

Wednesday's Wisdom

a weekly short note from Mike Minear

From Dusty Bibles to Filthy Garments

By Brent Lewis

When we quit reading our Bibles, we are really in trouble. It is not simply that we fail to gain knowledge and to grow as we should (though that is true), but the greatest problem comes from the fact that the word of God molds our character and changes our lives for the better. "Thy word have I laid up in my heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119:11). The inspired apostle Paul declares the word of God to be "profitable for ...correction, for instruction which is in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

The word of God has mightily to do with our lives. And when we neglect it, ignore it, and become inattentive to it the quality of our living before God is seriously impaired. The psalmist says, "For I have kept the ways of Jehovah, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his ordinances were before me, and I put not away his statutes from me" (Psalm 18:21-22). Serious consequences always result in the lives of people who "put away God's statutes" from themselves. In the Old Testament we read of the departure of the people of God from His ways, and the determination of Josiah, king of Judah, to restore God's way by repairing the temple. He sent Shaphan, the scribe, to the temple to arrange with Hikiah, the high priest, for the prescribed repairs. In the midst of their activity, the Scripture says they "found the book of the law." This book was that which was given by Moses to the people and had long been disregarded and unknown (2 Chronicles 34:15-21). Josiah concluded that God's wrath had come upon His people because they had not known and kept His word.

The Bible says that the wicked put God's statutes away from them. Ahijah, the prophet, pronounced a curse upon King Jereboam because "thou ... has done evil above all that were before thee..." (1 Kings 14:9). God accuses the wicked, by saying "that thou hast taken my covenant in thy mouth, seeing that thou instruction, and castest my words behind thee" (Psalm 50:16-17): and then goes on to show that their unrighteous lives were a direct result of their failure to give heed to His law (50:18-21). Charles Spurgeon, in his comment on Psalm 18:22, says, "To put away the Scriptures from the mind's study is the certain way to prevent their influencing the outward conversation. Backsliders begin with dusty Bibles and go on to filthy garments." ." And isn't that the way it always is? Such disregard and carelessness affects the way that people think and, ultimately, the way that they live-so that they finally become

clothed with the filthy garments of unrighteous lives. Get out your Bible, my friend, and dust it off-and prevent such dire developments in your life