

THE GREAT SINFULNESS OF SIN

A MESSAGE SHOWING THE MEASURELESS DEPTH AND EVIL OF SIN

Never has society at large had a lower estimation of the great sinfulness of sin, the abhorrence it is to a Holy God. Sin is a crime against God Himself. Sin is a revolver in the face of God. Sin is an infinite evil. It is a clear volition of God's law and will not be ignored. - Greg Gordon

WHAT IS SIN

The old puritan Thomas Boston stated once: "Learn the evil of sin." Surely this is a trustworthy saying and may the reader begin to understand the depths of sin and see it as God sees it. Firstly, though we must ask the simple question: What is sin? Sin is the breaking of God's law. The Westminster Shorter Catechism states that: "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God." Sin is rebellion against God. Sin is opposition to God. Webster's Dictionary states 'sin' as: "Any voluntary transgression of the divine law, or violation of a divine command; a wicked act; iniquity. A man enormously wicked." Never has society at large had a lower estimation of the great sinfulness of sin, the abhorrence it is to a Holy God. Sin is a crime against God Himself. Sin is a revolver in the face of God. Sin is an infinite evil. It is a clear volition of His law and will not be ignored. Sin also at the same time damages ourselves and is a result of our inward selfishness that is so prevalent. Martin Luther used the Latin description, 'Homo in se incurvatus', to describe the sinner. The phrase means something like 'mankind curved in on itself'; this is an image of man reaching in to oneself rather than reaching out to help others; this illustrates the inherent selfishness which lies at the heart and base of man's sinfulness.

May we have eyes to see as the Apostle Paul did when he wrote: “that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.” Who can truly measure the great evil and depth of sin, it is a fathomless pit which not man can fill, it is a fire of such fervent devilish heat that the ocean’s of the entire world could not extinguish. John Bunyan said that sin is: “The dare of God's justice, the rape of His mercy, the jeer of His patience, the slight of His power, the contempt of His love!” Oh that we might begin to see the great sinfulness of sin.

OUTRAGE OF THE UNIVERSE

John Piper stated a very strong definition of sin in these words: “What makes sin sin is not first that it hurts people, but that it blasphemes God. This is the ultimate evil and the ultimate outrage in the universe.

The glory of God is not honored.

The holiness of God is not revered.

The greatness of God is not admired.

The power of God is not praised.

The truth of God is not sought.

The wisdom of God is not esteemed.

The beauty of God is not treasured.

The goodness of God is not savored.

The faithfulness of God is not trusted.

The promises of God are not relied upon.

The commandments of God are not obeyed.

The justice of God is not respected.

The wrath of God is not feared.

The grace of God is not cherished.

The presence of God is not prized.

The person of God is not loved.

The infinite, all-glorious Creator of the universe, by whom and for whom all things exist, who holds every person’s life in being at every moment; is disregarded, disbelieved, disobeyed, and dishonored by everybody in the world. That is the ultimate outrage of the universe. Why is it that people can become emotionally and morally indignant over poverty and exploitation and prejudice and the injustice of man against man and yet feel little or no remorse or indignation that God is so belittled? It’s because of sin. That is what sin is. Sin is esteeming and valuing and honoring and enjoying man and his creations above

God. So even our man-centered anger at the hurt of sin is part of sin. God is marginal in human life. That is our sin! Our condition!"

SIN IS UNSPEAKABLY HATEFUL

William S. Plumer in his famous work 'The Christian' said: "Sin digs every grave, and wrings out every sigh and wail from earth and hell. Sin is the worst of all evils. Nothing can compare with it. It is worse than the plague. Sin is unspeakably hateful. God calls it horrible and abominable. Godly men in every age lament it--lament it much in others, most in themselves. A man's views of sin give a complexion to all his character. If he regards it as a trifle, he will laugh at it, when he should weep over it. He will make a mock of it. He will dally with it. He will take his fill of it. He will have low thoughts of God, and low estimates of salvation. He will despise Jesus Christ. If, on the other hand, he considers sin as very dreadful and very hateful--he will hate every false way. He will long for holiness. He will hunger and thirst after righteousness. He will loathe and abhor himself on account of sin. He will have exalted thoughts of the being, perfections, word, and government of God. To him Christ will be most precious, the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Job's sense of sin was vastly increased by the great discoveries he had of God's majesty and glory: "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes!" Increased views of God's glory had the same effect on Isaiah, and made him cry out, "Woe is me! for I am undone!" (Job 42:5-6; Isaiah 6:5). God's presence is infinite; His power is infinite; His nature is infinite; His existence is infinite; and so to sin against Him must be an infinite insult and wrong. Sin is an infinite evil. Sin is that abominable thing which He hates. He hates sin with infinite loathing."

