
The Hazards of Negative Volition

The Apostle Paul issued a stern warning to mature Christian believers living at Ephesus when he told them to beware of falling into a state of indifference to, or antagonism to, the Word of God. He stated that if they were to become to become negative to the Lord's teachings, their lives would very quickly become indistinguishable from those of unbelievers in terms of fruitfulness and Christian character.

Ephesians 4:17-19, "This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity (emptiness) of their minds, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."

The "darkness" referred to in these verses begins with a negative disposition toward the Word of God. This volitional decision not to follow the Scriptures leads immediately to a breakdown in the faith system of understanding divine viewpoint. There is a cessation in the spiritual growth process; and there is actually a total reversal in progress in the Christian life (backsliding, or reversion).

As a result of the lack of divine viewpoint in the soul, the negative person begins to entertain human standards, human criteria, human doctrine, human programs -- these things, plus the full gamut of Satanic doctrine, are substituted for the plan of God. The further result is subjectivity, unhappiness, and deep frustration in trying to live by techniques which do not work.

These conditions lead to a frantic search for happiness through details of life such as

riches, friendships, possessions, human approbation, personal influence and power, and so forth. The believer on this treadmill is a slave to these details of life rather than being a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. While the believer thus engaged is still "in Christ" positionally, he is actually no better off than an unbeliever as far as this life is concerned. In fact, he is destined to be far unhappier than the unbeliever, as will be shown in the following paragraphs.

The time, energy, and emotional commitments to this person's search for happiness lead to further isolation from the teachings of the Word of God. He is spending maximum effort to find happiness through other means. Thus, the very method for reversing the downward trend is ignored.

During this process, neuroses and psychoses are being developed, aggravated by the self-induced misery which accompanies chronic and unmitigated sins of the mind such as pride, jealousy, envy, vindictiveness, worry, fear, mental adultery, implacability, and the like, from which there is no relief outside of the plan of God.

Because of these sin patterns, divine discipline is compounded daily. This believer has a horrible life composed of his own failures, doubled and re-doubled chastisement, his self-induced unhappiness, and the fact that he has no defense against the attacks of Satan and his demons. His "righteousness" (-r) has replaced the righteousness (+R) of God. This whole miserable situation is avoidable, as you will see with further study.
