



Scriptures and Doctrine :: When Jesus Turns over the Tables

When Jesus Turns over the Tables - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/6/21 14:32

When Jesus Turns over the Tables

By Diane Eaton June 2005

Based on Luke 10:25-37

One day a distinguished man approached Jesus seeking the answer to the most important question in life – the one that would determine his eternal destiny. He asked, “What must I do to inherit eternal life? Lk. 10:26 It seemed that he was asking how to be saved? Any conscientious evangelical would be thrilled to receive this question, and would be well armed with answers.

But, wait a minute! Let’s learn more about this man before we start giving advice: Apparently, this man was an “expert”. Now have you noticed that when an expert asks you a question it is not always because he (or she) doesn’t know the answer? He sometimes asks you a question to check you out.

So it was with this “expert of the law”. This lawyer wanted “to test Jesus”, to cross-examine him in light of the Jewish Law. And why not? After all, it was his profession to protect his community from law-breakers.

Notice also that the man “stood up”, no doubt in the midst of his religious peers. Here was a perfect opportunity for them all to see how wise and discerning he was, how careful to sift out and expose the false teachers. I suspect that he was hoping that Jesus would publicly condemn himself by giving an answer that defied the Law. If Jesus could prove to be guilty, then the lawyer, including everyone present could discredit everything he said. Then the lawyer could safely maintain his authority among the people.

Jesus did not allow the conversation to be controlled by this skillful lawyer. Nor did he take a defensive position. Instead, he took authority, and steered the conversation directly to the man’s own conscience. Let’s examine Jesus’ strategy:

First of all, Jesus responded to the question by asking the man another question: “What is written in the Law? By asking this, Jesus “turned the tables”. He reversed the roles. Now Jesus was the examiner, and the expert was the examinee.

Of course the lawyer knew the answer, “Love the Lord with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and Love your neighbor as yourself.” Deut. 6:5, Lev. 19:18

Jesus agreed: “You have answered correctly”. Then Jesus drove the point deeper with a command, “Do this and you will live.” He may as well have said, “You already know the answer, sir. Now you must practice what you know so well, and then you will have eternal life. There is no other answer to your question. End of discussion!”

I can hear a few protests: “But Jesus, you have more to say! “What about justification by faith, and NOT by observing the Law?” Rom. 4 and 5

The lawyer also wanted Jesus to say more, also about justification. You see, “he wanted to justify his actions.” Lk. 10:29 NLT. In other words, he wanted to be sure he was innocent of any crime against the law. No doubt he couldn’t bear to live with a sense of condemnation hanging over our head. (Who can!) Jesus must have stirred up a twinge of guilt, causing him to realize that he wasn’t as loving as he should be. No doubt he was trying to appease his conscience with such thoughts as: “I do love all those whom I should be loving! I really am a good person! Those sinners out there, the lepers, the Samaritans, and the poor are not my neighbors, and so I don’t have to love them.” So he asked Jesus: “And who is my neighbor?” He was trying to justify himself.

This man was no different than any of his peers, the other Pharisees. At another time Jesus had said to them, “You all want to justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your heart.” Lk. 16:14 This lawyer was one of the gang - just like his buddies.

I suspect most of us have at times had the same motive for our actions, our words, or our quests. I sure have! I admit, I have asked questions so that others could see that I was a serious Christian. I hate to imagine how often I asked questions, NOT so that I could become more honest before God, but in order to learn how I could improve myself, so that I could be justified in the eyes of my community and society, so that they would accept me as a good Christian. That was my way of avoiding the intolerable sense of guilt or shame.

For many years I was not aware of my selfish, destructive motives, but God knew, and he helped me see it. Likewise, Jesus knew that the lawyer was blind to his motives, and so he tried to help him see it.

