

Turning the Crap of Life, Into the Fruit of the Spirit

Standing Up

Life Questions:

Has there ever been something in your life you have seen as so important that you were willing to risk friendships, family and job for? What would it take for you to stand up and put a stop to something?

HealthSouth was one of the largest frauds ever in the stock market. The darling of Wall Street was the solid stock of the early 1990s. From the startup, this small company had built an incredible reputation for making profit and being a major pioneer into the health care arena. Competitors hated them because when they put a clinic in your town it was all over but the shouting. One by one, HealthSouth began to dominate the market for outpatient rehab. Eventually expanding into other areas, the company seemed to be growing so fast that there didn't seem to be a limit, but there was.

It came a few years later when expectations from Wall Street were going to be short. The company was hurt by new regulations and more aggressive competitors. So when the time came to report bad numbers, the staff – regardless of who you think was responsible – didn't report the right numbers. In interviews with several of those who plead guilty, the overwhelming statement seems to have been, "I should have stood up and stopped it." But they didn't, and eventually the day came when the house of cards fell, there were serious fines and jail time for those involved, all because they didn't stand up.

Everyday we see it. Truth is ignored, people act in a way as if their actions have no consequences. How do you deal with it? Do you ignore it and hope it goes away? Do you assume someone else will take care of it?

My daughter's school was doing a canned food drive for Thanksgiving. She was really excited about it, but had decided that she wouldn't take anything. In her mind, other people would take care of it. She was praying for a lot of food but didn't want to provide any herself. As an eight year old I can understand and correct that behavior, but as adults we have a responsibility to stand up and be counted. "If it's got to be, it is up to me" is that how you feel about life? Are you willing to stand up when it counts?

1. You Do Not Get Away With It

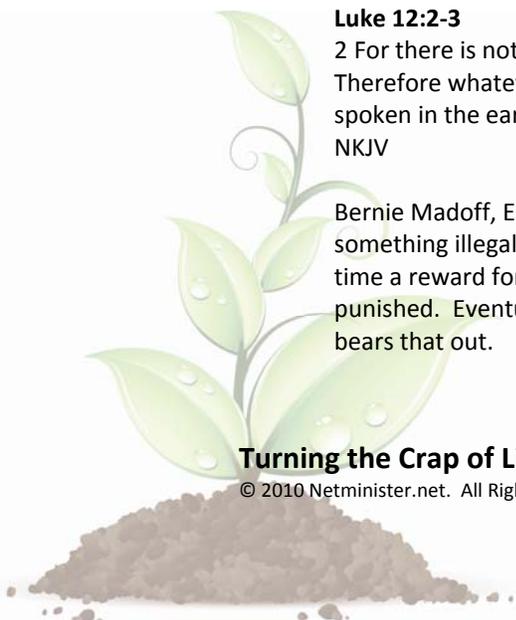
Luke 12:2-3

2 For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known.
3 Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops.
NKJV

Bernie Madoff, Enron, HealthSouth the list is long these days of companies that have done something illegal and for a while seemed to have profited from it. As in each case, there was a time a reward for their actions. But in the end, it came out and those involved are being punished. Eventually the truth comes out. Whether in this life or not, it comes out. God's word bears that out.

Turning the Crap of Life Into The Fruit of the Spirit

© 2010 Netminister.net. All Rights Reserved. For information about this material, please contact us at www.netminister.net



Here Jesus is telling us that there is nothing that is hidden that will not be brought out into the light of day. Things you think you have seen someone get away with will come out but just as importantly, so will our complicity with it.

Ever think that there is a sin of omission? The sin of not doing anything about things are going on that we know to be wrong?

James 4:17

17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.
NKJV

So not only will our actions be shouted from the housetops, our inaction will be brought to light as the sin it is. So many people refuse to stand up for what is right because either they think nobody will know or that they aren't going to be held accountable, but here in God's word we find that we are accountable to God himself for it because it is sin and we are going to be shown one day to have been complicit.

2. You Will Lose Something

A very good friend of mine was one of those people that believed that everyone was supposed to follow the rules. His background was one of being straight laced and hard working, but he soon found that standing up for what is right was going to cost him. One day sitting in a meeting he commended on something that was inappropriate and just like that all his years of service and hard work were forgotten and he was fired.

So many of us are unwilling to stand up for the truth because we know it is going to cost us, sometimes dearly. But God's word has something to say about the cost you will be paying:

Matt 19:29-30

29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.
NKJV

Even early on in His ministry, Jesus realized that there was going to be a cost for service to Him. He wanted His followers to know that as well, with a caveat being that anyone that loses something for His sake, family, friends, possessions, etc., would receive them a hundredfold AND inherit eternal life. Not a name it and claim it kind of hundredfold, but a return from the Lord Himself. Nothing you lose will compare to the glory of receiving a gift from Him for your effort. But know this, it will cost you and you may not see a return in this life. Nowhere is that a promise, trouble is part of the life of a follower of Christ.

3. You Have to Deny Yourself

Matt 16:24-27

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?²⁷ For the Son of Man

will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.
NKJV

It is not about you. Did you know that? Did you know that your life as a believer in Christ is more about your life as a follower of His?

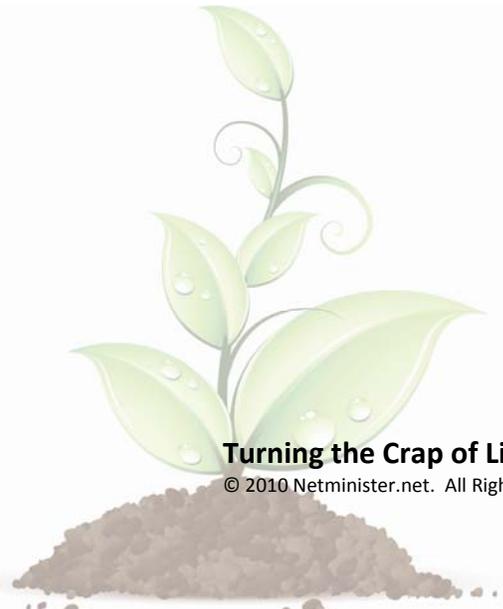
Take for example a behavior that you know the bible says is inappropriate, and you can take your pick from any of them. When we are sinning we are seeking to justify ourselves by saying I was made this way or I have a tendency for this behavior, right? Isn't that sin? The tendency is the sinful nature we have:

James 1:12-15

Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.¹⁵ Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.
NKJV

When we are a follower of Christ we deny our self. It is no longer we that live alone but Christ that lives within us. That is the difference, those desires are not from Him, they are not the way we were made and they are not something to be ignored or rationalized. To deny ourselves we have to be going into the Christian life with the full understanding that we have to have self-control on sin. That is after all a fruit of the spirit. Denying ourselves means we put Him first, Christ and His word ahead of our own desires and ambitions. Everyday that is the challenge, to take what I want to do and do what He wants me to do and deal with the consequences of my actions.

Final Analysis: You see it every day, at school, church, work maybe even in social settings, you see people doing things that are not right and you know you should stand up for the truth, but you don't. When you don't do it, you need to realize that there is a price going to be paid either here on earth to the people around you at school, church, work or in the social setting or to be paid to God Himself. I would implore you to deal with it here, and not with God. Don't make Him angry, you won't like Him when He is angry, especially at you, I know I don't.



Turning the Crap of Life Into The Fruit of the Spirit

© 2010 Netminister.net. All Rights Reserved. For information about this material, please contact us at www.netminister.net