

Don't Assume

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

- A. John 7:51; Deut. 1:17; Mark 3:20-22
 - 1. Assumption carries the same characteristics as gossip.
 - 2. Assumption communicates the credentials of a fool.
- B. A family of five was rushed to the hospital to have their stomachs washed out after the cat with which they shared a meal cooked with homegrown mushrooms suddenly began to have stomach contractions. While members of the family showed no signs of illness, the doctor still treated them at the hospital. When they returned home, they found the cat feeling well after having delivered five kittens.
 - 1. Parking his car in front of her house
 - 2. Seen in the company of an errorist
 - 3. "Some people gamble when they play golf, so if you play golf, you must be gambling."
- C. "Assumptions are dangerous things to make, and like all dangerous things to make -- bombs, for instance -- if you make even the tiniest mistake you can find yourself in terrible trouble. Making assumptions simply means believing things are a certain way with little or no evidence that shows you are correct, and you can see at once how this can lead to terrible trouble." (Lemony Snicket, *The Austere Academy*)

I. NOT ALL ASSUMPTION ARE FOLLY OR SIN

- A. Dangerous situations
- B. Routine situations and patterns
- C. Partial assumptions with facts in evidence (not conclusive)
- D. In every case, dogmatism will change reasonable assumptions into folly or sin.

II. SINFUL ASSUMPTIONS

- A. Dogmatic conclusions without facts in evidence - Prov. 18:1-2, 13, 17
- B. Assumption based on random, unconnected fragments - Prov. 29:20
 - 1. "My mind is made up; don't confuse me with the facts."
- C. Proudful assumptions - Prov. 19:9
 - 1. "That's my story, and I'm sticking with it!"
- D. Assumptions based on a predilection of character - Prov. 14:15-16
 - 1. "They have the unique ability to listen to one story and understand another." (Pandora Poikilos, *Excuse Me; My Brains Have Stepped Out*)
- E. Assumptions of outcomes without considering the Lord - James 4:13-15

III. THREE CHARACTERISTICS OF SINFUL ASSUMPTION

- A. Assumption sets a person up as a god; he assumes he is omniscient.
- B. Assumption exalts the self over others by comparing others projected faults.
- C. Sinful assumption is a prognostication built on either ignorance or judgmentalism. If we can't read others' palms, how can we read their minds?

- D. "It is useless to attempt to reason a man out of a thing he was never reasoned into." (Jonathan Swift)

IV. ENDING SINFUL ASSUMPTION

- A. Realize it is a sin and treat it accordingly.
 - 1. Repent, confess, and fight the temptation to return to it.
 - 2. Replace it with healthier ways of thinking.
- B. Deal with reality through God's word. Filter each situation through the will of God, not our projections.
- C. Understand our minds are just as susceptible to sin and error as those we judge by making assumptions.
- D. Renew and refresh our minds through God's word daily.
 - 1. Eph. 6:17; Rom. 12:2-3
 - 2. The more time we spend with God, the more we come to think like Him.
- E. Learn to recognize gossip bubbles popping up in our minds and burst them the moment they appear.
- F. Realize the possibility that others may be more mature and spiritual than us; if we are constantly assuming others are sinful, there is something wrong with us. Get help.
- G. Understand that we will be as lost over sinful assumptions as we would be for stealing, murder, or adultery.

Conclusion:

- A. The secular world understands that one must not assume the worst in others.
 - 1. "The arrow tipped with ill nature and malice is deadliest to him who sends it." (Prentice Mulford)
 - 2. "A sound mind is good at salvage, at seeing that nothing is lost in others." (Laozi)
 - 3. When we seek to discover the good in others, we somehow bring out the best in ourselves. (Unknown)
- B. Are we happy that God assumes the best in us?
 - 1. He knows all of us have the capacity to overcome and abandon our sins and the ability to develop and rise above the human condition.
 - 2. Rom. 5:8-9; John 3:16, 1:12
 - 3. The question becomes: Do we believe that about ourselves?