Did you notice that Jesus refrained from pointing out his faults? That would have been counterproductive - as you, no doubt, have discovered. Think, for a moment, of a time when you tried to correct a proud person, or tell him his wrongs. Instantly his thinking shifted into high gear, and in a flash he presented you with a sharp defense - a logical reason why he was not wrong, and you had misunderstood him. He tried to justify himself in your eyes, and you ended up being the one who needed "correction". In fact, all your efforts to take the "log out of his eye" worked in reverse. You inadvertently encouraged him to reinforce his own rigid wall of self-defense. Your attempts to correct him actually moved him further away from seeing the inner truth about himself. You sent him off in the wrong direction - away from seeing his need for divine mercy, and thus, away from Christ.

Jesus could handle resistant sinners better than any of us can. Instead of pointing any fingers at this man, he employed a shrewd tactic to get him to point his own finger at himself. And it worked. Within one minute, through a fictitious little story about a "despicable" Samaritan, Jesus demolished the expert's sense of righteousness. The man clearly saw himself as the villain of the story - that cold-hearted Levite who walked right past the wounded man lying in the ditch. He was the guilty one! The parable had convicted the lawyer of crime! Not only that, the hero turned out to be a Samaritan - the one who should have been the villain.

Next Jesus used a leading question to let the man publicly convict himself: "Which of these three do YOU think was a neighbor? In other words, 'You answer your own question, sir. Which one obeyed the law?'"

The answer must have been painful to admit, "Aaaaaah, well, I guess it's... mmmmm... the man... ahhhh... who... had mercy on him".

You can see that this lawyer had never before realized that mercy was an integral component of God's law - the law of love towards fellow man.

Now imagine the next time that the expert went to the synagogue. He likely did not stand up in the crowd as eagerly as before to display his clever skills. He likely did not act quite so haughty. In fact, after his encounter with Jesus, his entire life would have become filled with dilemmas that he had never before experienced. Imagine the next time he passed by a beggar, a leper, or a foreigner - how his conscience would have troubled him. He probably entertained such thoughts as, "A leper! Oh, dear, I should be giving him some attention. But what if my peers would see me! They may cast me out!... No, no, I don't want to give away my best robe to this wretched undeserving beggar!... Oh, no! I don't want to stop to help this woman with her load! What if I'm late for the meeting! Oh, dear, I am so miserable now that I have encountered this Jesus!"

It would not have taken long for this man to realize that it was both very costly and very impossible to keep the Law. And after that realization, he would need to make a choice - a very difficult one - the one that would determine his eternal destiny. Ultimately he would need to decide which way to go - either humbly admit his crime and acknowledge his need for divine mercy, or cling to his pride and harden his conscience, thus distancing his heart from Christ. Jesus offered no middle ground - as he once said, "He who is not for me is against me."

We do not know the final outcome of this man, but the greater possibility is that he chose the wide path of life - the one that most people take. He probably could not let go of his dignity and his pride. Perhaps he later joined the mob who cried out, "Crucify him!" And he would have felt very justified for exterminating the troublemaker - for indeed, Jesus had troubled his conscience.

continued...

Re: Knowing the Law is not enough (second part) - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/6/21 14:33

This expert of the law had dedicated his entire life to the Judaic Law. He knew every letter of it - better than anyone; and he was accustomed to examining others in light of the Law. However, he was immunized against it. It had never burned a path to his conscience. All his life he had used the Law to justify himself - that is - until he encountered Jesus who "turned the tables over". Jesus had dared to use that very same law to convict him of crime against God!

The lawyer reminds us of the danger of familiarity. Being familiar with God's law does not, in itself, draw us to Christ. By the time it gets filtered through our self-justifying, self-righteous mindsets, it has lost its power to convict us. Instead, we end up using it to justify ourselves. This can easily happen to us who are well church-ed. We can become familiarized by constant exposure to sermons, Bible readings, hymns, and meditations. We can nod our heads in agreement. We can shout "Amen, Alleluia!" to the truths that we hear or preach. We can study the Bible and other Christian books in order to become better, more dedicated Christians. And we might very well succeed. Our church might justify us by affirming our success.

