



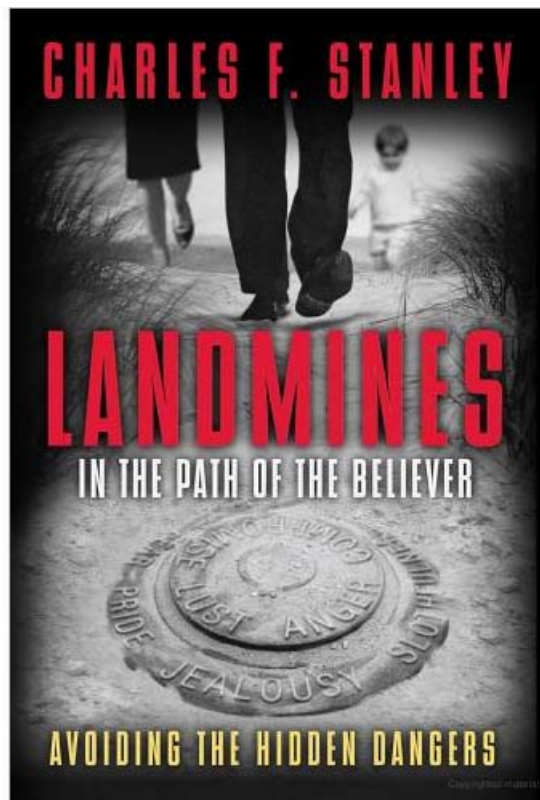
DEAN WELCH – TEACHER



WEEKLY SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

AUGUST 15, 2010

LESSON #3 FROM THE *MASTERWORK* SERIES STUDY OF:





1 KINGS 9:1 – 11:43

Everyone has principles they live by, but which are negotiable and which should never be set aside? What's a man or woman to do these days? The truth is, whenever Christians compromise their godly principles, they walk dangerously close to a deadly landmine. Since the fall of man, we've been in a power struggle with God over control. We surrender to God's will, but when His reality interferes with our daily lives, we jump right back in the driver's seat. When *"the rubber meets the road"* in our personal lives, often we do whatever we need to do to FIX the problem—even when God's Word tells us what we should do. Watch this short video about following God's direction in your life. [PLAY VIDEO CLIP: (2:05 MIN.)

[HTTP://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=S3OH2DJXUY8&FEATURE=RELATED](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3OH2DJXUY8&FEATURE=RELATED)

What was the problem in Kathleen's life in the video? Do you think this is a real problem that very many people struggle with in 2010? Why?

Does anyone remember our former memory verse from **PSALM 119: 72 (NLT)** that goes hand-in-hand with this about following God's instructions? *"Your instructions are more valuable to me than millions in gold and silver."*

Have you ever noticed how opportunity only knocks once, but temptation seems to keep banging away until you answer the door? Isn't that the way our adversary—the devil—plays? Sneaking and creeping around using schemes that we Christians always seem to fall for? He's always there waiting to entice us and unless we are constantly on guard against it, we will slip and fall victim to it too! We always have to be on guard so that we don't fall for any of his tricks and compromise—even a little bit, because

even a little bit can cause problems. Haven't you always heard that the first step is the most dangerous? **Why?**

When you take one step in the wrong direction—a direction that you know is unwise—it can lead to ungodly actions and ultimately destruction. Of course, the enemy's lie to you is: "A little bit of that is not going to hurt you. You can handle it." However, every time you step across the line, what happens? You endanger yourself in ways you don't even realize. Like rat poison, even a little bit of compromise can be deadly, so don't do it. Listen to this story about a father dealing with his two teenage sons: *Two teenagers wanted to go see an "R" rated movie. Their dad said absolutely not. He said it had adult content of all kinds in that movie and it was no place for them. They argued that some of their friends had seen it and said that most of the movie was okay, it was just a few small parts and those weren't enough to hurt anyone. The father said 'No' again and the boys got mad. The father told them to go watch TV, so they did.*

A few minutes later, they heard the dad in the kitchen rustling around the pots and pans. Then in a little while, they smelled the wonderful smell that only fresh-baked brownies can smell like. They smiled and figured that their dad was making something for them because he was sorry he angered them. In a little while, the father brought in a whole plate full of brownies that had been cut and stacked. He offered them to the two boys and each took one. The dad said, "Now before you eat these, you need to know something. I used nothing but natural ingredients. I also used the best ingredients possible. "But I put something extra in the mix that the recipe didn't call for." The boys questioned what it was, and finally the father said he had gone out in the back yard and got just a little doggy stuff to mix in with it. The boys almost got sick. They freaked out and said, "You put dog stuff in our brownies? What's the matter with you, are you trying to poison us?"

The dad tried to explain that just a little wasn't going to hurt them at all, and the rest of the brownies were really good. The kids didn't buy it for a minute. The more the father kept trying to say just a little wouldn't hurt, the more the kids were against ever eating them. Finally the father said, "Now you understand why I don't want you to go to an "R" rated movie. Just a little doesn't seem to matter, but as you see in the brownies, just a little is still vile and unhealthy." He then told the boys that there wasn't really any dog stuff in the brownies, but they still threw them away.

