

SIN CHANGES THINGS

(Genesis 3)

By Jon Quinn

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Our world has not been made a better place because of sin. Our sins always have a negative impact on our lives. The thief may think that he has improved his life by stealing something valuable. The hedonist imagines that his life could be no better as he relishes his latest sexual conquest and begins to plan for the next. What a good feeling it is to get away with something, whether you are a corrupt politician, a con artist or a shoplifter.

But sin changes things. Subtle but serious changes that have horrendous consequences. If sinners only knew what they were doing to themselves they wouldn't be smiling. If Christians would only remember some of these things when temptation seems so strong then perhaps the temptation would wilt away. Sin changes things.

## SIN ALTERS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

"And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden" (GENESIS 3:8).

It had not always been that way. Fear such as this was something new. Before sin there had been only trust and joy, but now that was gone.

The couple had a very immature concept of God. They tried to hide from the One who is all-seeing. Neither can man today hide his actions from the eyes of God. Let your actions be of such a nature that there is no need to hide them.

Yes, there are many people who revel in their rebellion against God. They mock any idea of judgment. They are not made afraid because they refuse to believe that they will ever be called upon to give account for their lives. They may be bold now, but will they when the hour of recompense comes? Adam and Eve did not become afraid until they realized that they were in the immediate presence of the Lord. One passage well describes the reaction of the rebellious as they faced a judgment of the Lord. Remember: these had also previously been bold and mocking in their contempt for Christ and His people; "...and they said to the mountains and the rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come; and who is able to stand?'" (REVELATION 6:16,17).

With Adam and Eve, Satan had put a question mark where God had put an exclamation point. What God had forbade Satan had declared permissible. The course of these two lives, as well as the entire span of human history, was changed forever. One sin. One sin can wreck a whole life. It often happens.

No matter how far from God we fall, the answer as to how to be reconciled is always the same. Jesus is the only way to regain fellowship with God. There is no other way. Because we deal with a loving God, He, Himself, has paid the price for our transgressions. The relationship broken by our sins can be restored by God's grace through our faith (JOHN 14:6; EPHESIANS 2:1-10).

### SIN ALTERS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOURSELF

"Then the Lord God said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil..." (GENESIS 3:22). Man had been at perfect peace with himself. There had been no inner conflict between right and wrong, no pangs of guilt, no struggles. There had really only been one moral choice to make: obey God's command not to eat of the tree in the midst of the garden.

But now there was no peace. That, too, had changed. Something had awakened within Adam and Eve that had taken away their innocence, and with it, the security that they once knew. No longer did the world seem the safe home it once was. They felt threatened and exposed.

The search to regain inner peace continues today. Though the search has led many to false hopes, there is an answer. It is not in eastern cultic religions, they offer no Saviour. It is not in drugs and alcohol, they remove no problems and only create more. It is not in suicide, that final solution merely sends one to judgment more quickly. Again, the only correct choice is Jesus. He will restore peace legitimately. He will make it possible for you to face life and death without anxiety. "And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (PHILIPPIANS 4:7).

### SIN ALTERS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS

"And the man said, 'The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate" (GENESIS 3:12).

Now there is strife. There is suspicion, distrust and conflict. In this passage we have the beginning of disharmony in the home. It will lead the way, as the world is populated, to conflict between brothers, between neighbors, between cities and finally between nations. But here we have the beginning. This is the true "mother of all battles" Mr. Saddam.

Again it is Jesus who teaches the principles necessary to get us back on track in all

of our human relationships. The answer is unselfish dedication to others, whether it be husband or wife, brother or sister, neighbor or stranger, friend or enemy.

Only when the teachings of Jesus are applied to our lives can we really expect there to be much improvement in this area. Whenever two people are obviously dedicated to the teachings of Christ, distrust and suspicion between them will dissolve and be replaced by trust and confidence. That is why Christians will make the best husbands and wives; friends and neighbors; employers and employees. They have risen above the world's standards in their dealings with their fellow human beings. God is the greatest builder of human relationships; Satan is the destroyer of whatever good relationships we may enjoy.

## SIN ALTERS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH NATURE

"...cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life" (GENESIS 3:17).

Various natural consequences resulted from the first sin. Not only was the ground cursed, but being separated from the tree of life meant that man became mortal and destined to die. From then on, through one means or another, the day would come for each human being where the body of flesh would fail and the spirit depart.

Pain in childbirth, wasteful vegetation such as thorns and thistles and physical exhaustion are other results mentioned specifically in the context. Everywhere we look today we see human suffering caused by living in a fallen world. No human tear of sorrow or pain has ever been shed but what can ultimately be traced back to the first sin. And sin has its direct consequences as well: disease, hunger and poverty are many times the direct result of sin.

Again, the answer to this human dilemma is Jesus. he said, "And if I go to prepare a place for you I will come again, and receive you to Myself, that where I am you may be also." (JOHN 14:3). The place prepared by Jesus is referred to in the Bible as "the new heavens and a new earth." It is described as a place where tears have been wiped away, where there is no more pain or death, sickness or crying. This is our destiny if we seek first His kingdom and His righteousness. It is the only answer available to those who are tired of the human condition.

Sin has demanded too heavy a price. There is a better course to choose. There are much better things to enjoy. "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (ROMANS 6:23).