However, like the expert, we may have become immune to God's highest laws, and blind to our crimes against God and fellowman. Eventually the very beliefs and practices that we use to justify ourselves may very well convict us - just as they convicted the lawyer.

The lawyer must have been shocked to learn that in order to love God with all his heart, all his soul and his entire mind, and love his neighbor as himself, he would need to give up everything that was more precious to him than God.

It was no different for the rich young ruler who came to Jesus, "asking, "What must I do to inherit eternal life." Jesus had instructed that man, "Go sell all you have, give it to the poor, and then come follow me." That was a pointed way of saying, "Love God with your entire heart, soul, and mind, and love your neighbor as yourself."

And now, with different words, Jesus said the same thing to this lawyer: "Go and sell your robes. Give up your dignity, your expertise, your importance, and your self-righteousness. Surrender your need to be right. Give up your desire to be in control. Let go of the hold that all those things have on you. And then you will be free to love God and your neighbor - and even "love your enemy". And then you will have treasure in heaven.

Jesus' one-minute parable was a deathblow to the lawyer's entire value system - his status, his position in society, his Jewish lineage, and his education. Jesus had essentially challenged him, "Do you love me more than all these?"

The apostle Paul, who also had those things, gladly forfeited their importance in exchange for something far better. He said,

"But whatever was to my profit,
I now consider loss...rubbish,
that I may gain Christ...
I want to know Christ... Phil. 3:7-11

Paul had found eternal life.

Encountering Jesus

This expert did not come to Jesus broken-hearted, needy, and humble. He did come begging for mercy. He felt no need. He came to Jesus filled with righteousness. He came to Jesus justified, but Jesus sent him away unjustified.

That is still the way Jesus works through his Spirit. Somehow or other he reveals divine law and justice to the impenitent sinner so that they can see that they are guilty. On the other hand, the Spirit reveals mercy and forgiveness to the penitent sinner who humbly seeks him. He lifts away their guilt and justifies them by his grace.

I doubt that any of us can ever approach Christ with pure unselfish motives. But God's Spirit, nevertheless, works within us to help us see the truth about ourselves. And then we can either humbly choose his mercy, or we can maintain our pride and resist his generous offer of a better way.

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In the Bible, Jesus' methods of dealing with people sometimes seemed harsh, offensive, and even shocking - like when he turned over the tables in the Temple. But it was the way of love. It was the way to uproot all that stood in the way of his divine love and mercy for humanity.

And still today, the Spirit relentlessly works in our lives - turning over our tables, toppling our precious wares and all our cherished values. We may be offended when the veneered surface of our lives - the shiny side, is turned upside down. We may object that the ugly side is showing for all to see. We may even blame the devil for causing such discomfort to us. Nevertheless it is the way of divine love. It is the way we see our need for Christ.

A Message for all

The well-known parable of the Good Samaritan is one of the most convicting stories in the Bible. It can speak to the consciences of anyone in the world, regardless of who they are. Atheists can understand it. Children can understand it.

It reminds the world that God's divine law transcends all religion, race, or status. It exposes prejudice and also religious, cultural, and racial superiority. It helps all the world to see that they are guilty of violating the highest law of the universe - the Great Command. In this way, it points the path to God - his mercy and forgiveness. This is the path to eternal life.

The Bible: God's finger pointing at me

The Bible is like an exploded version of the Good Samaritan Parable. It contains descriptions of the truly righteous, and many more descriptions of the unrighteous. I am so thankful that God divinely preserved all those references about the religious hypocrites. You see, as I read about them, I could see myself. That is what helped me see my need to change. Ultimately, through the Bible, and through many "turned-over tables" God led me to his Son who has become my eternal life. And I know that I will praise him for all eternity.

Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/6/21 20:03

Sister Diane

You know that post came at a time when I was examining some of my own motives for the discussions I've been involved in and my responses in those discussions. I've not always yielded to the Spirit and in so doing I've restrained Him in some instances. I've been wondering how much more of this goes on on this site and beyond. How many times do we just run our mouths instead of turning the Spirit of God loose that God may speak through us? How many posts have been for the purpose of glorifying oneself or flexing intellectual muscles? How much of what has been said here is simply the ramblings of man which will not abide the fire? How many questions have been asked like in the story above not to be answered but to ensnare people?

it's pretty despairing.

