

The Consequences of Sin

In today's culture, sin is often glorified, made light of, and sometimes denied to exist at all. But the Bible tells us that sin is a very real and serious matter. The things sin does to man are so devastating, that if he had no savior, his existence would be futile and his end would be frightful. In the Old Testament, Isaiah 59 has much to say about the consequences of sin.

Sin is a **deceiver**. "*Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear*" (Isa. 59:1). The children of Israel had a tendency to sin, reap its consequences, and then blame God for their distress. Even Gideon, the mighty man of valor, was guilty. Judges six says that Israel did evil, resulting in them being delivered into the hands of the Midianites. In verse 13, Gideon said unto the angel of the Lord, "O my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? And where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? But now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." Man often engages in the disingenuous practice of shifting the blame for his sin. Adam shifted the blame to both Eve and to God, while Eve blamed the serpent. It will not work. The Bible says that "every man shall die for his own sin" (2 Chron. 25:4).

Sin not only deceives man by deluding him into shifting the blame for sin to someone else, but often deceives him into denying that sin is sin at all. This happened to the Jews, and was addressed by the prophet Isaiah. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." We have this very problem in society today when opponents of abortion are alleged to favor depriving a woman of her civil rights, and to speak against homosexuality is branded as bigotry. Sin is still sin, and it is what the Bible that defines it as, not man.

Sin is a **divider**. "*But your iniquities have separated between you and your god, and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear*" (Isa. 59:2). At this time, God's people thought God could not hear, but no, it was not that. Because their sins separated them from the Father, he would not, not could not, hear them. Follow the logic. If some men are unconditionally chosen to be saved, and others to be lost, how can sin separate anyone from God? The elect could not be separated from God, because their salvation is unchangeable, and the non-elect could not be separated from God, because they were never united with God to then be separated from Him. The truth is that all men stand equal before God, and when an individual sins, his sin stands between him, God, and heaven.

Sin not only separates man and God, it separates man and man. Jesus revealed that very truth to the twelve when he sent them on what is known as the limited commission. Some of the people would hear the message that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, some would not, and their unbelief would be sin. Consequently, Jesus said: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household" (Matt. 10:34-36). The unbelieving and disobedient commit sin, and when they have, they are separated from God and from those who are obedient.

Sin is a **defiler**: "*For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness*" (Isa. 59:3). Sin pollutes the head, the heart, and the hands. It corrupts thoughts, words, and deeds. When one stands before God defiled, he must be made clean. That can only be accomplished by obedience to the Gospel.

"And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). Sin is powerful enough to defile, the only thing that is strong enough to cleanse the defilement is the blood of Jesus Christ. Its cleansing agency is applied when one obeys God.

Sin is a **dictator**. *"None calleth for justice, nor pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity. They hatch cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web: he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper. Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works are iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands. Their feet run to evil and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are the thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction or in their paths"* (Isa. 59:4-7). When a man sins, if he does not deal with it in the way God has prescribed, it may well take over his life. One unrepented of sin can lead to another and another and another until one finds himself the slave to evil doing. Thus the instructions given through Paul are essential: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof" (Rom. 6:12).

Sin is a **depriver**. *"The way of peace they know not: and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace. Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness"* (Isa. 59: 8,9). In the case of Isaiah's people, sin deprived them of judgment, (a verdict in their favor) of peace, justice, and light. All of those come from God. Sin deprives one of God given blessings in this life, including contentment. In the end, if sin is not dealt with, it will deprive one of the eternal blessings of a home with God and the joy of His presence in eternity. We know those things about sin are true, because as the inspired Paul wrote: "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

If sin has you separated from God, take the steps to be reconciled with him. If that is initially obeying the Gospel in confession, repentance, and baptism do not delay. If it is a breach that sin has caused after obeying the gospel, repentance and prayer are necessary to heal the divide (Acts 8:22). The consequences of sin are too serious to allow the separation that it causes between an individual and God to continue.

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