

The Pastor's Pen

“As long as I viewed God as a tyrant, I viewed my sin as insignificant. But when I knew Him to be my Father, then it broke my heart to think that I could ever have rebelled against Him. When I believed that God was hard - I found sin easy. But when I realized that God is so kind, so good, and so overflowing with compassion - then I beat on my breast to think that I could ever have rebelled against One Who loves me so much, and so much seeks my good.” ~ Charles Haddon Spurgeon

The 19th century British pastor Charles Spurgeon is still known today as the “Prince of Preachers,” because of his ability to take God’s Word and drive it straight into the hearts of his hearers. The quote above is no exception.

When we knowingly choose sin over obedience, *rarely if ever* do we consider *why*. However, if we start turning over the stones of our hearts to uncover *why* we find sin so easy, we need go no farther than our view of our Heavenly Father. Driving every single temptation to sin that we face is the evil lie that our Father is really not *good*, that He is actually a *tyrant*, and that He is a harsh *disciplinarian* Who delights in being the *Great Cosmic Killjoy*.

As long as we continue to believe the lie that God desires to *keep good from us*, we will find it easy to rebel against what we (falsely) *see as tyranny on His part*. And, Satan loves nothing more than for us to believe this lie about our Father’s character. In fact, he’s been telling and retelling this *same exact lie* since he first tried it out on our first parents in the Garden of Eden. Have you ever considered *what caused* the Fall in Eden? Yes, I know...they disobeyed the command of God and ate the forbidden fruit. But, that is *what* they did, not *why* they did it. And, *what* is not the question I’m asking. *Why* did they choose to disobey God’s *only* command?

The answer is – *what they believed*. Before our first parents *acted* in disobedience, they first *believed a lie* about our Father’s heart. Once Satan was able to convince them that God’s command was self-centered, rather than it being intended to *provide for* them and to *protect* them, the Fall was as sure to happen as ice is to melt on the sidewalk on July 4th. Once Adam and Eve believed the lie that, “*God knows that*

when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:5), they found sin to be *incredibly easy*.

As illogical as the Adam and Eve’s choice seems (*and it was 100% illogical*) – every single one of us are their children. And, the apple never falls far from the tree. Every single time that we fall into sin, we *believe the same lie* that they believed. We believe that our Father *is not good* and He *does not have* our best interest at heart. If and when Satan can get us to believe *that lie*, the fight has already been lost.

So, ask you (as you well should), how are we to make progress in our struggle against sin? I am really glad that you asked. We will never make progress until we begin to *learn* the Truth and begin to *believe* the Truth about our Heavenly Father’s heart. The Truth is that our Father is *not* harsh – He is *compassionate*. The Truth is that our Father is *not* mean – He is *incredibly kind*. The Truth is that our Father is *not* a cosmic killjoy – He delights in *giving us joy*. The Truth is that our Father is *not* a hard disciplinarian – He *runs* to us with a broken Heart when we cry out to Him.

Ok, so how does believing the Truth in these areas begin to transform our battle with Indwelling Sin? (*Nota bene...* “Indwelling Sin” is a theological word for the Christian’s sin nature). Well, as we begin to believe the Truth about our Heavenly Father’s heart toward us, we then begin to see sin as the heinous enemy that it truly is. And, we begin to realize that God is *always* seeking to *provide for us* and to *protect us*. And, *why* is He always trying to provide for us and protect us? Because He *loves* us. And, because He knows the devastation and harm that sin always brings with it.

When we begin to see our Heavenly Father as He truly is then, like Spurgeon, we begin to beat on our chest in grief as we consider how in the world we, “*could ever rebel against One who loves us so much, and so much seeks our good.*” So, this week, let’s do our best to remind each other of the Truth about our Heavenly Father.

I pray that, this week, we will know the Laughter of the Redeemed.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Heath", written in a cursive style.

Heath