

With Your Record

I have always been a lover of automobiles. To that end, there are many automobiles in the world which unfortunately cause me to lust after them. I realize that an automobile is merely a means of transportation from point “A” to point “B” and anything over and above this use is probably tantamount to vanity or striving after the wind.[1] An automobile should be viewed as nothing short of a tool, or a labor saving device. Without an automobile, our lives, in this country anyway, would be severely compromised.

It should therefore not be surprising that this labor saving device has become a recreational device and a status symbol. Consequently, the initial purpose of the automobile has been prostituted to the point that there are millions of dollars spent upon automobiles that might otherwise be spent on such things as: helping provide food and shelter for the homeless and indigent, educating people in health and medical issues, and providing clothing for the cold and naked, not to mention preaching the Word of God. Automobile aficionados, as they prefer to be called, justify an automotive extravagance by saying they can afford it and they want it, even though they may very well realize that there is a more economical and fuel efficient means of transportation which is available for day to day use. When it comes to having an automobile collection the true collector sometimes has the view that money is no object and will use their best car for the purpose of making a show of their financial success.

At this point, please realize that I am now “stomping” on my own foot, bunion and all. Here is a “true confession”. Once, while traveling down what is now Martin Luther King Boulevard, I happened to see a beautiful black Jaguar XKE roadster style sports car, parked in a parking lot, with a “for sale” sign prominently displayed. I copied the phone number down as well as other pertinent information. This was, indeed, your “basic 160 MPH sports car”. Shazam, I said to myself, my concupiscent heart all a flutter, and greed and lust filled my soul. I had visions of sailing down the thoroughfare of life, with the top down. I would feel of the road being transferred through my finely engineered machine as the rubber met the road. I imagined hearing the purring roar of the engine being in synchrony with the “tunes “coming through the speakers of the stereo radio. I salivated at the prospect. So, at my first chance I called my insurance man to find out what it would cost me to insure my dream machine.

Have you ever seen films of the Hindenburg disaster in Lakehurst New Jersey in 1939? Such were my starry-eyed dreams when my insurance man replied to my insurance bid cost inquiry with the ominous and intimidating first words, “With your record...” Thus, my beautiful black cat remained to be the property of another visionary. It was a true moment of “pathos”....Sigh.

God likes to keep His children in focus to go where He would prefer that we go and tries to protect us from ourselves when our lusts cause us to stray. Consequently He, seeing the future more clearly than we do, sometimes denies us what we think we wish. David was denied the chance to construct the Temple after amassing huge quantities of gold, silver, bronze, and iron because he had been a man of bloodshed.[2] Because of his record of blood shed he was denied his hearts desire.

Moses was forbidden to cross over the Jordan after leading the Children of Israel through the desert for forty years.[3] This was done as a disciplinary action on Moses for his disobedience at the waters of Meribah by striking the rock twice in anger rather than speaking to the rock to produce water as he had been commanded to do. His record of disobedience (albeit a one time act) was very costly to him.

King Saul, in an act of prideful disobedience refused to annihilate every living thing formerly belonging to the Amalekites, saving the best for a later sacrifice to the Lord. This was in contrast to what he had been commanded to do.[4] He lost the kingdom of Israel because of this act of pride. A record of pride cost him the kingdom.

My favorite book in the Bible, Ecclesiastes, was, in my opinion, written in part because of a lifetime of disobedience of God’s prohibitions against amassing wealth, wives, horses and material possessions. Solomon wrote Song of Songs in his youth, Proverbs as a middle aged man, and Ecclesiastes as a penitent old man. His seemingly cynical retrospection in Ecclesiastes came as a result of years of disobedience and self serving striving to find satisfaction. These are told in the first several chapters of the book. As his life is apparently drawing to a close, he, in

what seems to be a sense of fatalistic resignation, encourages the readers to remember their Creator when they are young. He culminates with the words of fatherly advice...."Fear God and keep His commandments, for God will bring every deed into judgment."[5]

We go through life, sometimes focused on ourselves. This is when we find out that we are errant in our behavior. We can then either correct our actions and live as God calls us to live or we can continue to live for self. If we do the latter, our judgment will end with God's intimidating words "with your record...." If we amend our ways and accept the Salvation of Christ, we still have a record of sin, but the record is sponged away by the Blood of He Who died for us on the Cross.

[1] Ecclesiastes 1:2

[2] 1 Chronicles 22: 2-19

[3] Deuteronomy 3:23-29; Numbers 20:1-13;

[4] 1 Samuel 15:1-35

[5] Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:14