A very strong picture of sin is seen in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Horatius Bonar said this: "Oh, what a revelation! Man hating God--and hating most, when God is loving most! Man acting as a devil--and taking the devil's side against God! The cross, then, was the public declaration of man's hatred of God, man's rejection of His Son, and man's avowal of his belief that he needs no Savior!" Oh reader does not this move you to realize that all mankind has fallen short of the glory of God and are in willful rebellion to his laws and will. Thus we can say: Sin is men hating God.

Thomas Watson speaking of the 'deceitfulness of sin' once said: Sin... has its original from a deceitful subtle serpent, is the ground of all the deceit in the world, is the great deceiver of souls. Sin... debases the soul of man, defiles and pollutes the soul of man, renders the soul most unlike to God, who is the best and greatest; renders the soul most like to Satan, who is a very sea and sink of sin. Sin robs the soul of... the image of God, the holiness of God, the beauty of God, the glory of God, the righteousness of God. Sin is peccatum est Deicidium--a killing of God! 'But they kept shouting--Crucify Him! Crucify Him!'"

MEN THINK LITTLE OF SIN

John Angell James, in his book 'The Anxious Enquirer' said: "Men think little of sin--but does God? What turned Adam and Eve out of paradise? Sin! What drowned the old world in the flood? Sin! What brought disease, accidents, toil, care, war, pestilence, and famine into the world? Sin! What has converted the world into one great burying-place of its inhabitants? Sin! What lights the flames of hell? Sin! What crucified the Lord of life and glory? Sin! What then must sin be? Who but God, and what but His infinite mind--can conceive of its evil nature?" Carrying along in the same thought the famous commentator John Stott stated: "To make light of sin is inevitably to make light of salvation and so of the cross. To deny the just judgement of God is a characteristic of false prophets, 'who say peace, peace when there is no peace'"

Thomas Reade the reformer said: "Sin is a daring rebellion against the Majesty of heaven; and would if it were possible, pluck the Eternal God from His throne! Every particle of sin contains an infinity of evil, and deserves everlasting damnation! Sin transformed the angels of light into demons of darkness. Sin rendered the happy pair in Eden wretched outcasts in a world of woe. Sin was the cause of the universal deluge, and the fiery overthrow of the cities of the plain. Sin has ever marked its steps by misery and blood. Pride, malice, envy, murmuring, uncleanness, and every abomination hateful to a holy God, and destructive to our wretched race, spring from this poisonous root."

SIN IS A MONSTER

C.H. Spurgeon the 'prince of preachers' over 100 years ago defined sin in one of his sermons: "Sin is a defiance of God to his face, a stabbing of God, so far as man can do it, to the very heart! Sin is a monster, a hideous thing, a thing which God will not look upon, and which pure eyes cannot behold but with the utmost detestation. A flood of tears is the proper medium through which a Christian should look at sin." Sin is surely a monster, a unnatural wickedness appearing so horrible to the mind of man. May we loathe and hate sin.

Lastly, hear this strong exhortation to flee from sin and forsake all in the words of Jonathan Edwards: "Sin is naturally exceeding dear to us; to part with it is compared to plucking out our right eyes. Men may refrain from wonted ways of sin for a little while, and may deny their lusts in a partial degree, with less difficulty; but it is heart-rending work, finally to part with all sin, and to give our dearest lusts a bill of divorce, utterly to send them away. But this we must do, if we would follow those that are truly turning to God: yea, we must not only forsake sin, but must, in a sense, forsake all the world, Luke xiv.33 "anyone of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple."