

GREAT BIBLE TRUTHS

7. Sin – Its' Nature & Effects



An Introduction

Man was created in the image of God, to have a relationship with him and one another. Although we are spiritual beings, we are spiritually dead because of sin. If we are going to fully realise our need as sinners, we must understand what sin is, from God's point of view.

NATURE OF SIN – What is sin?

Some people think of sin only as outward actions, that can be punished by law, while others think it is sin if you get caught! However we can't accept man's concept of sin, for man is a sinner himself. Let's see what the Bible teaches about sin:- how it affects our relationships, our attitudes and our actions.

1. Relationships

There are many words used in both Greek and Hebrew to express what sin is. One Greek word used is 'hamartia', which means, to go astray and miss the goal that God has for us, or to turn our backs on God and the proper relationship we should have with him. This is the fundamental element of sin: that we were created to have a relationship with God, but we have refused to do so, causing separation from God. This was the first Consequence when Adam and Eve sinned – their relationship with God was breached. (Genesis 3:8) This is expressed in different ways:-

(a) Indifference or Independence

Living without God, making our own decisions and plans, and even trying to do good apart from him, means we are living independent of him. Ingratitude to God for his care and provision shows we are indifferent.

(b) Open Rebellion

This is deliberate disobedience to God's will and acting against the things he has said. Daniel 9:5

(c) Idolatry

This is substituting God with something or someone else, which the Bible calls spiritual adultery.

- Worshipping other gods instead of, or alongside the true God. Hosea 4:7, 13, Romans 1:23, 25
- Making other things or people more important than God. This would include things like possessions, money, friends and family. Matthew 6:24
- Putting ourselves first, taking charge of our own life and decisions instead of asking God. Luke 9:23-25

(d) Unbelief

This is when someone fails to believe in God and put their trust in him, or refuses to rely on him. Sin doubts God's character (Genesis 3:4), his wisdom (Genesis 3:5) or his authority. Genesis 2:17

2. Attitude

Sin has affected our outlook on life, our thoughts and motives. These are the core of sin, and it is from these that our evil actions come. Jesus said our actions show what we are like inside, and our inner thoughts are as bad as the outward actions. (Matthew 15:18-19) God also judges our motives, not just our words and actions. 1 Corinthians 4:5

3. Activity

Different words are used in the Bible to express what sin is. It is also called evil, the acts of the sinful nature, the earthly nature or the works of the flesh. (Luke 6:45, Galatians 5:19-21, Colossians 3:5-9) The way we live is an expression of our relationship with God. The closer we are to him, the more like him we become, and the better our conduct towards one another will be. This is why the first commandment is to love the Lord our God, and the second is to love others. Mark 12:30-31



As a Christian, should we have charms, ornamental Buddha's, or follow the stars?

Is habitual worry a sin? What do you think?

"That is not sin, it is our culture." Discuss issues you face in your country.

EFFECTS OF SIN – Sin affects our relationship with God & man

1. In our relationship with God

(a) Separation & Disharmony

As sin is turning away from God, the natural result is that we destroy our relationship with him. God has no choice, but to turn from the sinner, and if we won't accept the salvation he offers, then he eventually gives up on us. Deuteronomy 31:16-18, Romans 1:18, 24, 2:5

(b) Enmity, Wrath & Guilt

If we don't turn back to God we become his enemies (Romans 5:9-10), proving we are hostile towards him. (Romans 8:7) This brings the wrath of God on us unless we repent and accept Christ by faith. Since we are guilty we deserve punishment. There are two types of punishment:-

(i) Sin's self-punishment

By its' very nature sin brings misery and destruction.

(ii) Positive punishment

Sin arouses God's anger, and just as God's love is personal, so is his anger against sin. Those who refuse to repent and receive forgiveness on the basis of what Jesus has done, face the punishment of eternal separation from God. 2 Thessalonians 1:5-9

There are those who say they don't believe in the existence of God, but no-one can completely cut themselves off from him, since we owe our very existence to him. Ultimately all men are accountable to him. Romans 3:19, Acts 17:28



Now that I have become a Christian is it true that I don't have to worry how I live, as I won't face God's judgment? What do you think? Romans 2:1-3, 6:15-23, 2 Corinthians 5:10

What about a person who has never heard about Christ? Surely God would not sent them to hell. Discuss. Romans 1:18-20, 2:12-16



Sin isn't a popular subject today, even in some churches! We need to remember this is why Jesus went to the cross. "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Corinthians 5:21) Think about that.