

BOILING FROG



A. BACKGROUND

- The “Boiling Frog” is a “slippery slope” metaphor. A metaphor that illustrates the dangers of gradual change.
- If you place a frog in boiling water, it will immediately jump out. However, if you put it in lukewarm water and slowly raise the temperature, the frog won’t notice the gradual danger and will eventually die.
- The legitimacy of this scientific claim about boiling frogs is under serious doubt, but the concept remains striking when applied to the human psyche.
- **Romans 12:2** - ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you can test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will.
- Are we comfortable, gentlemen? Are we conforming to the pattern of this world?
 - Are we letting proximity to the things of God inhibit genuine transformation?
 - Are we letting our pursuit of power and status prevent genuine change in us?
 - Have we become half-baked Christians due to our half-hearted commitment to the things of God?
 - Have we let our love for the World overtake our love for God?
- The “Boiling Frog” mirrors how small compromises, unchecked desires, and subtle shifts away from God’s purpose can lead to spiritual downfall.
- Transformation requires vigilance. Without it, we can become like the frog—unaware of the dangers of small compromises, unchecked desires, and subtle shifts away from God’s purpose. Today, we explore the gradual corruption that led to the downfall of Judas Iscariot, Simon the Sorcerer, Ananias and Sapphira, and Demas. Their stories remind us to guard our hearts and renew our minds.

B. JUDAS ISCARIOT: PROXIMITY WITHOUT HEART CHANGE

- Judas was one of Jesus's twelve disciples, handpicked by Jesus. He witnessed firsthand the miracles of feeding the multitudes, healing the sick, and even raising the dead. He listened to Jesus' teachings and travelled alongside Him for three years. Yet, despite this proximity to the Savior, Judas's heart remained untransformed. His greed led him to steal from the group's money bag (John 12:6), and ultimately, he betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.
 - **John 12:4-6** – “⁴But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, ⁵“Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages.^[a]” ⁶He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.”
 - **Matthew 26:14-16** – “¹⁴Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests ¹⁵and asked, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?” So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. ¹⁶From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.”
- Judas didn't wake up one day and decide to betray Jesus. His downfall was gradual, starting with small acts of dishonesty. John 12:6 tells us Judas was stealing from the money bag long before his betrayal. Over time, these unchecked compromises hardened his heart, leading to his decision to sell Jesus for thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26:14-16).
- His actions in John 12, where he criticized Mary for pouring expensive perfume on Jesus, were disguised as concern for the poor but were rooted in selfishness and greed.
- Judas allowed his love for money and selfish desires to dominate his heart. He had access to the Truth, but he chose to prioritize his personal gain over spiritual renewal. His outward appearance as a disciple masked an inner resistance to change.
- Lessons we can learn from this:
 - **Proximity is not transformation:** Walking with Jesus outwardly means nothing if our hearts remain unchanged.
 - **Unchecked sin grows:** Small compromises can lead to significant failures if not addressed. Gradual compromises in character lead to larger sins. Judas didn't start with betrayal—he started with dishonesty and selfishness, which grew over time.
- How do we avoid Judas' mistake:
 - **Stocktake:** regularly examine your heart for hidden sins.
 - *Psalm 139:23-24 - Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.*
 - **Vigilance:** Confess and repent immediately when the Holy Spirit convicts you.
 - *1 John 1:9 - If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

Reflection points

- Are there areas in my life where I am tolerating small compromises, thinking they are insignificant?
- Am I allowing selfish desires, such as greed or pride, to influence my decisions?

Prayer Point

- Ask God to help you recognize and address small compromises. Ask Him to transform your heart so that you can walk in integrity and avoid the slow drift into sin.

C. SIMON THE SORCERER: SEEKING POWER WITHOUT PURPOSE

- Simon was a sorcerer in Samaria who amazed the people with his magic. When Philip preached the Gospel, Simon believed, was baptized, and followed the apostles. However, his encounter with God did not change his mindset. When he saw the apostles laying hands on people and imparting the Holy Spirit, he offered them money to buy this power. Peter rebuked him, saying his heart was not right before God.

