

THE SIN OF DOING NOTHING!

TEXT: *Numbers 32:23* **But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.**

THESIS: To show the danger in 1) not receiving Christ & 2) not serving faithfully.

INTRO.: A. We often apply the latter part of our text verse somewhat out of context.

ILLUS.: An evangelist announced he would speak the following evening on "liars," & asked the congregation to read beforehand Mark 17. As promised, the next night he said, "My subject is LIARS, described in Mk.17. How many of you have followed my suggestion and read that chapter?" About 100 liars raised their hands. Why were they liars? Read Mark 17 and find out! **"Be sure your sin will find you out."**

B. The tribes of Reuben & Gad decide that they 1) do not want to continue to fight and 2) desire to stay on **"this side"** of Jordan (where they had wandered for 40 years!). They ask Moses if this is possible. Moses' reply is a compromise with conditions: they must continue to fight w/their brethren & if they refuse to do so **"THEIR SIN OF DOING NOTHING"** will reap terrible consequences.

C. Today we have believers who desire the benefits & blessings of the Christian life, but do not wish to share the WORK of the ministry. They are content to dwell in the pleasant lands, to soak up the sermons, to sit in an air-conditioned auditorium, to sit in padded pews, to enjoy the music, the comfort, the light, and even to see souls saved...but not to HELP in the work or PAY the bills!

I. THE SCENE:

A. These 2 Tribes Had Participated in The Miracles: (context)

1. They had crossed the Red Sea on dry ground.
2. They had seen the fire fall from heaven.
3. They had eaten of the Manna every day.
4. They had witnessed the miraculous preservation of shoes & clothing.
5. They had experienced healing from the fiery serpents.
6. They had been protected in the desert by the pillars of cloud & fire.
7. They had been led through the wilderness by those pillars.
8. They had heard the voice of God & saw His judgments again & again.

ILLUS.: We have been washed in the blood, have had our prayers answered, have seen healings, have heard His voice in His Word, have the indwelling Holy Spirit leading us & teaching us and have experienced His daily provision & protection. How dare we decide we won't serve Him! **"Be sure your sin will find you out!"** Sooner or later **"THE SIN OF DOING NOTHING"** will catch up with you.

B. These 2 Tribes Had Participated In Past Victories:

1. They had seen the walls of Jericho fall flat.
2. They had helped in conquering the enemies so far.
3. They had aided the 10 other tribes up to this point.

ILLUS.: But they had "grown weary in well doing" & just wanted a break from the warfare! (Who doesn't?) What battle-weary soldier hasn't wanted to stop fighting at times?! But for "the cause" the soldier must keep on going till the final victory is won.

II. THE SIN: **"But if ye will not do so..."**

A. It Is a Sin of Believers: v.23a

1. It is not the sin of the Egyptians: the world.
2. It is not the sin of the Philistines: God's enemies.

ILLUS.: The **"ye"** and **"you"** in the text speaks to all of God's people. The failure of reaching the lost in this world lies squarely upon the Church. The failure of revival in the Church lies squarely upon the Church. The encroachment of the world into the Church, the defilement & immorality in our society (incl. Homosexuality, evolution, abortion, etc.) is because of a luke-warm Christianity.

B. It Is a Sin of Omission, Not Commission: v.23a

1. Perhaps we are more guilty of NOT doing what we should, than of doing what we should not do.
2. Perhaps our sins of omission are greater than our sins of commission.
3. Perhaps our sin of not loving each other is greater than the sin of gossiping, griping & grumbling.

4. Perhaps our sin of not going soul-winning is greater than the sin of lying.
5. Perhaps our sin of not studying our Bible is greater than the sin of watching too much TV.
6. Perhaps our sin of not praying is greater than the sin of criticism & backbiting.
7. Perhaps our sin of not being obedient is greater than our sin of laziness.

C. It Is a Sin of Great Proportions:

1. Idleness & self-indulgence.

ILLUS.: "I am saved, secure & satisfied. I love the Word & fellowship...but don't ask me to WORK! Let others do that!" "I have a child in toddlers, but let someone else take care of him/her!" "I have a teen in the youth ministry, but don't ask me to help!" "I have kids in Sunday School, but don't ask me to teach." "I have lost loved ones, but don't ask me to go soul-winning."

2. Selfishness & unbrotherliness:

1. What about the other 10 tribes?!
2. What about God's direction of subduing the Promised Land?

ILLUS.: Like Cain's "**Am I my brother's keeper?**" Reply: "No, you are your brother's killer!" If you are not doing what you can to reach the lost, you are condemning them to hell. Someone reached **YOU!** "**If ye will NOT do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord.**"

3. Ingratitude & untruthfulness:

- a. Others had fought for them!
- b. God had been faithful to them!
- c. They had promised to fight for others.

ILLUS.: In the church we must fight the enemy together, work together, pray for each other, and all do our share of the work. We have committed ourselves to this task as a church. (see our Church covenant)

4. Injurious & discouraging:

- a. Our example helps or hurts others. V.6
- b. Our example encourages or dampens others. V.7

ILLUS.: We underestimate our influence! What about our loved ones, family, friends, co-workers? When one shop in a shopping center closes it has a deadening effect on the others. Our troops in Vietnam were demoralized when they heard of the draft dodgers (like Pres. Clinton), draft-card burners & protesters back home. When one worker quits, he discourages others. When you fail, you discourage others. **People are more likely to imitate our lethargy than our energy!**

4. Disobedient & divisive:

- a. God had given the command to possess the land.
- b. The 2 tribes separating from the 10 is divisive.
- c. The division demoralized the workers.

2 Tim.4:10 *For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.*

III. THE SEQUEL: v.23b "Be sure your sin will find you out."

ILLUS.: An 8 yr. Old boy skipped school to go fishing. He called the school as spoke to the teacher, assuming a deep, mature bass voice & said that "My son will be unable to attend school today." "Thank you" said the teacher, "and who should I say is calling?" The question took the boy by surprise, and he stammered "Er, uh, this is my father speaking." His sin had found him out.

- A. In Your Attitude: those not involved, lose the blessing.
- B. In Your Ambition: spiritual laziness breeds laziness elsewhere.
- C. In Your Appetites: spiritual inactivity decreases spiritual desire.
- D. In Your Family: like parents, like children.
- E. In Your Future: as now, so then! No work, no rewards!

CONCL.: **"THE SIN OF DOING NOTHING"** is unforgivable. The sin of not receiving Christ is the only one the unsaved can commit which God cannot forgive & you will be "found out" when you stand before Him.

The sin of not serving Christ is unforgivable for the believer & will be "found out" at the Judgment Seat of Christ.