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/6/22 18:52

Quote:
-----... How many posts have been for the purpose of glorifying oneself or flexing intellectual muscles? How much of what has been said here is simply the ramblings of man which will not abide the fire? How many questions have been asked like in the story above not to be answered but to ensnare people?

I have been guilty of all of the above over the years, and far more useless talk than I will ever realize. I regard much of our talk as "fig leaves" - attempts to cover up the exposure of our hearts - thoughts that don't necessarily draw us to see our own neediness, our need for Christ.

Perhaps we stay intellectual - away from thoughts which prick our own conscience. However, through the process, I think we can learn about ourselves - if we look. And that's not bad.

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I think if Jesus were to have a conversation with us, he'd get right to the matter of things - what's important. But alas - we are not that pure, so we get sidetracked. I think that the disciples did that a few times.

Diane

Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/6/23 1:12

God has been gracious and merciful to me concerning this and has shown me how i've rambled on on occasions to glorify myself. he has made it so that i know when i'm about to do so and He ask me to walk away from it. he has taught me to listen more intently to His voice to let me know when to respond and when to be silent. i pray He keeps me on His path that i may do whatever work He has for me and rise to whatever heights, and receive whatever gifts blessing and whatever else is of Him that He has for me.

i'm off to whatever heights He would have me rise and to attain whatever rewards He has for me.coming?

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/6/23 2:02

Quote:

-----he has taught me to listen more intently to His voice to let me know when to respond and when to be silent.

Ironman, your words are a blessing bro. I pray for the same thing for myself.

MC

Re: - posted by ravin, on: 2005/6/23 2:17

If not you, who? If not now, when? Holy Spirit made a beaten man Bold, that was Peter after being filled with the Holy spirit.

The devil would like nothing better then to shut up one from being bold and " having done all stand" after all look at Adam in the garden, look to the word "as it is written" is how my hero answered the devil. there is only one way and it is God's way. Bold in him, He must grow daily as self interests are turned over to him and we die to self. Thank you Lord for your word to guide and lead.

Re:, on: 2005/6/23 11:12

Great Message, Diane. Thank you. I regret I am only now reading it.

I've said it over and over I know. I'll keep on saying until someone besides me begins to believe it (there may be some here who already do believe it, amen).

Please read all of Isaiah 58, and Matthew 25:31-46. Here is your neighbor. Here is the heart of God. Here is the criteria that Jesus will use to divide the nations as a shepherd divides the sheep and the goats. Is this important to you? It is to me. It most certainly, at least to me, sums up what you have posted here. God bless you for it.

I have so come to believe that christianity, true biblical christianity is not much at all like what is paraded before the world today. It's much more about doing than speaking about it. That's why we are all called to be ministers. Who do we minister too, each other? Hardly. Find the sick, the lowly, the hungry, the naked, the imprisoned, the sick. Find somebody who needs to be loved. Ask God to lead you, He will. When He leads you, for His sake and yours, please follow.

Oh dear saints, this is so important, yet so few catch it. I hope it catches you.

with grief and sorrow,

Lahry

Re: - posted by Welch, on: 2005/6/24 12:33

Waht a great message! I'm not here to nit pick but I want to clarify something that I think could be just another blessing on top of that great message.

