

The Wages of Unrighteousness

➤ = next PowerPoint slide

➤ Intro:

- **2 Pet. 2:15** Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness
 - showed Balak how to tempt Israel and cause them to fall as a result of their sin
 - for personal benefit – wages, financial reward

- **this lesson:** things we should know about the wages of unrighteousness

➤ There are many ways people benefit from sin

- financially:

- preaching false doctrines, tickling people's ears, for a paycheck (profit)
- drugs, pornography, prostitution, gambling
- stealing, robbing

- social advancement: sinfully manipulating people to put themselves in a better position

- false accusations to get someone in trouble, to make themselves look better
- deceiving other people into thinking you're something you're not
- treating someone mean to make other people laugh

- etc.

- anytime a person benefits from sins he commits, it's the **wages of unrighteousness**

- **What are some things we need to know about the wages of unrighteousness?** – lesson below

➤ The wages of unrighteousness is a strong temptation

- illus.: Balaam, tempted with financial gain to curse the Israelites

- resisted at first
- gave in, unable to curse them, but showed Balak how to put a stumbling block before them whereby they sinned and God punished Israel

➤ - false teachers are doing the same thing as Balaam today, leading people to hell for personal gain

- **2 Pet. 2:1-2, 15** sensual, greed, exploit others for personal profit, like Balaam

- illus.: Perganaum, some held teachings of Balaam, eat things sacrificed to idols and commit acts of immorality (**Rev. 2:14**)

- benefit from the sin of leading people away from God and to Satan

➤ - lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, pride of life (**1 Jn. 2:16**)

- illus.: temptation, the wages of unrighteousness in everyday life. . . .

- deceive a teacher or boss so not get in trouble – wages of unrighteousness
- tell a white lie so someone likes you – wages of unrighteousness

- temptation of the benefits of sin are strong

- **Christians:** don't give into the temptation, refuse the wages of unrighteousness

- **Wages of unrighteousness only last a short time – temporal**
 - **1 Tim. 6:7-8 wages of unrighteousness can only last till we die** – often don't last that long
 - **at death**, all we can take is who we are, not what we have
 - **wages of unrighteousness = moral and spiritual bankruptcy**
 - **Ja. 4:14 even if wages of unrighteousness last till death, still a short time**
 - life is a vapor that is here a short time and vanishes away
- **- Ja. 5:1-5 people reaping the wages of unrighteousness should weep and howl**
 - **they're working for things that will be destroyed**
 - **they'll pay a bigger price for their sin one day, that they ever got from it**
- **We hurt other people more than we get from the wages of unrighteousness – Balak, king of Moab**
 - **illus.: Balaam, showed Balak how to tempt Israel and cause them to fall as a result of their sin**
 - **Num. 24:1-11** God caused a plague to come upon the Israelites and 24k died
 - **- Num. 31:1-18** God had Israel destroy the Midianites, plunder and destroy their cities, kill all the males, and all the women except for girls who hadn't known a man intimately, killed Balaam
 - **it would have been better for all parties, if Balaam had been faithful to God, and rejected the wages of unrighteousness**
 - **the best thing we can do for ourselves and others is be faithful to God, and reject the wages of unrighteousness**
 - **illus.: when tempted to lie for personal gain, better not to, for everyone's sake**
 - **illus.: when tempter to deceive someone for personal gain, better not to, for everyone's sake**
 - **illus.: when tempted to take something that's not our's, better not to, for everyone's sake**
 - **illus.: when tempted to gossip, better not to, for everyone's sake**
- **Wages of unrighteousness are small compared to God's gift**
 - **Heb. 12:15-17 not come short of God's grace, by accepting the wages of unrighteousness**
 - **illus.: not immoral or godless like Esau, who sold birthright for a meal, later couldn't get it back**
 - **- illus.: Judas, betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver – "price of wickedness" (Acts 1:18)**
 - **30 pieces of silver in today's \$ = \$30.85** - \$.66 each (ISBE) X 30 X annualized inflation of 3%
 - **Judas enjoyed the money for about 2 days, then died and eternal lost as the son of perdition (Jn. 17:12)**
 - **wages of unrighteousness were under \$31.00, had it 2 days, didn't get to spend, lost eternally**
 - **sold soul to Satan for \$31.00 - many today doing the same thing**
 - **the benefits we receive from sin are small compared to what we lose**
 - the benefits of sin never come close to matching what we lose in exchange
 - **Satan pays very little for sin, compared to God's gift of eternal life**
 - **Esau received a swallow of stew, Judas receive about \$30.00**
 - **"For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? (Matt. 16:26)**

- **Wages of unrighteousness have eternal consequences** – Balaam killed, Israelites died, Midianites decimated
 - **Rom. 6:23 wages of sin, death** (hell, eternal damnation)
 - **final wages paid for sin** (unrighteousness), **hell**
 - **illus.: Balaam** “loved” the wages of unrighteousness (2 Pet. 2:15), but he certainly doesn’t love the eternal wages

- - **Matt. 16:26-27** Jesus returning to repay everyone, according to deeds
 - **What will you receive when the Lord returns? – Rom. 6:23**
 - wages of sin, hell
 - **gift of God**, eternal life in Christ

- **Summary / Inv.**
 - **to reject the wages of unrighteousness, our love must be in the right place**
 - **2 Pet. 2:15** Balaam “loved” the wages of unrighteousness – **more than God**

 - **we reject the wages of unrighteousness, because we love God more**
 - **illus.: love God more than the benefits from lying** to someone
 - **illus.: love God more than the benefits from deceiving** someone
 - **illus.: love God more than what we receive from stealing**
 - **illus.: love God more than the benefits of gossiping**

 - **as Christians, we. . . .**
 - **love God with all our heart soul mind strength (Mk. 12:30)**
 - **serve one master, not two (Matt. 6:24)**
 - **reject the wages of unrighteousness, to faithfully serve God, and go to heaven**

 - **Is your love in the right place? focused on the right things, doing the right things**

 - **inv.: love God, obey**