

Sweeping It Under The Rug

About three thousand years ago Koheleth wrote, “**Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil**” (Ecclesiastes 8:11). What a sad, depressing, and discouraging commentary on the attitude of man toward sin. History records thousands of instances where justice has been defeated and even humiliated by prolonging the punishment of the evil doer. When the guilt of one has been proven beyond doubt, he should be punished straightway. The lag in retribution is the secret of many of the follies and faults within the world today.

This same sad commentary can also be read in the church of our Lord. In many congregations sins are just “*swept under the rug*” and, although they are never completely forgotten, they are ignored. This action is preferred over doing it the Lord’s way ([II Thessalonians 3:6](#)) and allows the congregation to wear the facade of peace, love, happiness, and contentment. It lulls the brethren into a false sense of peace and security.

If evil, like a raging fire, would scorch us all at once, we would take more care in doing the Lord’s will in such matters. However, when issues are hidden by time – “*swept under the rug*” – our willingness to do the Lord’s will becomes more lax and we begin to get comfortable in sin and many more problems arise (“**a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump**”). Sins that are not dealt with swiftly will have consequences that may be beyond our immediate vision but will cause trouble just the same. Simply “*swept under the rug*” they will leave “*lumps*” that will be stumbled over time and time again.

The apparent success of the sinner should not discourage others from doing that which is right. His false pride and arrogance, combined with other forms of wickedness in his life, are grievous to the Lord and motivates him to falsely accuse the faithful whom he regards as his enemies. This is purely a cowardice method used to deal with that which he cannot meet otherwise. David wrote such a one:

“His ways are always grievous; thy judgements are far above out of his sight: as for all his enemies, he puffeth at them. He hat said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be an adversity. His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity” (Psalm 10:5-7).

Isaiah stated, “**Let favour be shewed to the wicked yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord**” (Isaiah 26:10). Favor shown to the wicked will be unappreciated and will not improve his conduct but will only make it worse. And even though he may be surrounded by the goodness of the faithful, he will continue in his unjust life, in his unholy ways, and in his disrespect for God and His faithful children.

Brethren, “**The Lord is not slack concerning his promise**” ([II Peter 3:9](#)). The wicked man will finally receive his reward as well as all who aid and abet him. Those who fear the Lord (and not the anger of the sinner) will receive favor from the Lord. Shall we obey the Lord or continue “*sweeping it under the rug*”?