Quote:

-----"I doubt that any of us can ever approach Christ with pure unselfish motives"

In the sense that you're using it I believe we can indeed come to him in need for others and not ourselves. We can come to him with this attitude in what Lahry said about the poor and meek. Pray for an opportunity for that. that is unselfish and pure. Anytime we pray for the will of God we are breaking our flesh and sinful desires and are aligning ourselves with God's will and that is as pure, unselfish, and downright perfect as any one sinner can be. As a reminder, even though I'm sure you all know this already. When we are in God's will, the Bible says that His wants become our wants and His desires are our's. With that said we will 'want' and 'need' the same things as God does, with the fact that we are sinners and make mistakes, so in that if it's God's will for us to have a brand new Aston Martin ;-) (yeah I know... just lightening things up a bit) then that will be our want as well. So that in itself is not a selfish motive. In a class I've been in of late I've received a love message straight for the Father and my ideals, although subconsciously and not purposefully, have been that when I mess up God will punish me and I am to be happy that the Father cherishes me enough to do that... but I'm here to tell you brothers and sisters that is a wrong lifestyle to live by! The Bible tells us that an earthly father desires to bless his children, then how much more is our Father above who loves us ready to pour out to us? What I said earlier is true... we should be grateful for his willingness to discipline us and set us straight, but to live your Christian life always trying NOT to sin to avoid punishment and then when it happens try our best to respect and be grateful for that, my family, that is not what God desires for us. I serve a God who has graciously and miraculously saved me from The eternal fire's of torment and pain in Hell and put in its place Glory Divine and everlasting fellowship with Him in Heaven and he is ready to bless and finish in me the great work He began. So I challenge you to move of a life of 'avoiding sin' to a life of 'seeking blessings' inside His most precious Will for our lives and in doing the latter you will absolutely accomplish the former.

That is the reason why my dear brother we don't have to end anything in "grief and sorrow" because clearly God has given you a heart to reach out to the one's you've listed. So in that you are a minister 'to us' in that you encourage us to seek out those you've named but by God's grace you can witness to those and continue to encourage your brothers and sisters to do the same. Some will catch it and some won't but that should never bring you 'grief and sorrow' we serve a risen savior who Grace is abundant for all, so I encourage you my Brother to know that you are not alone and please go on in witnessing to those that God has laid on your heart. As you well know and I'm sure have experienced by doing those things you will enjoy peace and happiness and so much more in knowing that you're not alone... not grief and sorrow.

I pray someone's been blessed and encouraged! I love you all!

Re: Dear Welch, on: 2005/6/25 7:44

Hello,

I'm not sure I've seen you here before. Welcome. Praise the Lord for your post.

I am convinced, that if you really want to live life abundant, you simply must live in Isaiah 58 and Matthew 25:31-46. The greatest highlights of my christian life where I felt more alive to God than at other times, walking in close fellowship with Him, discerning the grace He was lavishing upon me, is when I was living out opportunities that are listed in the above passages. It just does something to me way down deep inside. It takes me to that high and lofty place above circumstances and events. It brings me in close fellowship with God. Bless His Holy Name.

Whew, I'm ready to go to the airport and stand there until somebody gives me a ticket to the mission field. Alleluia. It is called "abundant life". It is where we keep His commandments and are loved by the Father. Jesus also promises that He will manifest Himself to us. (John 14:21) Where do you think that will happen? In a church building praying before a lighted candle? Hardly. You'll find Him in the lowly, the down trodden. You'll find Him in the outcast, and the broken hearted. You'll find Him in the helpless, and the hopeless.

Saints, we have so much opportunity to minister to Jesus. We just simply fail to recognize the opportunities around us. There's nothing wrong with organized church itself. But if that is all there is, you are poor and destitute. Oh God help us all.

stirred in my heart today,

Lahry

Re: finetuning our thinking - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/6/25 8:55

Quote:

-----So I challenge you to move of a life of 'avoiding sin' to a life of 'seeking blessings

I don't think that my article quite intended to produce this end product - in fact, just the opposite. There are countless scriptures that speak of our need to avoid sin - deliberately, because there is a consequence - for all sin - saved or not.

Yet, I realize that an obsession to avoid sin can also be a bondage - a thin veneer for the same problem - trusting in self for our justification. The Pharisees were always doing that (cleaning the outer cup) but they were not admitting the core sin of their heart, a resistance to the first commandment.

