

Sin—An Outdated Concept?

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When did you hear the term “sin” the last time? We do not talk much about it any longer. If you make a mistake society would suggest not to admit it. You could possibly damage your feeling of self-worth or others could turn against you, some would argue. Therefore, mistakes should not be admitted. Yet we know that not everything is okay with us, and sometimes we may suffer because of it. So, let us face the problem rather than running from it. What do we know about sin?

I. The Bible and Sin

(1) What is sin?

- John 16:9 - Sin is separation from God (see Gen 3). Sin is not to believe in Jesus.
- 1 John 3:4 - Sin is lawless, transgressing God’s commandments.
- John 8:34 - Sin is slavery.
- James 4:17 - It is not to do what is right, although we know what should be done.

(2) Who is a sinner?

- Rom 3:9-12, 23; - Everyone including myself.
- 1 John 1:8
- Matt 5:21, 22, - There is nobody who has not transgressed the Law of God explained by Jesus.
- 27, 28
- Heb 4:15 - The only exception is Jesus.

(3) What are the consequences of sin?

- Gen 3:16-19; 4:8 - Pain, suffering, sickness, and whatever is negative
- Rom 6:16, 23 - Death
- Thus, all of us are affected.

II. The Reality of Sin

Although it is common to deny the reality of sin, it can be seen everywhere. It is manifested on a large scale in wars, “ethnic cleansing,” terrorism, oppression of and crimes against other nations, cultures, or people, etc.

It is also a reality on the individual level. A telling description is found in 2 Tim 3:1-5. Sin not only influences all our relationships to God and other people but even our own mental and physical health.

Psychosomatic medicine has shown, that hatred, the desire to take revenge, anger, wrath, etc.--what people may call “little sins”--may cause physical problems as severe as--in some cases--death. Psychological problems and inner tensions may lead to problems with the nervous system, strokes, high blood pressure, heart attack, digestive disorders, colon ulcers, urogenital problems, allergic reactions, infections, eye and skin diseases, etc. On the other hand, faith in God, prayer, confession, and attendance of church services have a positive impact on health (Gary E. Fraser, *Diet, Life Expectancy and Chronic Disease*, Oxford University Press 2003, pp.153-159; Gary L. Hopkins and Joyce W. Hopp, *It Takes a Church*, Pacific Press 2003, pp. 78-85). As sin destroys the entire human being, so real conversion makes whole the entire human being.

III. Solutions of the Sin Problem

(1) Situation:

- Jer 13:23 - We are not able to solve the sin problem. (See Achan in Josh 6:18 and Josh 7, but David in 2 Sam 11 and 12:1-13.)

- (2) Solution:
2 Cor 5:21 - In Jesus God has provided a solution for the sin problem. Jesus took our place so that we may be free.
1 John 2:1 - Jesus is not only our Savior but also our advocate.
- (3) Conditions:
John 6:47, 51 - We must believe and commit ourselves completely to Jesus.
1 John 1:9 - We must confess our sins to God and accept his forgiveness.
This includes:
(a) Repentance (Acts 2:38; 17:30)
(b) Admitting the wrong if necessary also (Luke 15:18-21)
(c) Turning away from sin (Prov 28:13)
(d) Restoration (Eze 33:14-16; Luke 19:8)
(e) Willingness to forgive others (Matt 6:12, 14, 15; Luke 23:34)
(f) An active attempt to be reconciled Matt 5:24)
- (4) Results:
Inner peace, joy, restored relations, a good conscience, eternal life with God

IV. Sin and Us

God is willing to forgive and to grant us a new beginning. He only waits for us to turn to him—Isa 1:18. Jesus takes away our sin—John 1:29.

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