

THE WAGES OF SIN

Sin is violation of God's will, transgression of the Lord's teaching and disobedience of the gospel of Christ. Attempts to dismiss the truth regarding sin does not eradicate sin, but rather, ensnares and entangles men in sin even more so. Rejection of sin's reality darkens man's understanding and then leads to ineffective discernment. A denial of sin or of one's own guiltiness blinds men to the serious consequences that will follow for sowing sin.

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap." (Galatians 6:7) This statement harmonizes with the law of cause and effect – a cause produces an effect. With every action, there is a reaction. Whatever seed men plant is what will grow. "For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption" (6:8). Sin has consequences.

Sin is what has separated man from God and still does. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear." (Isaiah 59:1-2) God is not at fault, nor should be blamed. Separation from God is every sinner's own fault. Surely, Adam and Eve felt uniquely this great loss of fellowship (Genesis 3).

"Love does no harm to a neighbor" (Romans 13:10). When harm is inflicted physically, verbally, socially, economically or spiritually, sin has been committed. When men choose to direct their own steps or to do what is right in their own eyes, the consequences which result are not good but harmful. The harm done can be immediate or delayed. Sin in its nature is destructive. It stirs up trouble; it defiles. Sinful words hurt. "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. . . . it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell" (James 3:6). "Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body" (1 Corinthians 7:18). The temporary pleasure of sin is a lie, a deception, designed to wound, weaken and handicap. All sin produces harmful consequences.

Every person tempted to sin is enticed by his own desires. Desires unchecked lead to sin, and "sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death" (James 1:15). The first sin committed in the garden of Eden introduced physical death into the world because the first couple was separated from the source of eternal life. All men die now. "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). The high cost of sin is not just because of physical death, but in addition, spiritual separation that leads to the eternal second death. "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (Revelation 21:8)