I've heard this phrase (above) used in the past many times by those who said they weren't going to concern themselves any more about sin. They didn't care about how their faults, sloppy habits, etc, may have affected others. Really they were justifying themselves, thinking, "I'm saved by grace, halleluiaah!, and you better accept me as I am." Pride, self-will, and other sins still ruled - but they were blind to it.

The purpose of my article was to expose our tendency to justify ourselves, all the while denying hidden sin. I also hoped to illustrate the importance of touching the conscience before any change could happen.

The test for the expert of the law was revealed in the way he refused to show mercy to the sinner. We can't imply that he never showed love to people - just not certain people.

Perhaps our attitudes towards the homosexuals would be our modern-day test of obedience to the Law.
Diane

Re: Hi Roady,, on: 2005/6/25 20:27

Beloved, if we are busy doing right, following the leading of the Holy Spirit, it seriously reduces the opportunity to do wrong. It's the focus, what are you looking for in your life? Comfort, pleasure, lust? Or is it the lowly and downtrodden?

Many who attempt wrong doing are only concerned with attempting to do as much as is absolutely legally functional to appease the flesh. See, it's kind of like attempting to drive the speed limit. It is next to impossible to do that without going a bit too fast, breaking the limit and the law. Maybe we just disregard the law and set our own limit, you know that 4 or 5 mph over the limit, what we think the police will tolerate.

This kind of christian has no heart for obedience. They are religious through and through. They want an arm and a leg on the cross and the other two in the street. You and I and most of our readers know that just won't work. You can't be just a bit crucified no more than you can be a bit pregnant.

Christianity is motivated by the heart, where God places in us both the will and the desire to do His good pleasure. His good pleasure extends way beyond the walls of a building that we have come to know and love as church.

In His blessing,

Lahry

Re:, on: 2005/6/26 12:08

Quote:

-----The lawyer must have been shocked to learn that in order to love God with all his heart, all his soul and his entire mind, and love his neighbor as himself, he would need to give up everything that was more precious to him than God.

Eventually the very beliefs and practices that we use to justify ourselves may very well convict us - just as they convicted the lawyer.

Diane,

Reading your article was like doing a practice round with Cassius Clay... ouch! Ouch! OUCH!

Perhaps it is more than a touch of religious hypocrisy that means I have never heard the lawyer's heart expounded so efficiently. Your evocation of his response, was worthy of a second and third reading. The thing that strikes me most about it though, is that back then, there was a genuine concern for truth and honesty, which forced him to be honest even in the face of his illustrious colleagues. Or, perhaps it was the presence of Jesus which made the difference?

Quote:
-----Jesus's one-minute parable was a **deathblow** to the lawyer's **entire value system** -- his status, his position in society, his Jewish lineage, **and his education**.

I just have to say another **OUCH!** at 'his education'.

Intellectual respectability is always threatening to revert to expositions of sophistry. Definitions of integrity suffer under such burdens. It is as great a challenge to the Church as ever, to turn the world to consider arguments pertaining to eternal life and the One non-theoretical Truth by Whom it draws temporary breath.

Quote:
-----But God's Spirit, nevertheless, works within us to **help us see the truth about ourselves**. And then we can either humbly choose his mercy, or we can maintain our pride and resist his **generous offer of a better way**.

