

THE FOREST HILL NEWS

Published weekly by the Forest Hill church of Christ

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Forest Hill Church of Christ

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VISIT US SOON!

Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:30 A..M.
Morning Worship.. ...10:30 A.M.
Evening Worship..... 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

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WHAT IS SIN?

Barry M. Grider

[Editor's Note: The following is the editor's contribution to this year's Memphis School of Preaching lectureship. You may obtain the two volume set of lectureship books which contain all the manuscripts by calling (901) 751-2242 or contact by email, kjones@msop.org.]

INTRODUCTION

All of man's heartaches, trials, and suffering are directly or indirectly related to sin. Sometimes because of one's own personal decisions he suffers the pangs of sin. Often because of the sins of others, innocent people must suffer. However, all of the suffering of mankind can be traced back to the entrance of sin into this world.

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die (Gen. 2:18,19).¹

Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one wise*, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons (Gen. 3:1-7).

Before man fell in the Garden of Eden he had all that his heart could desire, including a helpmeet or companion to share his happiness. All of this changed when he sinned. Notice God's response to the first couple after they succumbed to temptation:

Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return (Gen. 3:16-19).

Now that sin has entered the world, it has taken its toll on humanity. While everyone is responsible for his own actions (Ezek. 18:20), the consequences of sinning against God are the same – death. “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Rom. 5:12). All responsible men and women, young or old, have sinned (Rom. 3:23), and the penalty is death (Rom. 6:23).

With the exception of those who died before reaching the age of accountability, every individual who has lived has had to deal with sin. The purpose of this essay is to clearly identify sin, along with its causes and consequences.

SIN DEFINED

According to the dictionary, sin is defined as “the breaking of divine or moral law, especially by a conscious act.”² Since many do not accept the idea of divine law, to them sin does not exist, it is just an illusion. For example, the evolutionist would insist that what the Bible teaches as sinful, perhaps is nothing more than a mistake on

man's upward quest. However, the Bible teaches the opposite. Man was made upright and fell. This writer appeals to the Bible for the correct definition of sin. John wrote, “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). This passage teaches that when one sins he has literally “missed the mark” (*harmartia*). God has a standard and when one sins he has failed to meet God's standard.

Sin is rebellion against God's rightful authority. Adam and Eve, through their sin, gave the allegiance that belonged only to God, to the Devil. Sin is lawlessness. Some insist today that man is not under law, but under grace. This is based on a faulty interpretation of John 1:18 and other passages. Certainly the new covenant of Jesus Christ could correctly be called a system of grace. However, to deny that one is not under law today, would also mean one would have to deny the reality of sin. The beloved apostle also states, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8). The antinomian view will not stand the test of God's Word. James wrote, “But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed” (Jam. 1:25).

Various terms associated with sin are:

1. Transgression—lawbreaking – “for where no law is, there is no transgression” (Rom. 4:15).
2. Wickedness—grievous sin that brings much sorrow – “...how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” (Gen. 39:9).
3. Evil—that which is not at all in harmony with the divine and good. “Abhor that which is evil” (Rom. 12:9).
4. Iniquity—everything that is vile. “Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity...” (Psm. 51:3).
5. Abomination—abhorrent in the face of God; often connected to idolatry. “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable... shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone” (Rev. 21:8).

(To be continued.)

2004 MSOP LECTURESHIP "One Of The Best"

It seems we often use phrases that become cliché. The above title is one of the most common used. However, it would be hard to describe this year's lecture series any other way. First, a marvelous theme had already been selected. It was truly a blessing to study the fundamental topics centered around the theme, "Sin and Salvation." Second, all the speakers did an excellent job writing their manuscripts for the two volume set of lectureship books and delivering their oral presentations. Third, the fellowship enjoyed during the week was a foretaste of heaven above. It was wonderful to renew old friendships and meet some who, though for many years supportive of our work, were attending the lectures for the very first time. Fourth, the largest crowds ever to assemble for this annual event took place this year, with almost 1200 present for the Monday evening service. Fifth, the cooperative spirit of the Forest Hill church, along with the staff and student body of the Memphis School of Preaching, demonstrated the very best in Christian unity and love for the Cause and for each other. Sixth, it was a joy to honor two faithful, dedicated servants of God, Keith and Dorothy Mosher. Seventh, we rejoice because God was glorified in this endeavor.

Special thanks to our capable lectureship director, Bobby Liddell, who also edits the book; Curtis Cates who directs the Memphis School of Preaching; and our elders, who faithfully take a bold stand for the proclamation of Truth. We are grateful to our faithful members, including our students, who prepared food, served meals, lodged guests in their homes, assisted with parking lot detail, worked the sound system, provided transportation for guests, printed flyers, sold books, taught Bible classes for children, maintained the grounds, waxed the floors, made decorations, and the list goes on. Also, I must not forget the Forest Hill youth and their families who worked hard for the annual youth day. Over 200 were present to hear the excellent messages presented and to enjoy the Christian association. We are especially grateful to Keith McAlister, who tirelessly works with our youth, and Helen Newsom, who for many years has coordinated the luncheon, with the help of her fine crew.

It is our prayer that this sound and solid lecture series, which benefits the cause of Christ so greatly, will continue, until He comes!

Barry M. Grider

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