Just a little compromise can take its toll on our minds and hearts. God Word is clear and is a great instruction manual as we mentioned a moment ago with the verse from Psalm 119:72. Another great verse about this is found in **HEBREWS 4:12 (NLT)**: *"For the word of God is **living and active**, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."*

Today, as we continue our study of Dr. Stanley's book *Landmines in the Path of the Believer*, we're obviously talking about the landmine of **compromise**. You will recall that in Week One, we talked about how to defuse the landmines of **disappointment** and of **pride**. Then last week we spent the entire class talking about disarming the deadly landmines of **jealousy** and **envy**. And as we've been learning in this study, Satan's deadliest attacks are usually very subtle and the deceptive power of **COMPROMISE** is among the greatest threats to any believer—just as we saw in the opening video with Kat.

Why do we compromise? I pray that you thought about the eight reasons which Dr. Stanley listed on Day Three (pages 138-139) of your lesson this week. *Paul Harvey tells the story of the uncertain soldier in our Civil War who, figuring to play it safe,*

dressed himself in a blue coat and gray pants and tiptoed out onto the field of battle. He got shot from both directions!

The Bible is full of examples of individuals who compromised in one form or another and their ensuing losses. What about times when we are tempted to compromise our faith or beliefs? **Will we stay strong or try and wear the blue and gray?** Think about it! A great verse to lean on during these times is **EPHESIANS 6:10 (NIV)**, *"Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might."*

Turn to **1 KINGS 9-11** and let's look at the story of King Solomon. If you haven't read these three chapters recently, please take some time and do so. These three chapters reveal the terrible consequences of the landmine of compromise. From a distance, it would be easy to idealize Solomon. The Bible tells us about his wealth and accomplishments—the richest and wisest man to ever live. His national building projects are a tribute to his vision. His collections of proverbs and reflections on the meaning of life show his lifelong pursuit of knowledge. On closer look, however, we see that Solomon had a difficult and troubled life that tells us a lot about the realism we all find in and around ourselves—especially when we compromise what God's Word tells us.

Solomon was the child of his father, David's, marriage to Bathsheba. He had roots in his father's dark side. You'll remember that Solomon's mother was married to another man when King David had an adulterous relationship with her and then had her husband (Uriah) killed to cover up the scandal. Talk about a dysfunctional household. Solomon came to the throne in the middle of a family conflict, as David was about to die, when another son tried to steal the throne. Solomon finally ascended the throne of his father, but God had warned him against alliances with Egypt. Yet, he bypassed the Lord's instruction to buy horses and eventually Solomon found himself agreeing to an alliance with

Egypt and even marrying Pharaoh's daughter. It wasn't long before King Solomon took more wives who worshiped pagan gods. We learn from scripture that Solomon had about 700 royal wives and over 300 concubines.

Solomon's wisdom did not keep him from playing the fool. In spite of all the insight God gave Solomon, he ended up doing precisely what the kings of Israel were forbidden to do. In outrageously self-indulgent ways, he multiplied personal wealth, wives, and sexual partners. Then, just about the time we might think he could do no worse, Solomon built altars to the pagan gods of his wives on the hills surrounding Jerusalem. Look at **1 KINGS 11: 1-8 (NL)**: *"¹Now King Solomon loved many foreign women. Besides Pharaoh's daughter, he married women from Moab, Ammon, Edom, Sidon, and from among the Hittites. ²The Lord had clearly instructed the people of Israel, 'You must not marry them, because they will turn your hearts to their gods.' Yet Solomon insisted on loving them anyway. ³He had 700 wives of royal birth and 300 concubines. And in fact, they did turn his heart away from the Lord. ⁴In Solomon's old age, they turned his heart to worship other gods instead of being completely faithful to the Lord his God, as his father, David, had been. ⁵Solomon worshiped Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molech, the detestable god of the Ammonites. ⁶In this way, Solomon did what was evil in the Lord's sight; he refused to follow the Lord completely, as his father, David, had done. ⁷On the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, he even built a pagan shrine for Chemosh, the detestable god of Moab, and another for Molech, the detestable god of the Ammonites. ⁸Solomon built such shrines for all his foreign wives to use for burning incense and sacrificing to their gods."*

Solomon's life shows us something very important. Wisdom helps us only if we use it. The realism of Solomon's troubles and failures may be one of his most important contributions to us. Through Solomon's foolishness we see that all of the wisdom in the world

does not change our human nature and Satan knows this very well! Who among us does not want to be more honest, more loving, and more self-controlled than we are naturally inclined to be? That's why our real need is not for a wisdom of self-reformation for which we can take the credit. Our real need is for the wisdom that comes as a gift of God's grace, in Christ, through Christ, and for Christ (1 Corinthians 1:30).

