**Lessons from a Lockdown**

**Volume II**

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**Day 70**

**1 John 3:7-10**

Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work. No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God. This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not God’s child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister.

***Questions for Personal Reflection:***

1. What does it mean to be led astray? Am I in any danger of being led astray? Why?
2. Am I doing what is right every day? When is this difficult for me? Why?
3. How do I feel about the sinfulness of others? Do I tolerate it? Why?
4. What is stopping me from sinning? Why?
5. How am I helping Jesus destroy the devil’s work?

***Insight:***

To be “led astray” means to be pointed to the wrong direction or to be misdirected. It also refers to being fooled or influenced to believe something that is false. We should not allow anyone to lead us astray or to allow anyone one of us to be led astray. Ordinarily, being led astray leads us to sin. We are vulnerable to this type of influence because our sinful nature is always looking for reasons to justify committing sins. When we see another person doing something sinful, but something we also want to do, aren’t we tempted to do the same? When we see other people violating rules, don’t we feel justified in violating them also? When see fellow Christians not being committed to meetings of the body, or not giving sacrificially, or not sharing their faith, aren’t we also tempted to be the same way? Are we allowing ourselves to be led astray? If we are, we can’t pass the blame to the person who led us astray. Yes, God will hold them accountable for leading you astray. But God would also hold us accountable if we allow ourselves to led astray. Each of us are responsible for our own sin.

There are many things in the world that can lead us astray. There are many things that can infect our minds and our hearts that cause us to do things we would later on regret. Being online more often exposes us to more of these influences so we need to limit our time and be very careful.

We have all suffered in some way because of this pandemic and the disruption and isolation it has brought to our lives. But the hardships we are going through or have gone through does not justify us committing sins. The person who is righteous does what is right regardless of the circumstances. We must continue to be righteous no matter what circumstances we find ourselves in. The pandemic may have changed a lot of things in this world including our schedules, our lifestyles, and our priorities. A lot has changed but God’s standard for righteousness has not changed. The irregularity of the situation we are in should not result in the inconsistency of our convictions.

Part of doing what is right is obeying the law. For as long as the laws and policies of the governing authorities do not violate God’s law, we should obey them. Sometimes it is hard to obey because we see other people, sometimes the authorities themselves, violating the law. Sometimes it’s difficult to obey because the rules make no sense. But we must obey any law that is not sinful.

The devil’s work is to cause people to sin. So when we cause people to sin, even if unintentionally, we are helping the devil do his work. Causing people to stumble is a very serious matter. Jesus came to destroy the devil’s work. If we are with Jesus, we will do the same. First, we will destroy the devil’s work in our lives. Second, we will help others overcome their sin. Third, we will make sure that these sinful influences will not return.

If we have been born of God, we “cannot go on sinning.” Our baptism was not an empty ritual, we were reborn. We are “children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God” (John1:13). We are no longer who we used to be. We are a new creation, created to be just like God.

Douglas Jacoby explains that “cannot” is “in the sense of our refusal, not inability.” We can still sin if we choose to. But being born of God, we can refuse to sin. If we do sin, it’s because we chose to sin. Thus, no one really “falls” into sin, we walk into sin willingly. Are we still refusing to sin? What if everyone around you sins? What if the people you love the most entices you to sin? What if you are feeling weak and alone? What if someone sins against you or hurts you? No matter what the circumstance, we are who we are, we are born of God and we can refuse to sin.

Being born of God, let us continue to do what is right so that we will not be led astray.