

## WHAT SIN WILL DO FOR YOU

In order to deal effectively with the problem of sin, we must first admit that the problem exist. Some today deny the existence of sin. Atheist say that men are the product of physical forces acting randomly upon one another without rhyme or reason. A former secretary of the American Association for the advancement of Atheism said, "Human thought is as mechanical as the movement of the stars and the secretion of liver bile." If they are right, there is no God, no devil, no heaven or hell, no right or wrong, no good or evil, for they have denied the very foundation for determining these things.

Humanist deny the existence of sin and deny the world is lost. One spokesman for this group said, "Blood is a filthy thing. It's shocking to our education, culture, and refinement." So refined and educated, they remain lost and without any hope whatever. The real problem is that they have made humanism their god. They exalt the flesh. They believe every day man is getting better and better. When, if they would open their eyes, they would see men are getting worse and worse.

Many philosophers occupy this same position in denying the existence of God. They believe that man by his own intellect can answer all of his own questions and solve all of his own problems. Philosophy is the mother of situation ethics and hedonism. Whatever works is right. Whatever makes you feel good at a particular time do it because it is right for you, for this is the only time we have.

Some have tried to remove sin from our vocabulary and from the dictionary. They do it by changing the name of words and actions. A popular saying today is that "Sin is in the eyes of the beholder." The original saying was that, "Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder." We cannot say a person is gay today for this would imply they were homosexual. Two people living together without marriage is no longer sinful. They are said not to be living in fornication, but they are said to have a meaningful relationship. In some cases, the marriage vows have been changed from, "until death do us part," to "until love no longer remains." It does not matter how much people may refuse to admit sin exist, or try to change its meaning, sin and its consequences are clearly evident in the world we live in.

Referring to the fall of man, Paul writes, "Therefore just as through one man, sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). Sin is "unrighteousness" (1 John 5:17), and "transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4 KJV). Just as in the sin of Adam and Eve, sin results from a failure to believe God and to obey His word.

Sin is real, and its consequences are equally real. Let's consider some of those

consequences by discussing some of the things sin will do to us. Sin will enslave. Paul wrote, “Do you not know you not that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey; whether of sin leading to death or obedience leading to righteousness” (Romans 6:16). Jesus Himself said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin (John 8:34). This is not referring to inadvertently committing a sin, but the verb suggests continual action. Jesus can set us from sin (John 8:32). When we are baptized into Christ. We meet Him in His death, and His blood washes away our sins (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:26-27; Revelations 1:5).

Sin makes us dirty. We were born innocent spotless beings (Matthew 19:14). This is the way we were born, but if we have lived long enough, we have become contaminated by sin. Sin stains us. James writes that one important aspect of “pure and undefiled religion” is to “keep yourself unspotted from the world” (1:27). Jude said we should try to pull sinners “out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh” (v. 23). Jesus commended those in Sardis who had not defiled their garments with sin (Revelation 3:4). No matter how dirty sin may have made us, Jesus blood can wash as white as snow (Isaiah 1:18; Revelation 7:14).

Sin leaves scars. When I was a young boy, I was trying to prove how tough I was and heated up the top of a cigarette lighter and placed it on my arm to show how I could endure that pain. I did endure the pain, but that foolish act left me a reminder, a scar that remains until today. That is the way sin works. We may engage in sinful actions that at the time may seem pleasurable, but they may leave scars that last a lifetime. King David’s sins resulting from this sexual encounter with Bathsheba left him with scars that haunted him until his death (2 Samuel 12:9-15; Psalm 32:1-5; 51:1-17). Although he was forgiven for his sins, the consequences of those sins followed him through life. Saul of Tarsus who became the Apostle Paul knew his sins had been washed away in Christ’s blood (Acts 22:16), but the sinful actions were never far from his thoughts (Acts 26:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:9-10; Timothy 1:12-15). I am sure there must have been times in his life when Paul remembered seeing the angelic face of Stephen and his plea of forgiveness for those who were stoning him to death as he stood by keeping the coats of those executioners (Acts 7:54-60). Jesus can forgive the sins we commit, but the scars will remain.

Sin separates. Where God is concerned that separation may be temporary in this life, or it can become permanent in the life to come. Isaiah wrote, “Behold the

Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear, But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear." That separation ceases when we are born again into God's family through baptism into Christ (John 3:3-5; Romans 6:3-7). When we are His blood bought children, He will forgive our sins and hear our prayers (1 John 1:9; 1 Peter 3:12). However, until we accept His grace through faith and obedience, the separation continues and will follow us into eternity (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

Consider the rich man in one of Jesus' parables (Luke 16:19-31). In this life, he did not mind being separated from God. He thought he was self-sufficient and did not need anyone other than himself. When death came, and he awoke in torment, everything had changed. Now the beggar Lazarus was being comforted while he cried out from the pain of the fire that surrounded him. He might have now been willing to give up all he once had to trade places with Lazarus and to be where he was in the protection of God's paradise. It was too late. His eternal destiny was sealed.

If sin has us shackled, and if we don't break those chains while in this life, at the judgement seat of Christ, we will be separated from loved ones who died in Christ, and from everything that is good wholesome and precious (Matthew 25:31-46). Our saved loved ones and friends will not miss us, but oh, how we will miss them (Revelation 21:3-4; 7-824-27; 22:14-15).

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\*Unless otherwise stated all Scriptural references are from the NKJV.