

Curiosity sometimes creates an irresistible urge to do something the outcome of which we already know. Curiosity to experience something for ourselves is a powerful force.

I observed this phenomenon on a recent visit to a salt mine in Berchtesgaden, Germany. Melanie, the Russ Roberts' family and I were at a large underground salt lake which had been formed by the mining process. Fresh water would be used to dilute the salt; the brine would then be pumped to the surface and later distilled to form table salt.

Water from the lake was circulated through a basin which was thickly encrusted with salt deposits. Our German guide encouraged everyone to dip their fingers in the basin and sample the salt content of the brine. Predictably, everyone dutifully dipped their fingers in the basin and licked. All except me, that is. You see, I *know* what salt water tastes like, and I didn't have to stick my fingers in a salt lake to know how bad industrial strength salt water tastes.

While this is a harmless example of curiosity, not everything which tempts us is so benign. What makes some people, especially teenagers and young adults, play Russian roulette? Do they not know what will happen if a bullet is in the chamber? Of course they know! They aren't seeking information; they are seeking a thrill. There is a thrill involved in personal experimentation. It can be quite exciting to try something you've never tried before – even if it might kill you.

The element of curiosity is what makes sin so intriguing. You can quote statistics until you are blue in the face, document where certain behaviors have led to harm; you can plead, warn and threaten and some people still will want to try the "forbidden fruit."

Deliberately doing that which is obviously dangerous or deadly takes a certain amount of rationalization. "I'll just try it this once." "It probably won't happen to me." "Other people are doing it and it doesn't seem to hurt them." "Everyone needs to sow their wild oats." "I can handle it."

On and on people go, making excuses for themselves and doing the same stupid things, suffering the same consequences again and again – and the Devil laughs! Somewhere we've got to trust God when He says, "Don't do that; it will hurt you." Our curiosity must be curbed by faith.