

the kind of woman that was used to men. She was living with a man, and had been married five times before. Yet, before the day was out, she was converted to Christ. Her new affection changed her direction forever.

Follow sin to hell; follow Christ to heaven. Which will it be?

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To read the story of the woman at the well, go to John 4 in your Bible. For additional articles and materials to help you understand how to relate to Christ and find forgiveness, please go to our website.

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# Invincible?

By Jim Elliff

When I was caught for eating a bit of icing from one of the cupcakes planned for the Fifth Grade party, my principal was incensed. “What’s that on your shoulders?” she demanded.

I didn’t have a clue what “that” was. She asked again, but finally had to inform me that it was a head with a brain inside.

She was sure that any one with a brain encased in a head resting on his shoulders would have better sense than to swipe the icing off a cupcake that wasn’t even his. I should have remembered what my mother told me about such things.



“The capacity of the brain is such that it can hold information equivalent to that contained in twenty-five million books,” says Dr. Richard Swenson in *More Than Meets the Eye*, “enough to fill a bookshelf 500 miles long.” But somehow I could not bring that single byte of information up to the surface. I took the forbidden icing before I considered what my mother taught me, the painful consequences, or even what was resting on my shoulders.

I paid a big price for my stupidity.

Ignorance or failure to remember, is no excuse when it comes to breaking the law of God either. To be guilty, it is not necessary to plan your sin like the terrorists planned the plane crash into the World Trade Center. In fact, the tempta-

tion can come on you so fast that you just react with little or no thought about the dumb thing you are about to do.

I bought a diamond ring that way. That's right, a diamond ring. I stepped into an auction house in Hot Springs, Arkansas during my college days, was mesmerized by the auctioneer while trying to act clever in front of my friends, and suddenly I was the proud owner of a *yellow* diamond ring. He got me! At the time, I was barely paying my way through school with hardly a penny to spare. It took my father and a lawyer and a lot of embarrassment to get out of that one. I was just a lot more vulnerable than I thought.

Here is a piece of advice from someone who has done the wrong thing over and over again. *Don't overrate your ability to resist temptation.*

To think that you can withstand failure while entering the room of temptation is a form of self-confidence that will land you in serious trouble. The truth is that you are capable of sinning in a big way.

The best help you can get for staying out of trouble is to steer as far away from the source of that trouble as possible. "Make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts," is the way one version of the Bible puts Romans 13:14 (NKJV), a key verse to help us cope with temptation.

In other words, if you're in a relationship that is causing you to disobey God, end it. If you have trouble with drinking, or bingeing, change the set of friends who influence you. If you have trouble with lust, remove your television, uninstall internet access, or put a blocking device on your computer that will remove sexual content all together.

If sitting with certain folks during lunch prompts you to speak badly about others, then don't sit there. Don't plan to be in a situation loaded with possibilities for sin even if you

think you have power over those temptations. Cut the umbilical cord to temptation. You're not invincible.

The writer of Proverbs says, "Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil. Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn away from it and pass on." Proverbs 4:14-15.

Sin can take you down the road further than you ever thought possible. In fact, unless forgiven by God, it will take you all the way to hell. It's a cruel master.

There is a shocking story found in Proverbs 7 about a woman who entices a man to have sexual relations with her. There is a lot there to help you diagnose the nature of allure-ment. It gets scary when you read the part that says, "*Immediately* he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks. . . . As a bird hastens to the snare, he did not know it would cost his life." (Proverbs 7: 22-23)

The rest of the proverb goes like this: "Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways. Do not stray into her paths; for she has cast down many wounded, and all who were slain by her were strong men. Her house is the way to hell, descending to the chambers of death." (verses 25-27)

Strong men? Yes!—men who otherwise appear able to meet any challenge. Yet, these strong men could not resist the advances of a weak woman who wanted to have sex. And I'm sure the genders in the story could be reversed.

If her house is the way to hell, then the sitcoms and late talk show hosts are lying. Sex outside of marriage is not just innocent fun.

A woman gave some water to Jesus, an action not normal for woman of her day when meeting strangers. But she was