

The Effect of Sin

We have been examining the concept of sin in our study of theology. The last time we considered how it's defined, how it's committed, and what God says about it. But today, we're going to slow down and ask a more personal question: What does sin actually do to us? What effect does it have, not just on our record in heaven, but on our lives here and now? Too often we think of sin only in terms of guilt and punishment, but sin also carries real consequences: it defiles us, it pollutes our worship, and it spreads beyond us into the world around us. It's like a toxin that poisons everything it touches: our conscience, our relationships, our testimony. But as dark as sin is, the Gospel shines brighter. Today, we're going to look at what sin does. But, more importantly, we'll remember what Christ has done to overcome it. We are going to look at the effect of sin in our lives, but I will be saving the ultimate effect of sin for another sermon titled "Descent into Madness." For now we are going to look at the immediate effect of sin.

1. Sin defiles us -

Sin does not just make us feel dirty, it makes us feel that we *are* dirt. This is described in Psalm 106 which recounts this effect in a piece of Israel's history.

Ps 106:34-40 They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them:

35 But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works.

36 And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them.

37 Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,

38 And shed innocent blood, *even* the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.

39 Thus were they defiled with

their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions.

40 Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.

Don't think we are so far off from these sins. Many times we have become mingled with the heathen and have adopted their worldly ways. We run the risk of serving idols...sometimes they are called car, job, hobby, etc. We sacrifice our children to devils on tv and "culture." We unwittingly participate in shedding innocent blood when we don't fight the use of our taxes to fund the abortion industry. People turn to all kinds of worldly counselors rather than give an honest effort to do the things of the Lord. We only tinker with the difficult things of the Lord and then wonder why we don't have more spiritual power in our lives. We become defiled by our works. People are more obsessed with what they eat and the additives and chemicals they consume than they are with personal holiness.

Matt 15:17-20 Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

20 These are *the things* which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

The Pharisees were more concerned about mere dirt from unwashed hands but they should have more concerned about their unclean hearts. You might understand it this way. The teens were having hot dogs that they cooked on the

grill. Jonathan wanted to use some tongs, which are wieldy, instead of his bare hands, to put them on the grill. I told him it's okay if he had washed his hands. I noticed that they are good about wanting to put on plastic gloves to handle food, but it doesn't work when working over an open flame. So I capitalized on this. I had an extra hot dog put on the grill and when they were all served I took it on a plate and asked if anyone wanted another one. Then, woops, I dropped it on the ground! "Who wants this hot dog?" They looked at it with appropriate disdain. I said, "Oh, here let me clean it up." I spit on a paper towel and wiped it down. "Now its all clean. Who wants it?" To their credit, no one did. I pointed out how it doesn't take much to defile a hot dog to be disgusting to us.

This reminds me of what it means to be defiled when we look at the ten lepers who approached Christ for healing.

Luke 17:11-19 And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:

13 And they lifted up *their* voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

14 And when he saw *them*, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,

16 And fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

17 And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine?

18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

19 And he said unto him, Arise,

go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

Virtually all leprosy can be healed today with multi-drug therapy, but in ancient times the most they could do was try to contain it. The leprosy bacteria attacks the nerves that feel pain. With chronic injury that people don't notice, over years it can lead to blindness, bones to be absorbed losing fingers or toes, and deformity while all the while they feel fine. Lepers were considered medically unclean, or defiled, and socially unclean. When lepers approached people according to Leviticus 13, they had to call out "Unclean, unclean." These are two types of defilement, but in this passage there is a third type of defilement. One was a Samaritan. The Jews viewed Samaritans as unclean because they were seen as religiously compromised because they intermarried with Gentiles and corrupted true worship with pagan practices. That leper was thrice cursed with uncleanness: medically, socially, and ethnically. We get put off by spit on a hot dog, but the Bible paints our sin before God as defiling, isolating, and destructive leprosy. We are more concerned about not defiling ourselves with a hot dog that fell on the ground but we seem to be okay with our minds corrupted by the leprosy of the world. Our sin before a holy God is far more disgusting than a little spit on a hot dog and yet we incredulously expect Him to be silent and eat it. "I'm not so bad. Now just be a good little God and give me what I ask for."

Under the right conditions, the defilement of our sin can be more easily discovered. Without constraint, our depravity would be quickly revealed.

