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Will it Become Holy? Will it Be Unclean?

In the book of Haggai, the temple remains unfinished. The people are called upon to consider their ways. In chapter two Haggai is instructed to ask the priests two questions concerning the law.

"If one carries holy meat in the fold of his garment, and with the edge he touches bread or stew, wine or oil, or any food, will it become holy?" "Then the priests answered and said, "No." (Haggai 2:12)

And Haggai said, "If one who is unclean because of a dead body touches any of these, will it be unclean?" So the priests answered and said, "It shall be unclean." (Haggai 2:13)

These questions and answers are very telling. Just because someone lives among holy people does not make them holy and in good standings with God. Holiness does not rub off upon other objects or people.

The same is not true when it comes to uncleanness. Touching something unclean does defile a person. Uncleanness rubs off. Isn't this what Paul is saying in 1 Corinthians 15:33? "Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits." We like to think that our holiness will rub off on the unclean but Paul warns us to realize the deception found in that way of thinking.

Consider what James said "For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. For He who said, "DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY," also said, "DO NOT MURDER." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. (James 2:10-11)

We must learn to influence others without getting into the pig pen with the pig.

Therefore "COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM AND BE SEPARATE, SAYS THE LORD. DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN, AND I WILL RECEIVE YOU." "I WILL BE A FATHER TO YOU, AND YOU SHALL BE MY SONS AND DAUGHTERS, SAYS THE LORD ALMIGHTY." (2 Corinthians 6:17-18)

STACY

Thinking God Is Like Man

Wilson Copeland

"These things you have done and I kept silence; you thought that I was just like you; I will reprove you and state the case in order before your eyes." (Psalm 50:21)

Psalm 50 is a beautiful song of Asaph, in which God give a warning to **both** the righteous and the wicked. The Psalmist begins by calling heaven and earth to witness the judgment of God (vs. 1-6).

"He summons the heavens above, and the earth, to judge His people: "Gather My godly ones to Me, Those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." And the heavens declare His righteousness, For God Himself is judge." (NASB)

The author then proceeds to speak to the righteous (vs. 7-15). Their sacrifices are still abundant, but their hearts are not right with God. The Lord makes clear that He does not "need" their sacrifices. All the animals of the earth belong to Him, and if He were hungry He would not call upon man to fulfill his needs (vs. 10-13). Instead, He calls upon them to offer to God "the sacrifice of thanksgiving" (v. 14). It was not the **quantity** of their sacrifices that was the problem, but the **quality**. Then as now, God wants our hearts.

After reminding the righteous of their responsibility to worship Jehovah properly, God addresses the wicked (vs. 16-21).

“But to the wicked, God says: “What right have you to recite my laws or take my covenant on your lips? You hate my instruction ... When you see a thief, you join with him; you throw in your lot with adulterers. You use your mouth for evil ... You speak continually against your brother and slander your own mother’s son” (NIV, vs.16-20).

Then the Lord smacks them right between the eyes (v. 21). “These things you have done and I kept silence; you thought that I was just like you; I will reprove you and state the case in order before your eyes” (NASB).

It is a grave mistake to think that just because God has not acted – that because He has, up to this point, kept “silent” – that He has not taken notice of our sins, or that He will not call us into judgment. God’s temporary silence does not imply His approval, consent, or endorsement. As Peter points out in the New Testament, His “silence” demonstrates His patience toward mankind.

“But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:8-9).

The Psalmist also tells us that because God had been silent, the unrighteous *thought* that God’s attitude about sin was the same as theirs. “You thought that I was just like you” (v. 21b). Another grave mistake.

Men often overlook the sins of others. We may overlook sin because we have become “soft” on sin. We begin to think that certain sins are “not so bad.” The world around us has begun to accept many things that were once taboo even in general society. Adultery, fornication, homosexuality, killing (abortion), drunkenness, lying, taking God’s name in vain, etc. If we are not careful we can allow the world’s standards to become ours. Instead of coming out of the world and being separate (2 Cor. 6:17), we jump into the boat with them, and go along for the ride.

We may overlook sin because the sin has been committed by a friend or loved one. We “love” them so much that we don’t want to confront them. Or we don’t want to suffer their disapproval because of our opposition to their actions. There may be a multitude of reasons for our softening, but we can be assured that God has not changed His attitude toward sin.

God hates sin, always has, always will. And God is not like us – he will not overlook sin – for any reason. Peter said, “God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him” (Acts 10:34–35).

It was a grave mistake for Israel to think that just because God had not yet acted, that He was indifferent about their sin, and it would be a grave mistake for us as well. God is not like man. He is not indifferent – He is not a respecter of persons – He will not overlook our transgressions. He is loving and patient waiting for you to repent and correct your life. Will you correct your life today?