

Dealing with Sin

We are made in God's image, Who is a God of longings, rationality, volition, and emotion. Man is similar to but not identical with God.

The fall had dramatic effects on man. The "before" and "after" is plain.

LONGINGS

Man was satisfied

Man became empty

THINKING

Accurate and truthful

Darkened and irrational

CHOOSING

Pleased God

Manipulative for self

FEELING

Emotions helped progress
Toward God

Desire to "feel good" at any cost

1. Centrality of thinking – we must help people change in ways that please God. Thinking controls feelings and behavior. We are not necessarily controlled by what is true, but by what we believe is true. The convictions by which we are living need to be exposed.
2. Proverbs 22:15 – Foolishness is an unbiblical conviction that my longings can be adequately filled without God.
3. The development of foolishness

Age Birth to 1

Naïve foolishness. Think world revolves around
Them

Age 2-5

Learned foolishness from Parents and others

Age 6-12

Practical foolishness (start to do really dumb things

Age 13-18

Disappointed foolishness. Knowing nothing has yet
Fulfilled their longings, the devil offers alternatives

Age 19-30

Rearranged foolishness with some potential
Maturity from failures.

31-61

Stable foolishness with pragmatism ruling

66-death

Bankrupt foolishness

4. Two big errors in thinking

- a. Something else needs to change. In the A-B-C theory, people think: “I could only get it together if my circumstances would change. A (event) leads to B (our evaluation of the event) which leads to C (way we feel and behave). In this process, “A” needs changing. If we can’t change “A”, we try to alter “C”. What really needs to change is “B.”

It is important to distinguish between “Goals” and “desires.” A desire is something we might want, but don’t need to have for personal fulfillment. Usually, it requires favorable circumstances or someone else to help.

A goal is something that must be reached for personal fulfillment. As opposed to a desire, it does not require outside help. The godly goal is to know God, seek God, and please God.

- b. We need to change from a morality built of fulfillment of ungodly goals. Most people want a quick fix. If your goal is to “feel better,” we begin to measure the rightness of what we do by the quality of feelings generated.
5. The stubbornness of sinful thinking can be seen in the fact that most people rarely put into language their beliefs and presuppositions. They are disguised. There is a profound commitment to self-protection.
 6. As parents, we have to be discerning and wise in driving out foolishness and building wisdom. Children often do what they do for four reasons:
 - a. Reward without responsibility. “I want my world to work well without me having to be responsible.” There should be no reward without accountability to responsibility.
 - b. Power – (emotional power). Power struggles exist in almost every home. Matters need to be dealt with by parents removing themselves from the struggle.
 - c. Revenge. Some children explode with anger. We do not need to discipline because children are angry, but need to discipline for improper expression of anger.
 - d. Retreat and withdraw. To build in wisdom, we must recognize that the essence of relationship is involvement. The Lord stays involved with us, and we should do the same with children

7. How do you determine their goal?

- a. Reward without responsibility breeds a casual indifference to the consequences of their behavior. If you feel like your child’s servant and/or are constantly reminding them of their responsibilities, watch out.

- b. Power is the goal when children say or do things to “yank your chain.” You have entered into the power struggle if you sense a compulsion to lecture, argue, or “straighten them out.”
- c. Revenge is usually seen after you deny them something they want. Things are said or done that are designed to hurt, produce guilt, or “get back.”
- d. Withdrawal is easy to spot but hard to handle. You must find ways to always keep the doors of communication open.