

I (Almost) Got Away With It!

by Wayne Goff

There is a television show which airs regularly on Investigation Discovery Channel which documents criminals who *almost* got away with their crimes. It intrigues me because when I've watched the various episodes it is obvious that the criminals are very rarely penitent for their crimes. They are just sorry that they got caught. One episode of a runaway criminal documented the fact that he killed a family friend and showed little or no remorse. Something is definitely *missing* from the conscience of such people. Most, if not all, of them are proud of what they have accomplished on the other side of the law. They all brag about the fact that while they finally got caught, *they almost got away with it!*

Religiously speaking, many people practice religion on the same basis. They may have been a faithful Christian at some point in the past, but they decided to quit going on Sunday nights or Wednesday nights, and though their conscience was a bit pricked, eventually the pain subsided. The following week they experienced no terrible consequences for their absenteeism, so the downward spiral continued. Eventually they just "quit the church" (actually they "quit the Lord"), and again suffered no observable terrible consequences for their apostasy, so they conclude that *they have gotten away with it!*

Others proudly proclaim that there is no God, and that organized religion is corrupt, and one way is as good as another, and we all need to just agree to disagree and get along, and besides *all religions* have basically the same tenets so they must have originated from man. Then they go out and live the lifestyle they have chosen — alcohol consumption, sexual freedom, live-for-the-moment, and an extra day of the week all for themselves (Sunday!) — and since nothing horrible happened to them they think that *they have gotten away with it!*

Furthermore, they have lots of friends, coworkers, and other generally "pretty good people," and they are all doing it, and *they have gotten away with it!* So what's all the religious fuss?

Almost . . . But Lost!

Well, the problem with this very short-sighted philosophy is that it doesn't deal with the very real truth that **God exists!** Those I have talked to do not want to engage in a lengthy, detailed Bible-based debate on the subject. They just throw out a few *general accusations* about religion, God, the Bible, other world religions, etc., and soothe their conscience as they go on their merry way. The truth is that they want to live an unrestricted lifestyle and so they cast off their religion like the Prodigal Son of Luke 15! They think they are getting away with it! But King Solomon, a wise, experienced man himself, warned:

"Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; walk in the ways of your heart, and in the sight of your eyes; but know that for all these God will bring you into judgment" (Ecclesiastes 11:9).

You see, they have not *diligently searched* to prove the Bible to be untrue, nor have they *logically, reasonably* disproved the existence of God. So in the end, when they meet their Creator, they will not be so much surprised as scared to death! When they come to the terror that accompanies the death of one who lived only for today, then they will wish in a moment's time that they had read the Bible, believed and obeyed God, and were ready to receive a reward rather than judgment!

I understand that, as humans, none of us likes the idea of **"judgment."** But wishing it away will not make it go away! Better to be **eternally certain** of the future that lies ahead, than to live on the basis of *wishful thinking*. Jesus warned that *"whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand"* (Matt. 7:26). All seems well and good until the floods come, and then too late they will realize that **"I almost got away with it!"**