

Encouraging thoughts on endurance:

- “It is always too soon to quit.”
- “Most people never run far enough on their first wind to find out they have a second.”
- “Never give up. Keep your thoughts and your mind always on the goal.”
- “If you work long enough, hard enough and enthusiastically enough, sooner or later the effort will bring forth fruit.”
- “If you get up one more time than you fall, you will make it through.”



January 31, 2010

**What Might Have Been
Barney Keith**

How painful is the thought expressed by one of the great poets, John Greenleaf Whittier:

"For of all sad words of tongue or pen, The saddest are these: 'It might have been!'" Many a person has thrown away his life in drug addiction, (including alcohol). Numerous are those who have thrown away their marriages by becoming involved with others. Parents have often lost their children by neglecting them, or even granting them excessive freedom. Many are those who have thrown away a good name by some ungodly behavior. Do you not suppose that a vast majority of these later in life have shed tears of bitter remorse as they have thought of "what might have been"? It is too late, however, for all has been lost.

This bitter lament is found also in the Bible. It was expressed by the "weeping prophet," Jeremiah (8:20) as he sadly exclaimed, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." God had given His people ample time to repent and turn from their idolatrous, immoral ways. They had not shown any inclination to respond appropriately to His offers of mercy. When God was no longer willing to tolerate their wickedness, the Babylonian captivity became His means of teaching them a 70-year lesson. No doubt there were times in Babylon when they mourned and wept over "what might have been" if they had only listened to the voices of the prophets who had warned them.

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Send a Copy to a Friend

Evangelist:
 Jim Stauffer

MEETING TIMES
 Sunday - Bible Classes: 9:30AM
 Worship Services 10:20AM & 6:00PM
 Wednesday - Bible Classes 7:00PM

Lenexa church of Christ

Such lessons ought not to fall on deaf ears today. That individual who has stopped serving the Lord faithfully will one day realize what he has given up. It may be too late then to do anything about it. My dear wayward brother or sister, before the "harvest is past" and the "summer is ended," you ought to take advantage of a merciful God's offer of pardon by repentance, confession and prayer. Better that, by far, than to stand condemned in the judgment and have to think of "what might have been."

That individual, too, who has never obeyed the gospel should ponder seriously what hell is like (according to God's word) and submit himself to the rule of Christ in faith, repentance, confession and baptism before it is too late to do so. Far better this than to be separated eternally from God and think of "what might have been."

Limited Atonement versus Romans 14:15,23

Patrick Donahue

Romans 14:15,23 reads But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, ... Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. ... he that doubteth is [condemned] if he eat, because he eateth not of faith ...

"[Condemned]" in this passage is translated from the same Greek word as "destroy" in Matthew 10:28b: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in everlasting punishment.

This is the same Greek word as "condemned" in Mark 16:16: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned.

There is no stronger word to mean spiritually lost than "condemned."

So Romans 14:15,23 teaches that some for whom Christ died will be destroyed, that is, condemned.

This contradicts John Calvin's "limited atonement" position that all for whom Christ died will be saved.

Conclusion: Christ's atonement is not limited to the saved/elect.

Second conclusion: The doctrine of "once saved always saved" is not true, because Romans 14:15,23 shows the possibility of a brother in Christ becoming condemned.

PLAN TO SUCCEED

Jim Stauffer

When we look at some of the tragic stories of the Bible there are many lessons to be learned.

The choices we make as we live accumulate to success or failure. This is true in material matters as well as spiritual.

Do you believe Cain suddenly learned to hate his brother? The Bible story does not give all the facts of his life but it does tell us his offering to God was not done by faith. Consider that information in light of Rom. 14:23 and we know he had already sinned before God.

This information makes it apparent the murder of his brother was the culmination of several small choices he made along the way. These choices led him to the point of hating his brother and taking his life in a jealous rage. (1 Joh. 3:15)

Just as surely his brother Abel had made different choices which led him to offer to God out of faith. (Heb. 11:4)

While it is true that those who make daily choices out of self-interest rather than in response to the will of God will not all end up as murderers, it is sure those choices will lead them away from God and toward the world.

I am sure David did not anticipate his momentary satisfaction of lust toward Bathsheba would lead to the murder of her husband and the death of the baby born out of that union. Yet allowing his lust to be conceived was the first step toward a downward spiral he could not see because he was blinded by his selfish interests.

Poor choices do not always lead to adultery and murder. Sometimes they just gradually lead us away from our first love as Jesus told Ephesus in Rev. 2:4. Sometimes they lead us to become lukewarm toward God and His people such as the Laodiceans. (Rev. 3:15,16)

We make such choices every day. Whether to attend the worship on Sunday night or Wednesday night in favor of a good television program. Whether to give a portion of that extra income we had this week. Whether to spend money or time on a brother who is in need. All these choices accumulate. They become habits for us. They indeed become who we actually are. Then we hear or see the opinion others have of us and we are surprised or sometimes offended.

Better to be offended now than to hear Him say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels." (Mt. 25:41)