The disastrous result of Solomon compromising God's Word was revealed in the words of **verse 4** from **1 KINGS 11** that we just read. Did you catch what it said? Listen: *"...when Solomon was old, his wives turned his **HEART AWAY** after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God".* Consequently, the nation of Israel became weaker until it was torn apart. Just as we said initially, Satan's ways are sneaky and subtle—just a little compromise can undermine even a great and powerful man like Solomon. So imagine what it can do to you?

So, is all compromise wrong? No—it's only compromise with sin that's wrong. Obviously there would be many times when compromise would be a good thing. **When is compromise a good thing and when is it a bad thing?** The real question is, "Compromise with what?" If I am compromising my way with my spouse way in a non-moral issue, that is likely a good thing. *A doctor asked the man how he broke his arm, and the man said he broke it in a bar fight. The doctor told him to stay out of those places.* Duh! Certainly, it would be in our best interest to stay away from all forms of temptation where we may be tempted to compromise what God's Word tells us. Remember our memory verse from a couple of weeks ago from **1 Corinthians 10: 13** that God *"will show you a way out so that you can endure"* any temptation.

Your memory verse today is **PSALM 119: 11 (NIV)**. Someone read the verse, please: *"I have hidden your word in my heart that*

I might not sin against you." The English Standard Version of that verse says, "I have **stored up** your word..." **How does hiding or storing up God's word in our heart help us to sin LESS than we do?** It's often said by Christians that the most common benefit of Scripture memory is the strength to resist temptations that they experience. By getting a taste of this victory, chances are you'll continue in Scripture memory and review. **Does anyone have a recent example of a time when he or she was able to use Scripture to resist compromising?**

As Dr. Stanley pointed out in our bible study this week, Satan always camouflages compromise. He will bring a sinful thought to mind and then hope it will resonate within us. Slowly, like a small drip in our emotions, we begin to think about the temptation. So, now let's talk about the **HOW TO** part—how to avoid the sorrow that comes from this landmine of compromise and how we can disarm this landmine.

FIRST, in order to avoid compromise, *make **GOD'S WORD** your standard of conduct.* Recall the words of **Psalms 119:72** that we read this morning. Never compromise your doctrine. Christians sometimes waver on their belief in the bodily resurrection of Christ, His virgin birth, or the inerrancy of God's Word. Avoid that at all costs. From there, it becomes easier to compromise on issues such as morality and conduct. Make God's Word your standard for every area of your life.

SECOND, in order to avoid compromise, *begin every day on your knees in **PRAYER**.* Memorize **1 THESSALONIANS 5:17**: "*Pray without ceasing.*" When you begin the day before God in prayer and meditate on His Word, you dedicate the day to Him. You have a spiritual **G.P.S.—God's Positioning System**—inside of you, which is the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit guides you in the truth and helps you to live in obedience to God. When you start the day with

Him, you begin with the right heart and perspective to avoid the landmine of compromise.

THIRD, to avoid compromise, *obey the initial promptings of the HOLY SPIRIT*. Whenever you draw close to the landmine of compromise, the Holy Spirit will send you warning signals that you need to obey immediately. The enemy will try to subtly tempt you to think about disobeying God. Don't let him! Listen to the Holy Spirit and obey His promptings immediately. He'll never lead you astray.

Bottom-line is that we are to be a **NON-COMPROMISER**. Think about what characterizes the Christian who stands firm? His discerning spirit helps him to discern what is right from what is unacceptable—the non-compromiser has a clear sense of direction in life and is governed by principle rather than preference. He shuns compromise because he is motivated by the approval of God rather than the applause of others.

One tiny concession may appear insignificant, but as any soldier will tell you, the slightest step in the wrong place can set off a landmine. Compromising godly principles is no small matter for the believer. It is a spiritual undertow that can pull you farther and farther from shore until you are in over your head and too weak to struggle.

Holding firm to God's truth can require tremendous resolution. All followers of Christ will be called upon, sooner or later, to stand for their beliefs or fall for the enemy's deceptions. God wants genuine peace, joy, and contentment to replace all the enslavement, frustration, and anxiety that go along with trying to please a lost and foolish world. That's why, when you refuse to compromise and choose Christ, you're sure to experience victory in every area of life.

Let's Pray.



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1. PSALM 119:72 (NLT), "Your _____ are more valuable to me than _____ in gold and silver."
2. The enemy's _____ to you is: "A _____ of that is not going to hurt you. You can handle it."
3. Just a little compromise can take its toll on our _____ and _____.
 - ★ HEBREWS 4:12 (NLT), "For the word of God is _____ and _____, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."
4. 1 KINGS 11: 4 says, "...when Solomon was old, his wives turned his _____ after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God."
5. How we can **disarm** the landmine of compromise:
 - A. First, make _____ your standard of conduct.
 - B. Second, begin every day on your knees in _____.
 - C. Third, obey the initial promptings of the _____.
6. The bottom-line is that we are to be a _____.