

Owning Your Sin

“Stand up and take your medicine.” “You made your bed, now lie in it.” We may have heard it expressed in different ways, but all the clichés mean the same – we are to accept responsibility for our own choices and our own actions. Today’s Templates of Truth reminds us of this important principle and some thoughts about how we take ownership for our faults & failures, rather than avoiding the tendency to blame them on something or someone else.

When King Amaziah came to the throne of Judah, one of the first things he did was to execute those servants who assassinated his father, Joash. Where other leaders might have extended the bloodshed to even the sons of those servants, Amaziah was careful to follow the letter of the Law of God as given through Moses – *The fathers shall not be put to death for the sons, nor the sons be put to death for their fathers; but each shall be put to death for his own sin* (II Kings 14:6). God will not hold me accountable in any way for the sins of my sons, nor will God hold them accountable for my sins. We will each stand before God in judgment and answer only for the conditions of our life. God requires personal ownership of sin, but what does that mean exactly?

Assume the responsibility of our choices – modern theories in psychology & sociology show the connection between family dysfunction and adult attitudes & behaviors. While these theories are certainly valid, many use them as a way of avoiding personal responsibility for sin. They become a crutch upon which abusive, immoral, addictive and corrupt behaviors continue. Some even use the spiritual justification made popular by comedian Flip Wilson during the 60s: “the devil made me do it!” As long as we can blame something or someone else for our bad choices and evil behaviors, we skirt accepting full responsibility for our sin. We even think that might give us an excuse before God one day, but it most certainly will not!

Accept the repercussions of our consequences – all bad choices have consequences. Those consequences may be filled with various repercussions that affect our lives and family. We don’t usually like the consequences and they most often cause pain, loss & suffering, but they are nevertheless real and cannot be avoided. Our tendency is to change them, squeeze out of them, have them replaced with something better, or to eliminate them all together in some effort to go back to the way things use to be. Bad choices often come with forfeiting something once held of value, losing something once considered precious, or dramatically altering something once set in stone. We may genuinely change our life in sincere regret, but it may cost us a marriage, a career, our health, our freedom and certainly our personal integrity & credibility. Healing from the failures of life requires accepting these repercussions and trusting God to help us make the best of what is left.

Assure the repentance of our confession – it is one thing to confess sin, which means you agree with God that you are wrong. It is quite another thing to turn away from it, do an “about-face” and change your attitudes, behaviors and lifestyle – true repentance. Once some time has gone by and the dust settles, we have a tendency to slip back into old habits, regroup with old

friends, and dabble once again in things that contributed to our downfall. True repentance is a constant & persistent effort to avoid such repetition. It keeps a short record with God through confession, daily striving to walk in faithful obedience, and a keen sensitivity to all that is displeasing & unacceptable to God.

Acknowledge the righteousness of our character – Are you a born-again believer in Christ? Then living in the sinful ways of your “old man” is not your true character. When God saved you, He made you a new creature. He made your spiritual character dead to sin so that you no longer have to live therein. Acting out sinful thoughts & desires, living in willful disobedience to God’s will & ways and reeling in wicked rebellion is going against the righteous character of your new life in Christ. Only the power of prayer, God’s Word and the indwelling presence of His Holy Spirit will enable you to live daily in the nature of your true character. Submit your life daily to these spiritual resources so that you can know the joy& freedom of standing holy, blameless and pure before God.

The Apostle Paul taught that *we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad* (II Corinthians 5:10). No one can stand in our place. No one can assume responsibility for our life in that moment but us. There, we will totally own our sins. But thanks be to God, the blood of Jesus has them covered! We may suffer loss in terms of eternal rewards, but our salvation and God’s grace has insured our eternal forgiveness. Between now and then, however, we must own our sin and assume responsibility for our righteous living.

That’s today’s Templates of Truth. This is your Bible teacher, Rick Smith, reminding you to attend church this Sunday for Bible study and worship, pray for one another, and always strive to abide in Christ. Until next time, have a blessed and glorious day in the Lord Jesus.