

Reaching the Lost What Will You Do About Your Sin?

Intro: People today experience many problems--health problems, financial problems, relationship problems; but none of these are the greatest problem we face. The greatest problem people face is the problem of sin. So today, I'm asking, "What have you done about your sin?"

For many people, sin may not seem to them to be a problem; but my question implies that we understand three important things that people do not always understand about sin:

From the creation, God has revealed His will in the form of laws to be obeyed.

They are for our good.

So the Lord commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God for our good always and for our survival, as it is today. (Deut. 6:24)

It is our duty to obey them, even if we do not always perceive their value, because they come from the Creator.

The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. (Eccl. 12:13)

Satan, the enemy of God, has sought to persuade us to disobey God's laws

This is what sin is.

Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. (1 Jn. 3:4)

Satan makes his appeal to our egos and stimulates us through the desires of our flesh and eyes.

Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. (1 Jn. 2:15-16)

All of us have been deceived by him into committing lawless acts against God.

Paul in Romans systematically shows that all people, both those having the Law (the Jews) and those not having the Law (Gentiles), have sinned against God and forfeited righteousness by works.

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, (Rom. 3:23)

Therefore my question becomes a very important one, "What have you done about your sin?"

What people often do with their sin

Many simply deny their sin

Some of them, attracted by the forbidden, have invented reasons not to believe in God, so that they will not be hindered in what they want to do. They deny the reality of sin by denying the reality of God.

The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; there is no one who does good. (Ps. 14:1)

Some simply refuse to take an honest look at themselves and see who they really are.

If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. (1 Jn. 1:10)

Many seek to redefine it

For some the "solution" to the problem of sin is to reverse God's law. They may argue that times have changed, or our culture is different; but it is the same argument Isaiah denounced centuries ago:

Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! (Is. 5:20)

Today we see that in dozens of ways: adultery is called "an affair," homosexuality is called "an alternative lifestyle", killing the unborn is called "reproductive freedom or choice"

Many blame it on someone else

It is as old as Adam and Eve. When confronted with their transgression, Adam responded:

And the man said, "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate." (Gen. 3:12)

When the prophet Samuel confronted King Saul about his disobedience to God's orders to totally destroy the Amalakites, Saul changed his tune from "I have obeyed the command of the Lord" to: And Saul said, "They have brought them from the Amalekites, for the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen, to sacrifice to the Lord your God; but the rest we have utterly destroyed." (1 Sam. 15:15)

There is no doubt that all of us are shaped by the people who have nurtured and influenced us--whether for good or bad. But in the end, we are responsible for our own lives; and the sooner we quit pointing an accusing finger at our parents or someone else and acknowledge that the better off we will be!

Many ignore or make light of it

The other morning on a TV broadcast a guest was talking about the impact of the new health care law on himself and on another person who he described as "the woman with whom I live in sin." Was that some kind of confession? Probably not; but a light-hearted acknowledgment that he was living in fornication with someone outside the bonds of marriage.

And so often people will handle sin by laughing at it, mocking it, as if the more ridicule they put on the situation, the less sinful it becomes. It will not reduce our guilt, only increase it.

But there is little difference in making light of sin and simply ignoring it. Both refuse to see sin as God's sees it, as lawless behavior. Ignoring

sin trivializes the authority and love of God, and the cross of Jesus. (More on this later).

Moses warned the Israelites that they could not disobey God and simply ignore it:

But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sin will find you out. (Num. 32:23)

What God will do with our sin

He will not do what most humans do with sin.

He will not ignore, deny or mock it, because it is too serious.

He will not explain it away; because it is a real breach of His authority.

He will not blame it someone else, because He holds us personally accountable.

He may allow will allow us to experience the consequences of it in this life.

Because we are free will agents, God will not exempt us from the consequences of our sins. That means that we may experience the full deceit of sin, blind to the harmful effects it has upon us.

It means we may be hardened to the truth so that we no longer seek to do what is right.

It means that we may become enslaved to its power and be unable to escape its grip.

And all this itself is a terrible, but temporal consequence of sin. And God has warned of these consequences:

But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. (Heb. 3:13)

He certainly will punish it eternally.

Paul warns of the eternal consequences of sin in our lives:

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 6:23)

And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, (2 Thes. 1:9)

But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. (Rev. 21:8)

All that I have said might seem to have reduced us all to utter hopelessness.

Are we all doomed to eternal destruction? No! And the good news of the gospel is that we can escape this terrible destiny through the love and grace of God.

What God has done to deal with our sin

He has given His Son as a sacrifice for sin.

But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with

glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. (Heb. 2:9)

Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, (1 Cor. 15:1-3)

He has offered us an opportunity to be forgiven and escape His wrath.

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. (Rom. 5:8-9)

What we must do with our sin

We must put our trust in the justification offered through Jesus' sacrifice.
Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. (Rom. 5:1-2)

We must repent of our sin.

And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)

We must wash it away in baptism.

'And now why do you delay? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.' (Acts 22:16)

And if we have once been forgiven and turned back into sin as an erring child of God:

We must turn from our error in repentance.

My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth, and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death, and will cover a multitude of sins. (Jas. 5:19-20)

We must confess our sin to Him

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 Jn. 1:9)

Conclusion: So let me change my question. Not, what have you done about your sin, but what will you do about your sin?

We can't go to heaven unless we deal with the problem of sin. And we must deal with it as God instructs.