

Boasting of Sin 4-13-14

In Genesis 4:23-24, we read about Lamech boasting of his willingness to avenge himself sevenfold for even a slight. In effect, he is boasting about his sinful exploits. We all know that sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:2). Is it possible that if we sin boastfully, we are even further separated from God?

We are all familiar with images of Gay pride parades. They are not new. Some protested prohibition of alcohol with similar marches, boasting of their alcohol consumption. People have boasted about sinful behavior since the dawn of time, as Lamech testifies.

However, such boasting is not exclusive to the lost. It happened in Israel in Numbers 25:6, when an Israelite boasted of his sexual conduct with a Midianite woman at Peor. We recall how that ended! In the New Testament, the church in Corinth is rebuked because they were puffed up in letting a man have a relationship with his father's wife (1 Corinthians 5:1-2). We look at these examples with disgust, but is it possible that you boast about sinning? Maybe some of your past sins; but even more so, boasting about your present sins?

In our current age, Social Media, Email & Texts cause us to relay our constant behavior and conduct. Such expressions themselves border on narcissistic. Paul told the Ephesians (4:29) "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." How many times do we receive the message from another "brother" of their sinful conduct?

Perhaps it is an image of them drinking, or participating in a drinking party. Some might argue that drinking is not a sin, only being drunk. Yet that is not the only sin tied to drinking. Consistently in Scripture we see revelry, drunkenness and public drinking condemned. (Galatians 5:19-21, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 1 Peter 4:3). Even if we are not the ones drinking, we are celebrating the sins of others. We are boasting about sin.

Perhaps the image is one from the beach. Brethren and friends dressed in immodest attire. Is this boasting of sin? In the New Testament (Galatians 5:19-21, Ephesians 4:19, 1 Peter 4:3) we are told to reject "lewdness" and immodesty. Such images amount to boasting about sin.

Maybe we have made a public statement about our spouses. We dishonor them by refusing to love, honor or obey. Such is boasting about sin, in light of the commands of 1 Peter 3:5-7 and Colossians 3:18-19. Wives are to submit, and husbands are to love and understand.

What about when brethren make known their willingness to engage in acts of aggression towards others? Bragging about their refusal to be pushed around, or their willingness to act out against those who offend them? This was Lamech's evil boasting. Saints are called to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:7-9, 39, 1 Peter 3:8-9), yet they proclaim they are vengeance seekers.

It is bad enough to sin, to be cut off from God. But could it be worse to boast of it? *"For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins"* (Hebrews 10:26). God forgives those sins which we, with regret, confess and repent of (1 John 1:9). Those sins which we boast about, lacking such contrition, are unforgiveable.

*Stop Boasting About Your Past Sins — Charles Spurgeon
The Old Man Crucified, Sermon No. 882, April 11, 1869.*

Our sins must be put to death with every circumstance of shame and self-humiliation.

I must confess I am shocked with some people whom I know, who glibly rehearse their past lives up to the time of their supposed conversion, and talk of their sins, which they hope have been forgiven them, with a sort of smack of the lips, as if there was something fine in having been so atrocious an offender. I hate to hear a man speak of his experience in sin as a Greenwich pensioner might talk of Trafalgar and the Nile.

The best thing to do with our past sin, if it be indeed forgiven, is to bury it; yes, and let us bury it as they used to bury suicides. Let us drive a stake through it, in horror and contempt, and never set up a monument to its memory.

If you ever do tell anybody about your youthful wrongdoing, let it be with blushes and tears, with shame and confusion of face; and always speak of it to the honor of the infinite mercy which forgave you. Never let the devil stand behind you and pat you on the back and say, "You did me a good turn in those days."

Oh, it is a shameful thing to have sinned, a degrading thing to have lived in sin, and it is not to be wrapped up into a telling story and told out as an exploit as some do.

"The old man is crucified with him." Who boasts of being related to the crucified felon? If any member of your family had been hanged, you would tremble to hear anyone mention the gallows; you would not run about crying, "Do you know a brother of mine was hanged at Newgate?"

Your old man of sin is hanged; do not talk about him, but thank God it is so; and as he blots out the remembrance of it, do you the same, except so far as it may make you humble and grateful.

- Charles Spurgeon