don't delay! - BELIEVE Today! -

John 6

68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

Sorry for any confusion... - posted by Welch, on: 2005/6/27 10:42

Perhaps I was too broad in my statement of Seeking Blessings rather than avoiding sin. Let me elaborate. We know that God is ready to bless us, and that He dislikes punishing us but by His grace and faithfulness to do so, we should rejoice that He disciplines us. When do we live like that though? I'm a Baptist and I consider the Church I go to to be the quite opposite of most Southern Baptist churches today. Not based on pride in the religion, not legalistic, unwelcome, and sometimes very wordy. Even so, we sometimes fail to live the life I'm referring to. God has promised abundant life NOW and forever. We say that God is not eager to punish us but how often do we live that way? For an example, every time something remotely annoying comes through our lives we are going through a 'storm'. Sometimes in our repentance of Sin we feel already defeated and are looking for the punishment and become the modern day equivalent of the rent-a-garment, fasting pharisee. What I'm trying to say is that living a life that is equal to the Grace that God has shown us leaves no room for a defeated attitude. When we sin we say, "man, that stinks!" (because we of course hate sin) and after we have our time of repentance (which again, I stress, I'm not implying should be less sincere) are right back on our feet and thankful to our Father who has Grace and Mercy overflowing for us. Instead of repenting and thinking God is going to get me this time, I'm really in trouble. Even though we don't exactly always think this exact thought that's the kind of ideal that is portrayed as we live that life. God doesn't want us running from sin to sin trying our best to beat them but from Blessing to Blessing and in the process sin will be a defeated curse! For instance, we are so quick to tell the Jew sitting on the ground after the thieves have nearly killed him, "Brother, you are going through a hard time right now, can I just pray with you?" Again, this is not always wrong but why do that when you can pay his bills, clean his wounds and treat him as a family? My wife and I have a friend that is going through a time right now trying to find a place to stay, and it's mostly because a fellow 'christian' room mate of her's is having a relationship outside the rights of marriage and our buying a house leaving our friend nothing but a swift kick to the rear. She was down and I told her, "look, you have our place and you're more than welcome for dinner a warm bed and whatever you need for however long! You have an amazing church which you can rely on and you have an opportunity to get out of a situation that was getting the better of you! Say, I think you're pretty blessed!" Frankly I'd much rather hear that than how I'm just going through a rough time right now and need to let the water still. Again, yes sometimes that type of advice is needed but I think we are blessed to let that be the majority of our way of dealing with things. God doesn't want us having a defeated life, we should face sin with the idea of

when we pass the test God will be pleased with us versus the mindset of what will happen if I fail? This is such a hard one. If we are busy in God's work and are being blessed by His hand, sin will not be something that we have to spend such much time on trying to defeat because by His grace we will be living a life that defeats sin before we even encounter the temptation. Again, Diane my post was really just a personal note to a very touching and correct passage. Call it a small spin-off a wild rabbit that I thought may help in one small way or another.

Lahry, thank you my brother for your warm welcome, I'm so happy to be here. Isn't it amazing that even though the world says it's so great and so advanced that they don't need things like a god or faith, but yet His love still shines bright to everyone that will except it! I will remind you of the scripture John 12:32 If there is a stirring of Christ he will bring people to Him. There are some people who are just not called to be 'missionaries' in the sense that they go street preaching or on mission trip, of course we know that all Christians are to share the Gospel of Jesus, but certain people (i.e. pastors) are to grow their flock. Now addressing your point, a cop out is for us to bring people to Church and let them be shared with there... again, a Pastor with a Evangelical message is more often than not the tool in this situation. I'm not trying to fine-pick your post which is exactly what I'm doing Lahry, and I apologize :{ So I'll say that after we've been fed by our own studies and the support of a Godly Church, there is not a crowd that Jesus appeals to better than the one Lahry has told us. Witnessing is not completed when we just do it to the one's we're comfortable speaking with. Jesus accepts all sinners and praise Him for it forever and ever, but it cannot be denied whom Christ spent His time with, and it was not the popular or wealthy but the ones who were willing to realize that Jesus was the one true way. Thank you Lahry for this 'wake-up call' about the comforts of modern day witnessing. It's a blessing to me to hear an evangelical desire for "...all to be saved..." Thanks my brother. I love you all.

The presence of Jesus - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/7/24 18:11

Quote:
-----...which forced him to be honest even in the face of his illustrious colleagues. Or, perhaps it was the presence of Jesus which made the difference?

Dorcus, I'd say, the latter!! We know when we have encountered Jesus, because we have become more aware of ourselves. Jesus is like a mirror.

When Peter said, "Depart from me for I am a sinner." Lk. 5:8 wasn't he really saying, "Go, away, Jesus, I can't stand looking at myself"?

Diane