

DEVICE 8: Satan convinces us that sinners have more fun, but he hides the miserable consequences from us.

Remedy 1 – Remind yourself that outward blessings tell us nothing about God’s evaluation of a person’s soul [²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ ²³ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’ **Matthew 7:21–23** (ESV)]. Satan can make the damned look good. Saul was king, but not God’s man. Job was God’s man, but his life looked pretty bad. [Appearances can be misleading.]

Remedy 2 – Never forget that nothing provokes God to anger more than a person excusing their sin by saying God is merciful. [They presume that God doesn’t care about their sin.] [²⁶ For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. ²⁸ Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know him who said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.” ³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. **Hebrews 10:26–31** (ESV)].

Remedy 3 – There is no greater misery than to not be in misery. Remember this. Also, there is no greater affliction than to not be afflicted. [There’s a longer misery, and eternal affliction if we don’t endure the misery and affliction of repentance now.] [¹⁷ Ephraim is joined to idols; leave him alone. **Hosea 4:17** (ESV);

⁵ Why will you still be struck down? Why will you continue to rebel? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. **Isaiah 1:5** (ESV)].

Remedy 4 – Remember that no matter how great the joys are for a sinner on earth, all of them will end at death. Sinners lack two great blessings that belong to every believer: (a) The blessing of God, and (b) Contentment with their condition [¹¹ Their graves are their homes forever, their dwelling places to all generations, though they called lands by their own names. **Psalm 49:11** (ESV); ⁷ Their eyes swell out through fatness; their hearts overflow with follies. **Psalm 73:7** (ESV); ¹² They sing to the tambourine and the lyre and rejoice to the sound of the pipe. **Job 21:12** (ESV)].

Remedy 5 – Nothing is as it appears. Don’t be deceived by false appearances – sinners really don’t have more fun in the scope of eternity [³ For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. ⁴ With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; ⁵ but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. **1 Peter 4:3–5** (ESV)].

Remedy 6 – God has a plan to humble the strong. Don’t forget it. [¹⁶ But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, ¹⁷ until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end. ¹⁸ Truly you set them in slippery places; you make them fall to ruin. ¹⁹ How they are destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terrors! ²⁰ Like a dream when one awakes, O Lord, when you rouse yourself, you despise them as phantoms. **Psalm 73:16–20** (ESV)].

Remedy 7 – The greatest punishments of Hell belong to those who experienced the greatest sinful pleasure in this world [¹² So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts, to follow their own counsels. **Psalm 81:12** (ESV); ²⁶ He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens, and by his power he led out the south wind; ²⁷ he rained meat on them like dust, winged birds like the sand of the seas; ²⁸ he let them fall in the midst of their camp, all around their dwellings. ²⁹ And they ate and were well filled, for he gave them what they craved. ³⁰ But before they had satisfied their craving, while the food was still in their mouths, ³¹ the anger of God rose against them, and he killed the strongest of them and laid low the young men of Israel. **Psalm 78:26–31** (ESV); ¹⁵ he gave them what they asked, but sent a wasting disease among them. **Psalm 106:15** (ESV)].

Remedy 8 – Keep this in focus: Vain souls must give an account to God for each of their sinful actions [³⁶ I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, **Matthew 12:36** (ESV); ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. **2 Corinthians 5:10** (ESV)].

Questions

- 1. People who are committed to a sinful way of life can appear to have it pretty good. What does the Bible say about this?*
- 2. Why does God bless the person committed to sinfulness? (see Remedy 6).*
- 3. When will everything become clear about how God really feels about people who spend their lives living in rebellion against God*