

I Might Be Mistaken

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from Internet sources)

Introduction:

A. 1Sam. 15:1-4, 17-24

1. We have made our share of mistakes. As hard as we try, we are not perfect - Rom. 3:9-10
2. The question is not, "Will we make mistakes"; the question is, "What are we going to do after we make mistakes?"
3. Prov. 28:13 - "People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy."

B. Why do so many have difficulty admitting they are mistaken? Pride or fear of losing self image are at the core of each answer

1. Admissions of wrong doing are incredibly threatening for some because they have trouble separating their actions from their character. If they did something bad, they must be bad people; if they were neglectful, they must be selfish and uncaring; if they were wrong, they must be ignorant or stupid, etc. Therefore, apologies represent a major threat to their self-esteem.
2. Apologizing opens the door to guilt for most of us, but for some, it opens the door to shame instead. While guilt makes us feel bad about our actions, shame makes them feel bad about their 'selves' who they are—which makes shame a far more toxic emotion than guilt.
3. While most of us consider apologies as opportunities to resolve interpersonal conflict, others fear their apology will only open the floodgates to further accusations and conflict. Once they admit to one wrongdoing, surely the other person will pounce on the opportunity to pile on all the previous offenses which they refused to apologize, too.
4. Some believe that admitting wrong is the same as taking all responsibility and it will absolve others of their responsibility in it.
5. Some are more comfortable with anger, irritability, and distance, and admitting error opens them up to being vulnerable before others.

C. You know you've made a mistake when:

I. WE TRY TO JUSTIFY WHAT IS UNJUSTIFIABLE

A. 1Sam. 15:18-20, 13, 19

B. Saul argued with Samuel that he had obeyed God when he hadn't.

C. Contemporary expressions

1. "I know what the Bible says, but God understands"
2. "I'm not much on quoting Scripture, but I just feel"
3. "I don't believe in a God like that"

D. Saul learned, and so should we, that partial obedience is disobedience.

II. WE TRY TO SHARE CREDIT FOR OUR ACTIONS

A. 1Sam. 15:21

B. Adam and Eve tried to share credit - Gen. 3:8-13

- C. When we are unwilling to take complete responsibility for our actions, it's an indicator we've done something wrong.

III. WE GIVE A RELIGIOUS SPIN TO OUR DISOBEDIENCE

- A. 1Sam. 15:21
- B. "I don't go to church, but I watch religious programming on television."
- C. "I do that (make compromises in the faith) to try to influence them to come to church."

IV. WE ARE MORE CONCERNED WITH WHAT PEOPLE THINK THAN WITH GOD

- A. 1Sam. 15:24
- B. How often do we base our decisions on what people think?

V. WE DO MORE WORK TO HIDE IT THAN IT WOULD TAKE TO CONFESS IT

- A. 1Sam. 15:24-30
- B. 1Sam. 15:19-20 - Note the contrast in their perspectives of Saul's actions.
- C. When I am mistaken - Psalm 32:3-5; 1John 1:8-10

Conclusion:

- A. May we learn that when we make a mistake and done wrong, not to defend, excuse, argue, get angry, or attempt to spin our way out.
- B. Instead, humbly confess that we made a wrong choice, repent, and learn from our mistake - 2Chron. 7:14-15