

Entangled

Irven Lee
Jasper, Alabama

We may well be impressed by the word picture found in 2 Peter 2:20 "For if after they have escaped the pollution of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning." One is in a pathetic condition when he is entangled and overcome in the pollutions of the world. Verse nineteen speaks of such people as being in bondage or as being servants or slaves of corruption. Is this a vivid way to describe drug addicts and alcoholics? How many such entangled and enslaved people are there in our land?

The last half of this second chapter of second Peter uses several impressive remarks to help us realize the danger of this entanglement, Verse twelve refers to those who are entangled as being like "natural brute beasts." Men are made to be in the image of God, but this image can be marred until they become more like animals. They can lose respect for life, for property rights and, of course, for God. We should bring the body into subjection by crucifying the flesh with its lusts, but some allow the carnal or lustful side to win the battle with the higher part of

man. (Read I Corinthians 9:27; Galatians 5:16, 17; Colossians 3:5, 6; Romans 8:13.)

Look at verse fourteen in this passage that deals with those who are servants of corruption. It speaks of some as "having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin." That must be vulgarity gone to seed. It seems that some of the beatnik types start their indecent talk as soon as they reach the age of accountability, and they stay with the immoral, animal-like people until they are not capable of being respectable, honorable people. They think only of selfish lusts of their own animal desires. What chance is there of converting such? Their hearts are hardened. People cannot hear if their ears are stopped. They cannot see if their eyes are closed. (See Matthew 13:13-16.) Working to reach them with the gospel is like casting pearls before swine.

People who have escaped can be entangled again and overcome. How sad to think of the fact that many of the little children who are now innocent will not be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, but, as servants of corruption, will be more like "natural brute beasts." Please give diligence to see that your children do not become entangled. Will your children "count it pleasure to riot?" Will they become "spots and blemishes" on society? Will they "speak evil of things that they understand not," or shall they "utterly perish in their own

corruption?" Read this chapter again and think. There is not enough "salt of the earth" to save our nation if the number of beatniks continues to increase. Sin is a reproach to any people. There are other ways to become entangled. A person can come to be so involved in so many businesses that he does not have time to be a father, a husband, a Christian, or a neighbor. He cannot study his Bible, worship God, or talk with his children because he is too busy. A man IS too busy if he does not have time for the things that are truly important.

Reference is made to this entanglement in the affairs of life in 2 Timothy 2:3, 4. "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life: that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." The soldier cannot afford to plant a crop in the spring near the camp or set up a business of some kind. He is in the army and is subject to orders. The Christian must remember that he is a soldier. He is to take responsibility but he must not become too involved even in legitimate things. "Cares and riches and pleasures" of this life may become the thorns that hinder fruit bearing. (Read Luke 8:4-15.)

Some are entangled in the pollutions of the world. Some are so entangled or unequally yoked in the daily routine of life that they are hopelessly lost to spiritual things and to the

kingdom of God which we should seek first as the pearl of great price. Some are also enmeshed or entangled in their creeds, false doctrines, or traditions so that their worship is vain, and their deliverance next to impossible. These pathetic people may think that they serve the Lord while they by their traditions make void the law of God. (Read Matthew 7:15, 21-23; Mark 7:1-13; Matthew 15:1-14.)

Galatian Christians who had been made free through the knowledge of Christ, were about to become entangled with Jewish law and tradition. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Christ would then profit them nothing. They were fallen from grace. Please read the first several verses of the fifth chapter of Galatians carefully.

We must know of several who are so entangled in the alcohol habit and in bad company that their salvation is almost hopeless. Are there not many who are too busy in earning and in worldly pleasures to be concerned with the soul? They are too busy with the affairs of this life. Now let us think of those who are so confused and entangled in speculations and false doctrines that their escape is also hopeless. The way of truth is simple, but God hath chosen the simple things to confound the wise. One must love the truth to find it. Strong delusions are available for those who love not the truth that they may

believe a lie and be damned. It is truth that makes us free - not error. Truth may be hidden from some by the god of this world. (2 Corinthians 4:4; John 8: 31, 32; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.)

Many members of the body of Christ are being blown about by the digressive doctrines relative to the social gospel concept, and to systems of centralization that are being promoted among us. The devil is not asleep. Many of those who are being entangled have seemed wonderfully capable and excellent in so many ways, and now it seems impossible to turn them back to the simple pattern of activity and government for the church. They are entangled and overcome. It is no marvel that the words "fear and trembling" are used in warnings concerning working out our salvation (Philippians 2: 12). Taking heed and giving diligence are so different to drifting with the crowd (Hebrews 2:1; 2 Peter 1:10; 1 Corinthians 10: 12). We need to exhort one another daily because sin of all kinds is deceitful, and it has a hardening effect (Hebrews 3:12, 13). Are you aware of the danger of entanglement?

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