

Ticks, and How to Deal With Them

Introduction:

- A. Lyme Disease – history of, including statistics.
- B. Most of us are probably familiar with ticks.
 - 1. We've probably all had them on us at one time or another.
 - 2. They are bloodsucking mites that sit on bushes, in the grass or other spots waiting for a victim.
 - 3. They jump on and crawl to a protected area of the victim and begin to feed on our blood.
 - 4. If undetected, a tick will fill itself full of our blood before dropping off.
- C. In this lesson, we want to use what we know about the tick to learn some lessons about sin.

I. A Comparison Between Ticks and Sin.

A. Both Feed On Our Life!

- 1. Ticks feed on blood and thus they feed on our physical life – Lev.17:14.
- 2. Sin feeds on our spiritual life – our soul! – Psa.41:4; Prov.8:36.
 - a. Sin, and temptation, robs us of our service to God by causing us to focus on the flesh.

B. Both May Start Small Enough That They Are Hard To Notice!

- 1. Often when we think of ticks we think about the blood bloated insect we pulled off of our dogs.
- 2. However, these ticks are much smaller than common dog and cattle ticks.
 - a. In their larval and nymphal stages, they are no bigger than a pinhead.
 - b. Adult ticks are only slightly larger.
- 3. Sin often starts “small.”
 - a. A little white lie, one drink, a lingering glance at someone besides your spouse, etc.
 - b. We convince ourselves that it will be okay to open the door to sin just a little but usually it is opening a flood gate.

C. Both Grow!

- 1. A tick left untreated will continue to grow.
- 2. Sin left untreated often grows and leads to more sin.
 - a. David's sin started with lust for Bathsheba, then led to adultery, then to murder, etc. – 2 Sam.11.
- 3. Today one sin leads to others in attempts to hide our true character.

D. The Longer They Are There, The Harder It Is To Get Rid of Them!

- 1. If you find a tick on you before it attaches, you can fairly easily knock it off.
 - a. Once it attaches and begins to grow, it is harder to get rid of it.
- 2. Likewise, if you confront sin before it gets hold of you, it is much easier to get rid of it.
 - a. When we allow sin to remain and lead to more sin, it becomes more difficult to get rid of.
 - 1) There is so much to remove – to correct – so many to apologize to....

E. Both Can Lead To Death!

- 1. Ticks often carry diseases that many people have died from.
- 2. Sin leads to death – Jas.1:14,15; Rom.6:23; Ezek.18:20.

F. Both Carry Consequences Besides Death!

- 1. Illnesses from ticks can linger for a long time.
- 2. The consequences of sin often remain even after forgiveness is received.
 - a. David's sin – he lost his children.
 - b. One can be forgiven of fornication, but they may have to live with disease, a child, etc. that came as a result.

G. So ticks and sin are a great deal alike.

- 1. With the summer months upon us, we will have to worry about ticks for a few months.
- 2. Sin, however, is always among us.

II. Similarities in the Way We Deal with Ticks and Sin.

A. Tick-Proof Areas!

1. One of the best ways to prevent your yard from being infested with ticks is good maintenance.
 - a. Don't let the grass get too tall; perhaps use an insecticide.
2. To prevent infestation with sin exercise good maintenance / keep everything under control.
 - a. cf. Jas.3:1f– James talks about the importance of controlling or taming the tongue.
 - b. Don't allow our desires to get out of control.
 - 1) 1 Cor.7:5– Sexual desires in the marriage relationship.
 - 2) 1 Jn.2:16– We must control the desires of our flesh, eyes and pride.
 - 3) Covering ourselves with God's word and filling our schedules with activities for the Lord will help prevent us from being infested with sin.
 - 4) We must create in ourselves a heart where sin cannot survive / cannot find a home.
 - 5) 1 Pet.3:15,16.

B. Avoid Infested Areas!

1. Stay out of tall grass and wooded areas which are prone to tick infestations.
2. Stay out of **places** which are often infested with sin – cf. Prov.4:14,15.
 - a. Movies, school dances, public swimming pools, etc.
 - b. We all need to heed God's warning and *"abstain from every form of evil"* – 1 Thess.5:22.
3. Stay away from **people** who are infested with sin!
 - a. *"You can't lie down with the dogs without getting up with fleas."*
 - b. Playing with tick-infested animals can lead to ticks on us – same with sin – 1 Cor.15:33.
 - c. What kind of friends do you have?

C. Protect Yourself When You Must Enter Infested Areas!

1. There are times you can't avoid being in tick-infested areas – Yard work, camping trips, etc...
2. During those times you must have the proper protection.
 - a. Wear a hat, long pants and sleeves that are fitted at the openings, long white socks, repellent.
3. There are times you cannot really avoid being in sin-infested areas – 1 Cor.5:9,10.
 - a. How do we protect ourselves from sin?
 - 1) Eph.6:11-17– By putting on the whole armor of God.
 - 2) Jas.4:7,8– Resist the devil – for some the problem is they don't resist!

D. Examine Yourself Daily!

1. After being in tick-infested areas we need to carefully examine ourselves for ticks.
2. Likewise, we need to often examine ourselves for sin – 2 Cor.13:5.
 - a. The longer we allow ourselves to stay in sin, the harder it is to return to the faith.

E. Have Others Examine You, And Help Examine Them!

1. We cannot always see all the ticks that may get on us.
 - a. Those who love us will help point out any ticks on us.
2. So it is with sin: we cannot always see the sin in our lives.
 - a. Sometimes we need others to help examine us for sin – Heb.3:13; Jas.5:20.

F. If One Gets On You, Get It Off Immediately!

1. What do we do if we see a tick on us? "Get it off!"
2. What do we do if we see sin in our lives – Are we as quick to remove it from us as we are a tick?
 - a. Which carries the greater consequences?
3. Through Christ every sin can be removed: Alien – Acts 22:16; Christian – Acts 8:22.

Conclusion:

- A. If you fail to properly deal with ticks we may lose our physical life.
- B. If you fail to properly deal with sin we WILL lose our spiritual life.