

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

March 15, 2009

Living life the hard way

by David King

"Good understanding gains favor, but the way of the unfaithful is hard" (Prov. 13:15).

The goal of every human being is happiness. But few ever find that happiness. Many culprits get blamed for that failure, but in most cases, the reason is **sin**. We violate God's law, and pay the price for our decision. The irony here is that we ignore God's way because it's too much trouble, but the "easy" path we choose ends up costing us much more. Whether we realize it or not, we have chosen to live life the hard way.

Sin is the ultimate con artist. It offers glittering promises of pleasure; but only after we take the bait do we realize we've been had. Oh, there may be an initial spasm of excitement, but the fun is only temporary. The pleasure is soon replaced with pain, as the real harvest comes in: health problems, broken relationships, financial ruin, emotional trauma. In the end, we learn to our everlasting regret that we chose poorly. The way of the unfaithful is, in fact, quite hard.

Even after we realize we have made a mistake, we often compound the problem by trying to avoid the consequences of our error. Some folks, for example, try to mask the first sin with other sins (look at King David's clumsy attempts to cover his sin with Bathsheba). Others look to science or legal maneuvering to lessen sin's impact (think of the gay lobby's efforts to legitimize their immoral lifestyle). Others simply redefine the sin as something other than sin, thereby perpetuating the notion that there is really no problem (alcoholism,

gossip, pride). Ultimately, none of these denial strategies will accomplish what the sinner is looking for. In fact, in many cases, these strategies only make matters worse. Satan will not be cheated.

The best way to avoid the consequences of sin is obvious: **quit sinning**. Notice in our text that "the way of the unfaithful" is contrasted with "good understanding." The first step in living right is to develop a healthy understanding of how God wants us to live. This is not a matter of merely memorizing Scripture. Rather, it is opening our eyes to recognize the cause-and-effect principles that govern this world in which we live. Bible study is a good start, but also study the mistakes and successes of others. Try to understand the immutable connections between behaviors and outcomes, and live so as to achieve the best outcomes, rather than being guided by the whims of the moment.

Admittedly, in some cases the consequences of sin cannot be removed. Some sins in our past leave scars that will never go away, and we'll have to live with them the rest of our lives. But at least we can stop adding to the pain, and perhaps even lessen it.

Of course, the best course of action is to not sin in the first place. Resolve at an early age to serve God with all your heart, mind, and body, and learn the self-discipline necessary to make that commitment stick. It will require some sacrifices, and there will likely still be some rough patches. But in the end you will find the happiness that you seek.