October 7, 1969 the Montreal, Canada police force went on strike. Because of what resulted, the day has been called Black Tuesday. A burglar and a policeman were slain. Forty-nine persons were wounded or injured in rioting. Nine bank holdups

were committed...along with 17 robberies at gunpoint. Usually disciplined, peaceful citizens joined the riffraff and went wild, smashing some 1,000 plate glass windows in a stretch of 21 business blocks in the heart of the city, hauling away stereo units, radios, TVs and wearing apparel. While looters stripped windows of valuable merchandise, professional burglars entered stores by doors and made off with truckloads of goods. A smartly dressed man scampered down a street with a fur coat over each arm with no police around, anarchy took over.
– Source Unknown

Jas 1:27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world.

2. Sin defiles our worship -

So if sin defiles us, it should not surprise us that our worship can become contaminated by it.

Prov 21:27 The sacrifice of the wicked *is* abomination: how much more, *when* he bringeth it with a wicked mind?

When we offer up sacrificial labors to the Lord, they become an abomination.

Matt 5:23-24 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

When we participate in communion, we are supposed to take time to judge ourselves lest we come to the Lord's

table defiled with sin.

1Cor 11:26-31 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

30 For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

3. Sin defiles the world -

So if sin defiles us, and even our worship can become contaminated by it, then it shouldn't surprise us that it also reaches beyond us and into the world around us. Sometimes people try to excuse their sin because they think, "I'm not hurting anyone else – leave me alone." But no man lives unto himself. No man is an island.

Rom 14:7-8 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

1Cor 12:18,21-26 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

23 And those *members* of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness.

24 For our comely *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that *part* which lacked:

25 That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

When we sin, we cause the world to blaspheme God.

Rom 2:23-24 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?

24 For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

They use our sin as an excuse to sin and turn away from God.

4. There is one effect that sin does *not* have -

Sin defiles us, it defiles our worship, it defiles the world around us, but there is one effect that sin actually does not have. Sin does not make us sinners, although it might make us *worse* sinners. This is doctrinally accurate, but could sound paradoxical or confusing at first. We don't become sinners because we sin – we sin because we are sinners by nature.

John 3:18-21 He that believeth

on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Take note that the Scripture says he that believeth not is condemned *already!* We are born sinners. There is nothing you have to do to become a sinner. You just *are* a sinner.

The remedy for sin is not to improve our performance in the hope that we will someday get the mastery. Anyone who has lived long enough knows that that is a fool's game.

The remedy for sin is two-fold. First, ask Jesus to forgive you for being a sinner. Quit trying to win that game. Know that you can't win it yourself. Realize that God doesn't want you to try and will not recognize any of your efforts. We covered that last week.

Isa 64:6 But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Ask Jesus to take your punishment...and then say thank you!

Rom 10:12-13 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be

saved.

Rom 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

If you're here today and you've never trusted Christ as your Savior, the effects of sin that we've discussed aren't just theological – they are personal. You may feel the defilement. You may carry the guilt. You may be trying to cover it up or clean it off through good deeds, religion, or distraction. But you don't need to be *reformed* – you need to be reborn and *transformed*. The Bible says you are already condemned; not because you've done something particularly evil, but because you've not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God (John 3:18). You were born into sin, and nothing you do can erase that stain.

But here is the good news: Jesus came to take your place. He took your punishment. He bore your condemnation. He shed His blood for you when you were helpless, guilty, and unclean. He offers you forgiveness, not through the works you perform, but through simple, saving faith. Don't leave this place under the judgment of sin. Call on Him. Ask Him to save you. Trust Him to wash you clean like Jesus did for that leper. If you do, you'll walk out no longer a condemned soul, but a forgiven child of God.

Once you are forgiven, you are free to live for Him. But then you ask, what if I sin after this? Let me state that you are still a forgiven child of God. All mankind has a relationship with God. Before salvation, that relationship with God is as a judge who has condemned us to eternal punishment in Hell. After salvation, our relationship with God is as a Father. When you are a child of God, that relationship can be good or bad, but you are still His child forever. How much better would it be to walk in harmony with God as His child? When the conviction of the Holy Spirit comes and

you feel Him striking at your conscience, instead of rebelling against God, wouldn't it be clever to rebel against sin instead of giving in to the whims of lust? Become accountable and reliable for God.

1Cor 9:27 But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

1Pet 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

1. Sin defiles us - Ps 106:34-40, Matt 15:17-20, Luke 17:11-19, Jas 1:27
2. Sin defiles our worship - Prov 21:27, Matt 5:23-24, 1Cor 11:26-31
3. Sin defiles the world - Rom 14:7-8, 1Cor 12:18,21-26, Rom 2:23-24
4. There is one effect that sin does not have - John 3:18-21, Isa 64:6, Rom 10:12-13, 12:2, 1Cor 9:27, 1Pet 5:8, James 4:7Cell