- **Acts 8:9-24**

⁹ Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, ¹⁰ and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, "This man is rightly called the Great Power of God." ¹¹ They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his sorcery. ¹² But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. ¹³ Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw.

¹⁴ When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. ¹⁵ When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit, ¹⁶ because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

¹⁸ When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money ¹⁹ and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

²⁰ Peter answered: "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! ²¹ You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. ²² Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord in the hope that he may forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. ²³ For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin."

²⁴ Then Simon answered, "Pray to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me."

- Simon's desire for recognition was deeply rooted before he encountered the Gospel. Acts 8:9-10 shows that he enjoyed being called "the Great Power of God." Even after believing and being baptized, his old habits persisted. His pride and desire for control led him to offer money for the ability to impart the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:18-19).
- Simon's belief was superficial. He wanted the benefits of God's power without submitting to God's purpose. His desire for self-promotion and control prevented genuine change.
- Lessons we can learn from this:
 - **Faith must transform our motives:** True belief in Christ changes not just what we do but why we do it. Transformation requires surrendering not just actions but also the underlying desires and attitudes that drive them. Simon's failure to address his pride and control issues led him to approach God's gifts with the wrong motives.
 - **Surrender selfish ambition:** Spiritual gifts are for God's glory, not personal gain.
- How do we avoid Simon's mistake:
 - **Stocktake:** Regularly ask God to purify your motives.
 - *James 4:3 - ³When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.*
 - **Process:** Recognize that spiritual growth requires the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit to renew your thinking.
 - **Accountability:** Stay accountable to mature believers who can challenge and guide you.

Reflection points

- Are there ambitions or desires in my life that I haven't surrendered to God?
- Do I seek recognition or control, even in spiritual matters?

Prayer Point

- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to release pride and selfish ambition. Ask God to transform your motives and teach you to seek His glory above all else.

D. DEMAS: LOVE FOR THE WORLD OVER LOVE FOR GOD

- Demas was a companion of Paul and worked alongside him in ministry. However, Paul later lamented that Demas had abandoned him because he loved the things of this world. Demas's initial commitment to the Gospel faded as worldly pleasures and distractions took priority in his life.
 - **2 Timothy 4:10** - ¹⁰for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia.

- Demas was once a faithful companion of Paul, mentioned in Colossians 4:14 and Philemon 1:24 as a fellow laborer. However, in 2 Timothy 4:10, Paul laments that Demas had abandoned him because he “loved this present world.”
- Demas’s affection for the temporary pleasures of the world outweighed his devotion to God. His mind was not fully renewed, and he lacked the endurance to persevere in his calling.
- Demas didn’t suddenly abandon his faith. His drift began subtly, as worldly distractions and affections took precedence over his calling. His affection for worldly things—perhaps comfort, safety, or material possessions—grew stronger over time, eventually overtaking his commitment to the Gospel.
- Lessons we can learn from this:
 - **Beware of divided affections:** The love of the world competes with our love for God.
 - **Guard against spiritual complacency:** A lack of vigilance can lead to gradual spiritual decline.
- How do we avoid their mistake:
 - **Complacency:** Stay rooted in prayer, fellowship, and God’s Word to guard against complacency.
 - **Stocktake:** Regularly evaluate your priorities to ensure they align with eternal values (Colossians 3:2).

Reflection points

- Are there worldly distractions in my life pulling me away from God’s purpose?
- Have I allowed my love for temporary things to outweigh my devotion to God?

Prayer Point

- Ask God to keep your heart fixed on Him. Ask that He help you resist the subtle pull of worldly distractions and remain steadfast in your calling.

E. CONCLUSION

The stories of Judas, Simon, Ananias and Sapphira, and Demas reveal the dangers of gradual corruption. Their proximity to God’s power and work wasn’t enough because they ignored the small compromises, unchecked desires, and distractions that slowly led them astray. Like the frog in boiling water, they were unaware of the dangers until it was too late.

As we pursue a transformed mind for territorial transformation – let us reflect:

- **Are there small compromises in your life that you’ve overlooked?**
- **Are there distractions or desires pulling your heart away from God’s purposes?**
- **What steps can you take today to renew your mind and stay vigilant in your faith?**