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There Is No Wisdom In Sin

The world has divided men into two classes, the stupid good people and the clever wicked ones.

This false classification runs through much of the literature of the last centuries from the classics to the comic strip, from Shakespeare's Polonius, who furnished his son with a set of good but dull moral platitudes, to Camp's Li'l Abner, who would never knowingly do a wrong act but who would rather fall on his head than on his feet because there is more feeling in his feet than in his head.

In the Holy Scriptures things are quite the opposite. There righteousness is always associated with wisdom and evil with folly. Whatever other factors may be present in an act of wrongdoing, folly is one that is never absent. To do a wrong act a man must for the moment think wrong; he must exercise bad judgment. If this is true then the devil is

creation's prime fool, for when he gambled on his ability to unseat the Almighty he was guilty of an act of judgment so bad as to be imbecilic. He is said to have had a great amount of wisdom, but his wisdom must have deserted him at the time of his first sin, for surely he grossly underestimated the power of God and as grossly overestimated his own. The devil is not now pictured in the Scriptures as wise, only as shrewd. We are warned not against his wisdom but against his wiles, something very different. Sin, I repeat, in addition to anything else it may be, is always an act of wrong judgment. To commit a sin a man must for the moment believe that things are different from what they really are; he must confound values; he must see the moral universe out of focus; he must accept a lie as truth and see truth as a lie; he must ignore the signs on the highway and drive with his eyes shut; he must act as if he had no soul and was not accountable for his moral choices. Sin is never a thing to be proud of. No act is wise

that ignores remote consequences, and sin always does. Sin sees only today, or at most tomorrow; never the day after tomorrow, next month or next year. Death and judgment are pushed aside as if they did not exist and the sinner becomes for the time a practical atheist who by his act denies not only the existence of God but the concept of life after death.

History is replete with examples of men whose intellectual powers were great but whose practical judgment was almost nil: Einstein, for instance, who was a mathematical genius but who could not look after his own bank account and who absent-mindedly ran his little motorboat aground with the excuse that he "must have been thinking about something else." We can smile at this, but there is nothing humorous about that other class of men who had brilliant minds but whose moral judgment was sadly awry. To this class belong such men as

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Lucretius, Voltaire, Shelley, Oscar Wilde, Walt Whitman and thousands of others whose names are less widely known.

The notion that the careless sinner is the smart fellow and the serious-minded Christian, though well-intentioned, is a stupid dolt altogether out of touch with life will not stand up under scrutiny. Sin is basically an act of moral folly, and the greater the folly the greater the fool.

It is time the young people of this generation learned that there is nothing smart about wrongdoing and nothing stupid about righteousness. We must stop negotiating with evil.

We Christians must stop apologizing for our moral position and start making our voices heard, exposing sin for the enemy of the human race which it surely is and setting forth righteousness and true holiness as the only worthy pursuits for moral beings.

The idea that sin is modern is false. There has not been a new sin invented since the beginning of recorded history.

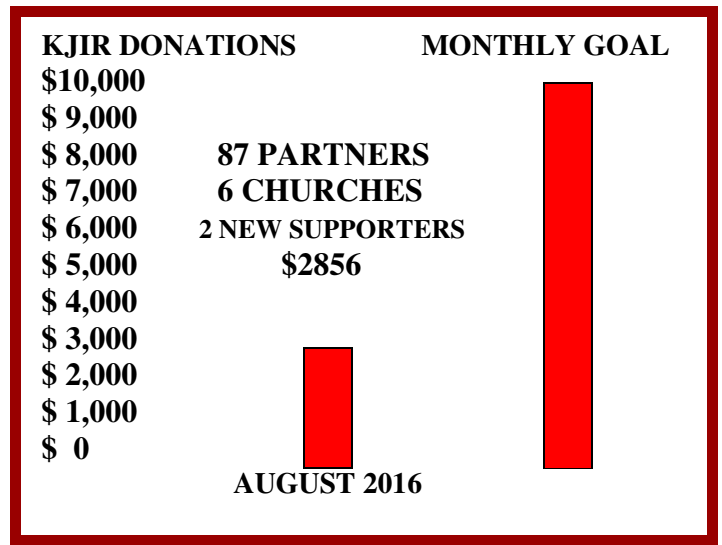
That new vice that breaks out to horrify decent citizens and worry the police is not really new. Flip open that book written centuries ago and you will find it described there.

The reckless sinner trying to think of some new way to express his love of iniquity can do no more than imitate others like himself, now long dead. He is not the bright rebel he fancies himself to be but a weak and stupid fellow who must follow along in the long parade of death toward the point of no return.

If the hoary head is a crown of glory when it is found in the way of righteousness, it is a fool's cap when it is found in the way of sin. An old sinner is an awesome and frightening spectacle. One feels about him much as one feels about the condemned man on his way to the gallows. A sense of numb terror and shock fills the heart. The knowledge that the condemned man was once a red-checked boy only heightens the feeling, and the knowledge that the aged rebel now beyond reclamation once went up to the house of God on a Sunday morning to the sweet sound of church bells makes even the trusting Christian humble and a little bit scared. There but for the grace of God goes he.

I am among those who believe that our Western civilization is on its way to perishing. It has many commendable qualities, most of which it has borrowed from the Christian ethic, but it lacks the element of moral wisdom that would give it permanence. Future historians will record that we of the twentieth century had intelligence enough to create a great civilization but not the moral wisdom to preserve it.

A.W. Tozer



KJIR Radio Is A Listener Supported Christian Radio Station

Dear Jesus ~ dear to my heart,
Speak your sweet message to me.
Give me today a new start,
Your humble servant to be.

Speak of our Father who reigns supreme
O'er this beautiful land and sky,
Whisper again the assurance to me
Of His love for one such as I.

Oh, how we take for granted
All His dear blessings each day,
Then when our blessings all vanish,
We fall on our knees and pray.

He forgives our sins and transgressions,
With his wonderful love divine,
Oh, dear Lord, how I thank thee
For hearing these prayers of mine.

No matter how often we stumble
On life's pathway here on earth,
If we honestly ask His forgiveness,
We can always have a rebirth.

This is God's promise everlasting
For all who take time to hear
His forgiveness and love forever,
So what do we have to fear?

So listen for that soft whisper,
Listen to the message it gives,
Listen to the voice of Jesus,
And know that He also lives.

**Alma Tolleson
11-10-1986**