

DEPRAVITY OF MAN

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As parents we know our children have to grow and mature, but nothing frustrates a parent more than a child's inability to admit they did something wrong. Recently, our washer and dryer finally died. We were forced to get new appliances. These new appliances were fancy with all kind of buttons and controls to operate it. My wife was extremely excited over them and proceeded to lecture everyone on the proper usage of these machines. She became very protective over them, because she wanted them to last. Now my youngest son picked upon the excitement of his mom over these new machines in the house. So, he wanted to participate in doing laundry. As a parent you have mixed feelings about this, on one hand you want to encourage the independence of your children to do their own laundry; however, on the other hand, you know he can't read and he will mess it up at some point. Well, she decided to teach him how to use the machines and he did fine with it. Until.... You guessed it, he messed it up. His mom found the machine over packed with every setting adjusted wrong; she was fit to be tied. She got a hold of my youngest son, and proceeded to lecture him, on how he was going to ruin those machines. Of course, he said he didn't do it, it was his brother who did it. She called his brother down, and with a few pointed questions the truth came out. My youngest did it, and blamed his brother, because he didn't want to be in trouble.

It is just amazing how much a person can learn about human nature by being a parent. As a parent you find yourself in a multitude of roles. One moment you are a motivational speaker trying to insight some desire to get better grades and the next you're trying to settle some dispute requiring the skill of a mediator at a peace accord. Recently, my eldest son came complaining about something that his younger brother had done. Of course, your natural response is "so, grow up." However, you pick up on the underlying tone of his whining that he wants you to do something about it. We ended up calling his brother down and asked why he did whatever it was. While watching him very intently, we saw him look up, imagining/remembering what he did and a little smirk barely showed at the corner of his mouth. Immediately, we knew not only did he do it, but why he did it. He thought it would be hilarious to harass his older brother. But of course, his answer to us was, "I don't know."

When you catch your child doing something wrong, boy, are they sorry after they are caught. When our children get to the point where they are sorry at the time they realize they have done something wrong we call this maturity. In the scriptures, we find Jesus tells Peter that he will deny he knows the Messiah three times. As prophesied, Peter denies the Christ three times. At the third time, the cock crows and Peter recalls the prophesy of the Lord. In **Matthew 26:75** it says he "wept bitterly" as he came to the realization that he had done wrong; that he had sinned against the Lord. However, after the resurrection, we do not see Peter confessing to the Lord and asking forgiveness for what he had done. Peter, as anyone in his position, was probably very aware that he had not spoken to Jesus about it. He probably was hoping Jesus wouldn't bring it up and just knew that he was sorry about it. But in **John 21:14**, the third time that Jesus meets his disciples He asks Peter three times if he loved him. Peter responded, "yes" and Jesus responded, "then feed My sheep." In **John 21:17**, it says Peter "grieved" because the Lord had asked him this.

Peter's response to this brings a large magnifying glass on our own lives. How often, are we sorry for sinning against the Lord, when the Lord sends conviction into our lives. Like David when Nathan, the man of God, stands before us and with clear pointed words strikes our hearts, we confess our sorrow. We confess with our petitions of forgiveness. With the broken attitude of David we fall before the Lord and cry the words of **Psalm 51**.

"Have mercy upon me, O God... Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity... And cleanse me from my sin... for I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me... Create in me a clean heart O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy holy spirit from me..."

When are God's people going to mature and be sorry for being sinners, and not simply sorry that we sinned? Many times we act just like children and wait till we are confronted with sin before we deal with it. When are we going to be broken and confess to the Lord the words of Paul in **Romans 7**....

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do... O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Many of God's people will confess seeking forgiveness when confronted with sin. Some will even confess seeking forgiveness at the realization of sin. But how many will continue to grow in the Lord and just confess we are simply sinners and can't seem to get any of it right. As the true realization of our depravity comes to the forefront of our minds and we recognize just how far from good we really are. We can't afford to ever stop growing in the Lord and continue to beg for mercy in our lives.