



The Good News

August 5th, 2018

Volume 18, Issue 31

How sneaky is sin?

By Michael McCleary

Many may recall the news many years ago in 2006 of Ted Haggard of the New Life Church, in which he was accused by a man named Mike Jones of receiving and using drugs, as well as paying for homosexual relations. Consider this, brethren: This is a man whom Time Magazine listed as one of the top 25 most influential evangelicals in America in 2005. Author Jeff Sharlet reported that Haggard “talks to...[President] Bush or his advisors every Monday” and says that “no pastor in America holds more sway over the political direction of evangelicalism.” He was the head of the 30 million-member National Association of Evangelicals, and the Senior Pastor of the 14,000-member New Life Church in Colorado. This was a man who had a tremendous amount of influence. He was someone who was expected, and appeared (to the world), to be godly. In fact, he openly and forcefully opposed homosexuality and gay marriage, which proved to be his undoing. Mike Jones was reported to have explained that “It made me angry that here’s someone preaching about gay marriage and going behind the scenes having...” gay relations.

How sneaky is sin, brethren? This is a man whose life was constantly studied as an example. How could he fall so drastically away from what he himself taught? The truth is, this man is no evangelist, at least, not one of the Gospel. But what about the apostles who were teachers of the Gospel? Were they perfect? No, of course not. Indeed, even the apostles were not impervious to the influence of sin. Consider Paul’s correction of Peter in Gal. 2:11-15, in

which we read of Peter and Barnabas showing favoritism to the Jews out of fear.

Brethren, sin is sneaky. It creeps in through cracks in our armor like weeds through cracks in sidewalk. It corrupts us on the inside, taking our hearts away from godliness to the lusts of the flesh. We fight it with every ounce that we have, purifying our hearts before God. Yet, sometimes it breaks through. It may come through a crack or it may come at us from behind. Why? Because sin is sneaky. Consider the dangers we face in the 21st century: pornography, sexual immorality, macro-evolution, drugs, influence of social media...the list goes on and on. We are constantly being bombarded by sin and its influence. We must be careful. We can easily have our senses dulled by what we see on TV, the internet, and what we hear on the radio. What’s more, because of the widespread acceptance of these practices, we can be lured into, for example, posting immodest pictures on Facebook and sharing posts with sinful language or conduct. Or allowing ourselves to consider sinful practices as acceptable behavior since so many in our society are involved in them. Sin is sneaky! It can so easily deceive us, and by that deception bring forth death (Jas. 1:14-16)

We do not have thousands or millions of people watching us every day to help motivate us to be godly, brethren...just God. “...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,” (Heb. 12:1)