

# DON'T THROW THE BABY OUT WITH THE BATHWATER ...

By John Gagliardi



One of the saddest things I often see among Kingdom Business Professionals - and for that matter Christians in general - is the tendency to think all is irrevocably lost after some sort of slip-up, be it moral, financial or spiritual.

You're going along fine, walking with the Lord, God's in His heaven and all's right with the world. And then suddenly - **blam!** You blow it bigtime! You do that thing you thought you'd long since left behind. Maybe the thing the Bible calls your "besetting sin", or some new feat you've managed to come up with.

The response of many Christians is to say: "Well, I've blown it now anyway; I might as well go all the way, and keep on doing it. What more have I got to lose?" That sort of thinking is the perilous trap the devil sets.

Most of us know what the Bible tells us so many times in so many ways - articulated perfectly in 1 John 1:9 - *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* But knowing it, and believing it, are two different things.

The knowledge has to go from head to heart, from theory to practice, from thought to experience.

And don't think it can't happen to you, my oh-so-very-spiritual brother or sister in Christ, because it can! One of the scariest Scriptures in the Bible, I think, is 1 Corinthians 10:12 - *"Therefore, let him who thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall"*.

Just when you think you've got it made, you're virtually "untouchable", you've finally got that thing totally under control ... Hey! That's when you need to watch out! Just look around the world at the number of powerful, high-profile ministers who have fallen into some form of sin. None of them started out that way - but - they thought they stood, and then they fell!

The point is - none of us is immune from sin and disobedience. *“For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”* (Romans 3:23). But if we do sin, it is crucial to realise that the grace of God is there to pick us up, and offer us a way back. It’s our divine “safety net”.

Of course, in the immediate aftermath of a sin experience, it’s often hard to see that grace, or to feel that we are worthy to reach out and ask for it. The guilt kicks in, and our human mind, fuelled by Satan, will tell us that this time we’ve blown it one time too many. And that’s when the “stinking thinking” really starts ...

“Well, I’ve done it once; might as well be hanged for a sheep as a goat”, or some such twaddle. It’s the devil’s way of stopping you from falling on God’s grace, and leading you on from one isolated event of sin, to a whole “lifestyle” of sinning.

That sort of thinking is what I call “throwing the baby out with the bathwater”, which is a rather facetious way of making a very serious point. Instead, go to the Bible, and allow God’s Word to wash away the stain and stink of sin and rebellion. In Ephesians 5:26, Paul talks about sanctifying and cleansing the church, which is us, with the *“washing of water by the Word”*.

The topic of God’s grace seems to be a very “hot” one at the moment. There’s always some slick conman around who “rediscovers” the age-old lie that grace is a free ticket to easy sin without consequences.

In fact, there are always consequences to sin - just ask King David! It’s true that God’s grace is free, but it’s not cheap - it cost Jesus His life. It is free because Jesus shed His blood, of His own free will, to give us redemption and forgiveness.

It is always there for us to call on. But it is not there for us to wipe our feet on!

Paul in Romans 5 and 6 addresses the demonic lie, that goes something like this: “God’s grace is always there if we sin; but if we don’t sin, then we can’t experience that grace; so then, we should go ahead and sin, so that God’s grace can kick in.”

Beguiling, seductive logic - but hellish logic with dreadful eternal consequences! With this logic, you’re at the top of the slippery slope that leads on down to sin as a lifestyle, not an event. Listen to the words of Paul: *“ ... When sin grew worse, God’s grace increased. Sin once used death to rule us, but God gave people more of His grace, so that grace could rule by making people right with Him ... So do you think we should continue sinning, so that God will give us even more grace? No! We died to our old sinful selves, so how can we continue living with sin?”* (Romans 5: 20,21; 6: 1, 2, New Century Version).

In the Scripture above, where Paul says “**No**” in the New Century Version, the actual Greek word used is *“Me genoito”*, which is a very strong negative form meaning something like, “By no means”, or “Let it never be!” The NKJV translates it as “Certainly not!”

God’s Grace, His “unmerited, unearned favour”, is there for all genuine believers who understand that Jesus died for their sins, and that as long as there is confession and genuine repentance, there is always total forgiveness through grace.

It is not there for glib hucksters who think they have found a “loophole” to justify a loose lifestyle. If we sin, we have one answer - Jesus Christ. If we come to Him, repent, seek forgiveness, by grace we are forgiven and washed clean. That’s a promise - so if we let ourselves and God down, we know there is a remedy, and we don’t ever have to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

Reject outright the devil’s lying accusation that this sin is just too big, or too nasty, or too horrible for God to forgive. To God, sin is sin - He hates it all, but Jesus’ blood is powerful enough to wash it all away.

But don’t approach it the other way round, the devil’s way - God’s grace through the blood of Jesus is always there, so I can do this sin, and it’ll all be OK afterwards. After all, if I don’t sin, how can I really test this grace thing? Seeing is believing!

That’s dangerous, precarious thinking, and for Kingdom Business Professionals, who are daily beset by temptations of all sorts, we need to be always on our toes and ready to catch the devil in this particular lie.

For those of you who read “Every Day With Jesus” by Selwyn Hughes, you will know that he also is covering the topic of grace at the moment. He puts it this way: The point cannot be overemphasised: a person who sees grace as permission to sin has missed the point of grace entirely...Those who have fathomed what it means to be forgiven by a holy God are so overwhelmed by His amazing grace, that they want to give themselves to Him in holy living.

“There are some who take advantage of grace, but you can be sure that those who abuse it have never trembled at God’s holiness, and have little comprehension of what it means to be saved by grace.”

The devil doesn’t give up - he doesn’t have public holidays or sick leave. *“The devil, your enemy, goes around like a roaring lion looking for someone to eat.”* He’s always out there, prowling around, ready to make you his next meal and turn you into nothing more than a putrid smelly pile of “devil do-do”.

We must realise we need God’s grace every second of every day - that we in ourselves are not that smart or that strong, and when you gloatingly hear the scandal about the latest “televangelist” fall, just remember that “there but for the grace of God, go I”. God’s Word tells us that when we are weak (in ourselves), then we are strong (in God). *“My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness”.* (2 Corinthians 12:9).

*“If you think you are strong, you should be careful not to fall. The only temptation that has come to you is that which everyone has. But you can trust God who will not permit you to be tempted more than you can stand. But when you are tempted, He will also give you a way to escape, so that you will be able to stand it.”*  
(1 Corinthians 10: 12 and 13 New Century Version)