

The Old Paths

Volume 14, Issue 30

September 23, 2007

“The Continuing Effects Of Sin”

Jarrod Jacobs

I have said in the past that any sin man commits has its basis in selfishness. I believe this to be a true statement because any sin we commit occurs because “we” want it to happen! We surrender to the lusts of the flesh and eyes and the pride of life because this is what we want to do (I Jn. 2:15-17). We commit unrighteousness because it is “fun,” or makes us feel good, or powerful, etc. (I Jn. 5:17). This was true when Adam and Eve sinned, and it is true today.

Furthermore, when we think of James’ statement that he who knows to do good and does not do it has sinned (Jas. 4:17), we know that selfishness is the motivating factor behind my refusal to do what I know to do. Selfishness rules the day in too many cases. Let us learn from the examples of Christ and the apostles and think of others more than self. Let us not look merely upon our own things, but look upon “*the things of others*” (Phil. 2:4). In other words, help others bear their burdens, and we will “*fulfill the law of Christ*” (Gal. 6:2).

Sadly, what we often experience is the reality that folks succumb to selfish impulses and they sin and fall short of God’s glory (Rom. 3:23). Inherent in sin is often the selfish thought, “It is my body and my life. It is a free country, and I can do what I want. My sin will not harm anyone else.” Be honest, have we not at times justified sin based upon

such selfish thoughts? I have, too.

The Bible reveals, though, that sin and its effects are not limited merely to the one or two who engaged in an act of sin. Rather, what we often see is that sin has continuing and lingering effects upon the lives of others. Sometimes, our sins effect those we love and admire. At other times, we see that our sins affect strangers we have never met. