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The Proper Attitude Toward Weakness

There are those who call themselves Christians who believe that God, knowing that we are weak and sinful creatures, immediately puts certain things away by forgiving us. Others have accepted the idea that once one has transgressed, certain deeds may be performed that will make up for indiscretion, thus relieving one of the consequences of their actions. As we turn to the scriptures we find that this attitude is not supported in the Bible. Christ's example demonstrates that with proper reverence toward God we may live a life that is acceptable to the Lord. The reality of human life is that we are indeed prone to sinning against God and may be guilty at times when we are genuinely trying to do our best. Failure is a fact of life at times but it is our attitude toward this that will set us on the proper course once more if our heart is in the right place. What we as humans allow in our lives may constitute sin in the eyes of God. A number of passages support the idea that we should always strive to do our best and find ways to overcome or manage our weaknesses. When Simon the sorcerer sinned, asking to purchase the ability to dispense spiritual gifts, he was rebuked strongly by Peter and told to repent (**Acts 8.18-24**). Some may allow certain weaknesses to exist or even flourish, finding a number of excuses to continue in them. Paul stated, "***But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.***" (**Rom 13.14**). Some may defend certain practices by stating that to put them aside may cause undue stress and keep them from serving God. Christ dealt with this attitude when he stated, "***For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.***" (**Matt 16.25**). Perhaps as one seeks to change their lives they find that change is difficult or painful as we incorporate such changes as God would have us do. This attitude may cause us to shop for a church that is more liberal in their attitudes toward certain activities. There are many religious folks who do not see anything wrong with gambling, particularly playing the lottery, dancing, social

drinking or other things that lead to problems socially, morally and spiritually. Such an attitude may separate us from God as we fear leaving the fun in life behind. We might also find ways to excuse our behavior citing the positive aspects of activities that more conservatively minded individuals will condemn. Such ideas shape a negative view of those who teach and practice what the Bible commands us to observe and may even condemn some as being too strict. Paul stated to the Romans, "***...for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.***" (**Rom 14.23**). If we should find ourselves doubting whether something is right in the sight of God the best course of action is to err on the side of caution. We must study and understand the will of God through his word and by so doing will be better equipped to make decisions about what we should and should not do. The writer of Hebrews speaks of the result of a lack of knowledge of God's word when he writes, "***For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.***" (**Heb 5.13-14**). Not knowing that something is wrong is no defense spiritually. We must understand what God's attitude toward certain things is and accept that. It is possible to remain ignorant, defend what is wrong and convince ourselves that we are justified in God's sight and be lost eternally as a result. One of the problems we have is that we fail to see the long term consequences of our actions on our own lives and the lives of those around us. Sin many times is an impulsive reaction to a short term problem. Temptation exists in everyone's life and only by resisting do we grow stronger. As James writes, "***Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.***" (**Jas 1.12**). God understands weakness but also demands faithfulness. God will help us in this endeavor. Paul states, "***There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.***" (**1 Cor 10.13**).

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