will not sin against Him.

People sin because we are deceived by sin. We are to, "Exhort one another daily, while it is called today, lest any of you be

hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:13). We can even deceive ourselves by denying we have sinned. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). Because of the deceitfulness of sin, we are to, "Beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked" (2 Peter 3:17). We are warned, "Let no man deceive you with vain words" (Ephesians 5:6). Yes, sin is deceiving.

People sin because there is temporary pleasure in sin. Moses chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25). Because of the pleasures of sin, we are tempted and enticed. "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin, and sin when it is finished, brings forth death" (James 1:14-15).

People sin because, "The soul of the wicked desires evil" (Proverbs 21:10). Jesus asks, "Why do you think evil in your hearts?" (Matthew 9:4).



People sin because they "love evil more than good, lying rather than speaking righteousness" (Psalms 52:3). And because of this they "call evil good and good evil" (Isaiah 5:20).

People sin because they are deceived by false doctrine. "If anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:9). If one wanders away into the sin of denominationalism, he will be lost. "Whoever trans-

gresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God" (1 John 9). We must be faithful to God and His word.

People sin because of the influence of the people with whom they associate. "Do not be deceived: evil company corrupts good habits" (1 Corinthians 15:33). We must carefully choose our associates. To protect ourselves from sin we must,

"Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

We also sin when we don't do what we should do. "Therefore, to him that knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). One of the things some people fail to do is they fail to assemble for worship. But we are not to "forsake the assembling of ourselves together as is the manner of some...for if

we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sin" (Hebrews 10:25-26). If we continue willfully in our sin and don't repent, we will die in our sins and be lost (John 8:24). Let us not be deceived by sin, because the wages of sin is spiritual death in Hell forever (Romans 6:23). ~

Angels: "Second Place"

Hebrews 1:5-14

By Warren E. Berkley

The Jews, for many generations before Christ came, held angels in high esteem. There was a basis for this. Angels have long enjoyed a place in God's order, like Gabriel and Michael in the book of Daniel.

Today there is a heightened fascination for "the spirit world" of demons and angels. Mostly this interest revolves around claims of personal experience, dramatic encounters and dreams which could never be verified, but carry some sensation.

When Bible classes come to any mention of angels (as in Hebrews chapter one), there is a temptation to stop everything, unpack everything the Bible says about angels and add to the discussion all the subjective options and stories about these mystic beings.



If you let that happen in Hebrews chapter one, you have acted in direct defiance of the point of the passage. The main thing in Hebrews one is not angels. In fact, the affirmation of the writer is, they are second place to Jesus Christ. What is said and claimed

about Jesus Christ could never be said of angels. Our Savior is totally different and stands at a different level. It is our great privilege to be subject to Him.

"Let all the angels worship Him," (Heb. 1:6; Psa. 97:7). ~

The Superiority of Christ

Hebrews 1:4-14

By Randy Harshbarger

The book of Hebrews argues that Christ is superior in all things. Christ as our Great High Priest is superior to the priest who officiated under the Levitical system. The covenant of Christ is superior to the Old Covenant given to the Jews at Sinai. Christ is greater than Moses and Aaron. These arguments are designed to lead to the conclusion that the salvation Christ provides (since it is predicated on His own precious blood and not on the blood of bulls and goats) is indeed great (Hebrews 2:1-4). We ignore or "neglect" this great salvation to our spiritual ruin. Christ is also superior to the angels, which is the theme of Hebrews 1:4-14.

Angels are featured throughout the OT. We generally think of angels as being messengers for God; they did serve that purpose (Genesis 19; 22). Daniel speaks of Michael (Daniel 12:1-2). Angels were a featured part of many Near Eastern religions. The Dead Sea Scrolls suggest that the ancients speculated about the role of angels in service to God. In NT times, the worship of angels has apparently become a problem, probably as a part of Gnosticism (Colossians 2:18). Angels had (have) something to do with



Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 11. Today, the New Age Movement has again popularized angels; they are the focus of many books and some movies. What place do angels occupy in Hebrews?

First, Christ is said to be better than the angels "as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they" (1:4). Exaltation by the Father's right hand marks Christ as greater than the angels. Further, His name is greater. In context, this seems to be a reference, as verse five states, to the fact that Christ is identified as the Son (cf. Philipians 2:9-11; here Lord is used). While on earth Jesus was clearly the Son (Hebrews 5:9), but in this exalted position of honor, Jesus is demonstrated to be far above the angels; He is ranked or reputed to be above the angels. The Father never said to the angels: "Thou art my son, This day have I begotten thee" (1:5). This is a quotation from Psalm 2:7, which speaks of

the triumph of the King over His enemies. Paul, in Acts 13:33, applies the Psalms passage to the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Not only is the name of Christ above that of the angels, but His very essence, His deity, was demonstrated by His resurrection from the grave (cf. Romans 1:4). No angel could make that claim.

Second, did the Father ever say to an angel: "I will be to him a Father, And he shall be to me a Son?" No, but He said that to Christ (1:5). This OT quotation is from 2 Samuel 7:14. King David asked permission to build a suitable house for Jehovah. After telling David no, the Lord said that one from David's loins would come forth and his kingdom would be established forever. Yes, David's son, Solomon, would later build the temple in Jerusalem; God would be a Father to him. But the ultimate fulfillment could not be possible apart from Christ, the Son, who sits on David's throne (cf. Acts 2:29-36). Could the angels make such a claim of superiority? No, but Christ makes that claim. Is He worthy? Should we listen to Him? The original recipients of Hebrews needed to be reminded of Christ's superiority. We need that same reminder today.

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