

What Must I Do to be Lost?

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Sometimes people get caught up in discussions about what sins will send a man to hell. Usually, the “really bad” sins, like adultery or murder, top the list with little question. Then there are the “little sins” - sins society tolerates more-or-less - like cursing, coveting possessions, recreational drug and alcohol use, or lust.

Perhaps we could talk about how even *Christians* often turn a blind eye to some sins. To our shame, it is not hard to find Christians full of pride, selfishness, ungratefulness, anxiety, and worldliness. The truth is any sin, no matter how small, can damn Christians. As Isaiah told God’s people:

Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear. (Isa. 59:1-2)

“Is it a Sin to...”

Yet many Christians still ask the question, “What must I do to be lost?” Not with those words, of course, but with other questions. “Do I have to go to every church service?” “Is

_____ a salvation issue?" "How far can I go with _____?" "How many drinks is too much?"

These *can* be legitimate questions. And if we are willing to listen, the Bible answers all of these questions with great clarity. **But the problem is usually not the question itself; it's the attitude *behind* the question.**

What I mean is this: Many Christians are no better than the servant who was given one talent and went and buried it. When the master returned, the servant handed over the one talent. To which the master responded:

Cast this worthless servant into outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matt. 25:14-30)

The attitude behind, "What must I do to be lost?" is akin to, "What is the *least* I can do/get right/believe/commit and still be saved?" When we start drawing lines in the sand, we start forgetting that what belongs to our Master is our complete devotion.

All or Nothing

Of course, the Lord is patient and wishes for all to come to repentance. Yet that does not negate the fact that **He is still coming**, and will do so without warning. As a result, we are commanded to "be diligent to be found by Him without spot or blemish" (2 Pet. 3:8-17).

Peter did not command us to learn the art of distinguishing between so-called "essentials" and "non-essentials." He did not tell us to "know how much we can handle" when it comes to alcohol, drugs, crude jokes, unbecoming language, lust, tempers, gambling, and "things like these" (per Gal. 5:21).

Instead, we are commanded to love God with every ounce of our being (Mark 12:30). We are commanded to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord" (2 Pet. 3:18). **We are to flee - not draw lines in the sand - every flavor of sin** (1 Cor. 6:12; 10:14; 1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22).

Jesus told the Laodicea church of Christ that they were lukewarm. He told them He'd rather them be hot or cold - *anything* but lukewarm. **God doesn't want our partial, hairsplitting, apathetic, unbalanced, hypocritical devotion.** He demands we **sacrifice**

it all (Luke 14:33) and **count everything as** loss (Phil. 3:8).

What must you do to be lost?

Be indifferent. Get as close as you can to sin without sinning. Take a chill pill. Only worry about the “salvation issues.” Presume on God’s grace. Do nothing.

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