

HOW TO AVOID PERSONAL EVIL

PSALM 34:14

Introduction:

It is extremely humbling to realize the potential for evil that is in your heart.

It can be frightening. It should destroy our vain self-confidence and pride.

David understood that one distinguishing mark of a wise person is their relationship to evil. In admonitions that are found in the three Psalms before us, 34, 36, and 37, he points a path that will enable you to avoid the practice of evil, and thus avoid all destructive consequences that go with the practice of evil.

Evil is anything that God abhors and anything that does harm to others.

I. ADOPT THE PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARD EVIL.

“He does not abhor evil.” (36:4) This is a negative description of the attitude of the wicked man; the positive description of a wise man would be that he abhors or despises evil.

II. CHOOSE THE PROPER ACTION WITH REFERENCE TO EVIL.

“Depart from evil and do good.” (34:14)

The proper action is “depart” from evil.

1. Separate yourself from those who practice evil.
2. Avoid circumstances that bring the temptation to do evil.
3. Flee from the temptations to do evil.

III. SELECT THE PROPER ALTERNATIVE FOR EVIL.

“Depart from evil and do good.” (34:14) (37:27)

The human spirit will not tolerate a vacuum. If you are going to avoid evil, you must commit yourself strongly to an alternative. David suggests that you choose to “do good.”

1. Focus on doing things that please God and build character.
2. Commit yourself to do good and helpful things for others.

This should begin in your family. Learn to bless the members of your family.

This would include the members of the family of faith. Bless those who share your commitment to the Lord with your prayers, words of encouragement, and kindnesses.

This would include the neighbors around you. This is “love for your neighbor” in action. It is doing them good.

Attempts to avoid evil practices will fail if you do not choose this alternative. Jesus spent more time encouraging the good than he did condemning the evil.