

Two Serious Sins, Too Often Overlooked

John 21:20-24

Introduction:

- A. Peter's impetuous personality surfaces again.
 - 1. This time he did not play the hypocrite (cf. Gal. 2:11-13).
 - 2. Nor did he deny Christ (cf. Matt. 26:69-75).
 - 3. But, he did wrong none the less.
- B. This story illustrates two sins, too often overlooked by Christians.
 - 1. Maybe because we minimize the impact they have.
 - 2. Maybe because we have grown so accustomed to them.

Discussion:

I. Meddling in Other People's Matters (vv. 20-22)

- A. The nature of this sin.
 - 1. Twice used of "to work all around, i.e. bustle about (meddle)" (Strong)
 - 2. Once used of "overseeing others' affairs, i.e. a meddler (Strong)
 - 3. It is basically sticking one nose into another's business unwanted and unneeded.
- B. The seriousness of this sin.
 - 1. It is listed with vile crimes (1 Pet. 4:15).
 - 2. It is a product of an unbridled tongue (cf. Jas. 1:26)
- C. It often grows out of having nothing better to do. (2 Thess. 3:10-11; 4:11; 1 Tim. 5:11-13)
- D. It goes beyond legitimate interest in the welfare of others.
 - 1. It is one thing to correct sinners, another thing to be "peeping Toms" to catch sinners.
 - 2. It is one thing to show interest in another's welfare, another thing to appoint oneself guardian.
 - 3. It is one thing to be concerned about others, another thing to ask purely personal questions.
 - 4. It is one thing to teach stewardship, another thing to appoint oneself another's "business mgr"
 - 5. It is one thing to be interested in the neighborhood, another thing to try to run the neighborhood.

II. Spreading False Information (v. 23)

- A. One must be careful not to distort what he hears and passing it on as fact.
- B. One must be careful about repeating information before verifying it's accuracy.
- C. Tattlers and talebearers are probably the worst offenders in this area.
 - 1. Tattlers and busybodies are associated together. (1 Tim. 5:13)
 - 2. Talebearing generates and stirs strife (Prov. 26:20)
 - 3. Tale bearing hurts people deeply (Prov. 26:22)
- D. Once false information is spread, it is hard to get the correct information out.
 - 1. This is why we should be swift to hear, but slow to speak (Jas. 1:19)
 - 2. This is why we not unnecessarily speak any negative thing about another.

Conclusion:

- A. Maybe more of us should ask "What is that to thee?"
- B. Certainly more of us should double check our information before spreading it.