

A Necessary Habit

Justin Morton

Have you ever tried to hide something you'd done from others? When I was a kid there were times I would try to hide things from my parents because I was afraid of what might happen if they ever found out I had disobeyed them. I'm sure most of you can relate to this. As children, we've all been down the road of hidden secrets. Sadly, many of us try to do the very same thing as Christians; we try to keep our sins hidden from others as well as from God.

One old saying says there is no stronger sin than sin which remains hidden. I believe the reason for this is because hidden sin has the potential to prove costly in our lives. Consider just a few of the ways secret sins can be costly:

1. **Our secret sins keep us from enjoying the relationship with God we were created to enjoy.** Isaiah told the people their sins had made a separation between them and God (Isa. 59:2). Our sins, including those we think we have very well hidden, will do the same to us today. All sin, whether public or hidden, causes a separation between us and God.
2. **As long as we think our sins are hidden, we most likely will continue doing them.** If we feel our secret sins are unknown to others, we won't think about the consequences and will continue to practice such sins. Paul told the Christians in Rome that God would judge even the secrets of men (Rom. 2:16). Friends, no "secret" sin is hidden from God so why not stop trying to hide them? Confess your sins and avoid continually practicing them.
3. **When we try to keep our secret sins hidden, guilt begins to eat at us.** Perhaps one of the biggest reasons this occurs is because we begin to feel as though we are fakes. We know others who hold us in high regard because they don't know the secret lives we are living and this causes us to feel guilty. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for their hypocritical behavior (Matt. 23). Let's be careful not to be people who look good on the outside but on the inside are living impure lives of secret sin.

Friends, instead of trying to keep our secret sins hidden, why not confess our shortcomings? James wrote, "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed" (Jam. 5:16). Through confessing the very things we are trying to hide, we can find healing and forgiveness, both from others and from God (I Jn. 1:9).

May God open our hearts to the necessary habit of confession.