

Think You Can Get Away With It?

Aug. 27, 2013

Several years ago I began to notice how many people buy into a disturbing fantasy.

First, I watched a dear friend jump into a sinful and dangerous relationship. She tried to numb her guilt through drugs, alcohol and self-injury, in escalating amounts of each. She ended up losing her job and her freedom—first in a hospital, then a psych ward, and then months in a rehab facility that consumed every penny of her considerable savings. Later she confessed to me, “I thought I could get away with it.”

This summer I served over a month on a jury for a drug conspiracy trial. (I blogged about that [here](#).) After we found all four defendants guilty, the judge came to talk to us and answer our questions. We learned that a large number of co-conspirators indicted along with these defendants had all pled guilty. The judge confirmed to us that these four had “rolled the dice,” hoping to persuade a jury that they were unjustly charged. Why didn’t these men plead guilty? They thought they could get away with it.

Thinking we can get away with it happens a lot, from speeding to not declaring everything on our tax returns to the U.S. government monitoring its citizens’ phone conversations.

And this fantasy—this LIE—goes back a long way. All the way to the Garden of Eden, when the serpent scoffed at God’s rule about not eating from the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil. “Surely you will not die!” (Gen. 3:4) In today’s language: “C’mon, you can get away with it!”

But, being sneaky, the enemy of our souls (and his minions who are the spirits who actually tempt us with lies) uses first person to make us think his thoughts are actually our own, so we are not aware of the source of our temptation: “I can get away with this.”

God has something to say about this lie. One of my favorite Bible verses, particularly when my sons were small, is Numbers 32:23: “Be sure your sin will find you out.”

There were three four-year-olds on our street including my son. One of them, a heartbreakingly sexually precocious little girl, said to Kevin one day, “Let’s go behind this bush next to my house, take off our clothes and kiss.” When he said no, she insisted, “It’s okay. Jordan (the other four-year-old) and I did it yesterday, and no one will know.” Kevin said, “But God will see us, and He’ll tell my mommy!”

Back to God’s opinion. Jesus said in Mark 4:22, “Everything that is hidden will eventually be brought into the open, and every secret will be brought to light.” In Luke 12:3, He said, “Whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms will be proclaimed from the housetops.”

Paul wrote in Galatians 6:7, “Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.”

No, we *can’t* get away with it. That’s a truth that can keep us out of a lot of trouble!

This blog post originally appeared at

blogs.bible.org/tapestry/sue_bohlin/think_you_can_get_away_with_it