

You Must Strive Lawfully

Wednesday, August 14, 2019

Mike Miller

Straight Paths Bible Church

2 Tim. 2:5 And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

Numbers 20:1-13 Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month: and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there. And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. And the people chode with Moses, and spake, saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the LORD! And why have ye brought up the congregation of the LORD into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there? And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink. And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they fell upon their faces: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto them. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them. This is the water of Meribah; because the children of Israel strove with the LORD, and he was sanctified in them.

- I. Moses disobeyed God here, and it was probably the greatest error of his life.
 - A. God said to speak to the rock and Moses smote the rock instead.
 - B. Moses spoke as if he and Aaron had gotten the water themselves out of the rock – he did not mention God in it.
 - C. The water came forth anyway.
 - D. This does not show that God has low regard for his Word, but only that He is full of compassion and benevolence.
 1. The people were in a desperate state; there was no water and they were in a desert.
 2. God sent the water in spite of the disobedience of Moses because He had compassion on the people.
 - E. The disobedience of Moses here did not go without consequences – it cost him his life's mission: to lead the Children of Israel into the Promised Land.
 1. This is what God had called him for and told him he was to do.
 2. It had been in his heart since his youth.
 3. The price Moses paid for this transgression was very heavy.
 - F. Accountability increases with the responsibility given to a man.
 1. Moses' position as their leader made what he did here extremely bad.
 2. It was not the fact that he was angry that made it a transgression.
 3. It was the fact that he let his anger and frustration control him and he dealt with the problem in his own anger.

4. We have all done the same thing Moses did here, but it has not been as costly to us as it was to Moses.
5. Jesus was angry, but He did not reach out and slap someone.
6. Moses was angry at other times, and he acted when he was angry, but this time was different – he left God out. (failed to sanctify the Lord)
7. The basic point here is that Moses did not strive lawfully this time.

II. Most people gauge the approval of God by how much they get their own way – no matter what they have to do to get it.

- A. What God says in his Word is not their standard for judging themselves at all – but whether they get things the way they want them or not.

Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find? **Prov. 20:6**

- B. If life is easy, needs are met, troubles are few, then what I am doing must be pleasing to God – at least it isn't upsetting Him because He isn't doing anything about it.
 1. Bruce Wilkinson wrote a book in 2000 called "The Prayer of Jabez" which became a best-seller and sold 2 million copies in the first year.

1 Chronicles 4:9-10 And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.

2. This is one of the most selfish prayers that could be put together.
3. But God granted him his request ...and
4. You never hear another word about Jabez in the Bible.
5. He prayed away the very things that God uses to mold us and make us into vessels He can use.

C. Most people look at God as if He is the one who reacts to us – instead of the other way around: we are made to react to God.

1. Most think that God just spends every day watching us to see whether to bless us or punish us according to what we are doing.
2. If we don't get punished then it means that God is not upset with us.

Jeremiah 44:15-19 Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine. And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men?

III. Most people will quickly lay aside the clear Word of God and trust in the fact that God gave them what they wanted instead.

- A. The apostasy of our day is being fueled by this way of thinking.
- B. ANYTHING that will get people to come to church is acceptable now.

- C. The greatest argument that is given for the use of rock music in modern worship is that they are reaching people with it.
- D. The biggest excuse for compromising with the world in modesty of dress and lifestyle is that “we are reaching more that way.”
- E. The enticement to every compromise with the world and evil is to win more people to God and obtain more blessings.
- F. You don’t have to do it exactly the way God says; you can use your head and think for yourself.
 - 1. You can make adjustments for different circumstances and situations.
 - 2. God understands and it doesn’t really matter to Him that He has forbidden what you are doing, or that He has told you to do it a different way.

IV. Everyone should be aware that there will always be heavy consequences for disregarding the Word of God.

- A. They may not show up immediately – in fact it is very likely they won’t.
- B. It may be a long time before the consequences are manifested – but they WILL come.

Joshua 5:6 For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people that were men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: unto whom the LORD swore that he would not shew them the land, which the LORD swore unto their fathers that he would give us, a land that floweth with milk and honey.

- C. After giving his last charge to the people and admonishing them to obey ALL the words of God, this was the way he ended his pilgrimage:

Deuteronomy 32:44-47 And Moses came and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he, and Hoshea the son of Nun. And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel: And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law. For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life: and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.

Deuteronomy 32:48-52 And the LORD spake unto Moses that selfsame day, saying, Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession: And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people: Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel. Yet thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel.

- D. Do all that you do God’s way, and act not according to your own understanding.

Psalms 73:24 Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

Psalms 119:105 NUN. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Proverbs 6:23 For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life: