

RESULTS OF SIN

“death”

Key question

How does sin effect our lives?

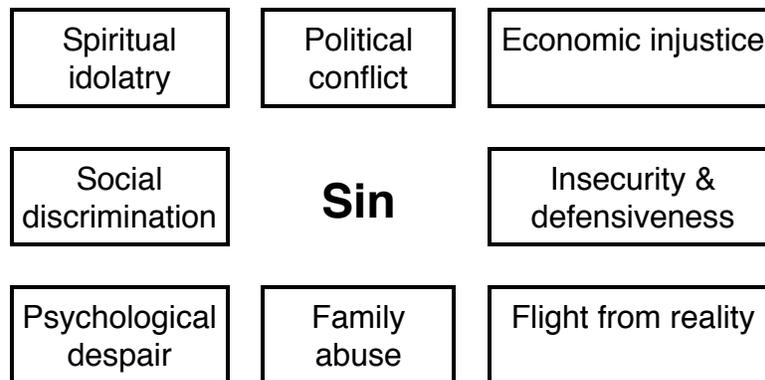
Key text

Romans 6:23

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Introduction

1. Universal human experiences seem to include a sense of right and wrong and a sense of moral failure. How are we to understand this phenomena?
2. It is easy to deny the presence of sin but not the results of sin. How can a Christian draw a link between the results of sin and the Biblical concept of sin?
3. Are all sins individual (personal) or are there corporate sins? Are there systemic sins?



A. **Gen.3, Sin is the process of gaining independence from God with the separation from life that such independence initials.**

1. **Deception** - Eve is confused as to what is true. The first step is one of wrong thinking about the nature of reality. That which is seen (the physical) is to be preferred to that which is not seen (the spiritual).

2. **Disbelief** - Eve rejects what God reveals. The second step is one of misplaced commitment. God's goodness is not believed.
3. **Disobedience** - Eve seeks to do things her way. The third step is to act out the disbelief with the following results.
 - a. **Discernment** - The eyes of Adam and Eve are opened and a new level of consciousness is born. A whole new world is opened to their consciousness.
 - b. **Death** = Broken relationships with GOD, ENVIRONMENT, OTHERS & SELF which perpetuate man's sin.
 - c. **Darkness** = Inability to see the truth which perpetuates man's sin.
 - d. **Despair** = Psychological hopelessness which perpetuates man's sin.

B. The results of sin must be understood if we are to fight against it.

1. **An enemy of God** (the picture here is one of a combatant status) - Jas.4:4 "whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."
2. **The wrath of God** (the picture is one of strong disfavor) - Jn.3:36 "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the WRATH of God rests upon him." Rom.1:18 "the WRATH of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of men who by their wickedness suppress the truth." (Rom.2:5, 9:22).
3. **Guilt** (the picture here is one of delinquency & indebtedness) - Jas.2:10 "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become GUILTY of all." The sacrificial system of the Old Covenant suggests that there are degrees of guilt. (Lev.4-7).
 - a. Outward sins and sins of the heart.
 - b. Sins of ignorance and sins of knowledge - I Tim.1:13
 - c. Sins of 3rd degree and sins of 1st degree - Ps.19:13
 - d. Sins not unto death and sins unto death - I Jn.5:16-17
4. **Punishment** (the picture here is one of painful effects).
 - a. JUSTICE - Heb.10:30 "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."
 - b. DETERRENCE - I Cor.10:11 "Now these things happened to them as an example."
 - c. DISCIPLINE - Heb.12:10 "He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness."
 - d. NATURAL CONSEQUENCES - Gal.6:7-8 "whatever a man sows, this he will also reap."
 - e. SPECIALLY ORCHESTRATED EVENTS - Israel's history.
5. **Death** (the picture here is one of broken relationship).
 - a. PHYSICAL - separation of soul from body. I Cor.12:30 "For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep."
 - b. SPIRITUAL - temporal separation of soul from God. Rom.6:23 "the wages of sin is death."
 - c. ETERNAL - eternal separation of soul from God. II Thess.1:9 "And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,"
6. **The effects on the sinner:**

- a. DEATH - a deep longing for life that is frustrated.
 1. Insensitivity
 2. Self-centeredness
- b. DARKNESS - flight from reality. Rom.1:21 “they became futile in their speculations,” Gen.3:11 “the woman gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” Jer.17:9 “The heart is deceitful above all things,”
 1. Denial of sin. Gen.3:11-12.
 2. Self-deceit. Jer.17:9.
- c. DESPAIR - a hopelessness. Ps.38:3 “There is no health in my bones because of my sin”
 1. Enslavement to sinful thoughts and deeds. Rom.6:17; 8:2.
 2. Restlessness

7. The effects on relationships with others:

- a. DEATH - broken relationships.
 1. Inability to empathize. Phil.2:3-5.
 2. Inability to love.
- b. DARKNESS - rejection of authority. II Thess.2:7 “the mystery of lawlessness.”
- c. DESPAIR - social conflict. Jas.4:1-2 “you fight and wage war”
 1. War.
 2. Class discrimination.

C. The social dimensions of sins must not be neglected by evangelicals.

1. If we view the personification of evil as **THE DEVIL** and the inborn personal depravity as **THE FLESH**, then the corporate social dimension of sin can be described as **THE WORLD**.
 - a. **The World** is a spiritual force that works against the Kingdom of God.
 1. The world as a whole organized system of spiritual force is a fact.
 - **II Cor.7:10** “worldly grief produces death”
 2. The world is under Satan’s control.
 - **Eph.2:2-3** “once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.”
 - **I Jn.5:19** “the whole world is in the power of the evil one.”
 3. The world is clearly evil.
 - **Jn.7:7** “The world . . . hates me because I testify of it that its works are evil.”
 4. The world stands in opposition to the people of God.
 - **Jn.15:18-19** “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.”
 - **I Cor.1:21,27** “The things of God are foolish to the world.”
 - **I Cor.2:12** “Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God,”
 - **Jn.14:17** “the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him;”

5. Powerful as are the world's system and ruler, they are doomed.
 - **I Cor.6:2** Believers will someday judge the world.
 - **Jn.16:33** "I have overcome the world."
 - **Jn.12:31** "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out." - vs.32-33 speak of the cross.
- b. **Principalities and Powers** are elemental spirits of institutions and social structures in the world that are corrupted by the fall. Col.2 is a key chapter.
 1. Paul distinguished "powers" from "principalities" and from "angels" in Rom.8:38-39
 2. Paul refers to "elemental spirits" in Col.2:8, 20.
 3. Paul describes the principalities and powers as having control of persons. Col.2:14-15.
 4. Christ is said to have disarmed the powers, made a public example of them, and triumphed over them. Gal.3:1-5; I Cor.15:24-26; Rom.8:18-25.
2. Social sins often go unclaimed by individuals.
 - a. People feel that they do not have an active choice in corporate sins.
 - b. Group identity can shape worldviews so as to render them insensitive to social injustices.
 - c. People fail to see that group selfishness may involve individual unselfishness.
 - d. There is a tendency to "group think" so as to lose sight of our weaknesses.
 - e. The further removed we are from the actual evil, the less real it seems.
3. We are not the only people responsible for some of our sins.
 - a. Lk.17:1-4; Matt.18:6-7 suggest that we can cause another to stumble.
 - b. The responsibility of the stronger brother in I Cor.8 suggests that he will bear responsibility for the sins of those that they lead astray by example.
 - c. Teachers are warned in Jas.3:1 that their judgment is strict because of their influence.
 - d. In I Cor.15:33 we read that the choices we make with respect to the company we keep can result in putting us in harms way, causing us to sin.
 - d. I Tim.5:22 "Do not lay hands upon any one too hastily and thus **share responsibility for the sins of others;**"

Pastoral advice

How should we view the results of sin?

1. Just as Jesus' healing ministry was a sign of his authority and God's compassion so our commitment to social reform is but a sign of the Kingdom of God and His love. It is not assumed that education, economic justice, psychological therapy, and political reform will solve the sin problem.
2. We will never out grow our need for grace. Our condition is far worse than we can fathom and God's grace is far more powerful than we could imagine.
3. Christians have the ability, more than anyone else, to understand the highest aspirations of humanity and to empathize with the deepest pains of human experience. This is because we understand the nature of man's dignity and his depravity.

Questions that you should be able to answer.

- 1. Specific facts you should know.**
 - a. What is the meaning of death?
 - b. What texts of Scripture express the results of sin?
- 2. Issues that you should be able to discuss.**
 - a. How is corporate sin to be understood?
 - b. What are some of the social dimensions of sin?
 - c. How should Christians expect to impact society?
 - d. How are we convicted of sin?
- 3. Questions you should wrestle with.**
 - a. What constitutes proper legislation with regard to social injustice?
 - b. How deeply committed should a believer be to social reform? What are some of the wise and unwise expressions of social concern?
 - c. Are political conservatives more enlightened with respect to social reform than political liberals?