

FOLKS WHO HIDE THEIR EYES FROM EVIL

We have all known folks who refuse to acknowledge unpleasant problems. Sometimes it is a partner in an unhappy marriage or parents with problem children. Often we compare them to the ostrich who hides its head in the sand. When God gave his law to the Hebrews he warned them against the sinful practices of Molech worship. He then said:

“And if the people of the land do at all hide their eyes from that man when he giveth of his seed unto Molech, and put him not to death; then I will set my face against his family and cut him off...” (Lev. 20:4-5).

The Lord knew that some of the Hebrews would reason that idolatry was not such a big deal, they would just ignore it. But to God such practices “defile my sanctuary, and... profane my holy name” (Ex. 20:3).

Today, churches of Christ face two crises. First there is a determined band of false teachers who are determined to impose unscriptural changes upon the church. Such changes are disastrous in consequence. Second a much larger band of preachers, elders and members are “hiding their faces,” “covering their eyes,” “putting their heads in the sand,” “wearing blinders,” “wearing rose tinted glasses.” They cannot bring themselves to acknowledge the danger upon us. To acknowledge it brings with it the responsibility to do something about it. It might arouse feelings of guilt for allowing the evil to exist without challenge. Such is not unusual behavior. People in all ages, around the world, have done this to avoid dealing with unpleasant situations.

The sobering thought is how God views those who hide their eyes from evil. He will set his face against them, he will cut them off! That large body of our brethren who can't bring themselves to evaluate and pass judgment on the promoters of change who are wreaking havoc in congregations all over the nation and in our mission outposts, should contemplate their unfavorable standing before God and the jeopardy in which they stand.

Consider the following lessons from these verses:

- * It is not enough to personally abstain from an evil. We must be concerned that the wicked practice not be allowed to flourish in our midst.
- * When we close our eyes the problem does not go away. It is no wise lessened. The danger is no less real and will likely grow worse as we pretend it does not exist.
- * Those who preach and those who lead God's church are under obligation to “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up (their) voice like a trumpet and declare unto (God's) people their transgression...” (Is. 58:1).
- * All the good works of the church in Thyatira could not compensate for the fact that they suffered the woman Jezebel who taught and seduced God's servants to sin (Rev. 2:19-20).
- * We must either judge those who are harming the church and defiling God's sanctuary or we will be judged by God for our failure to do so. JHW

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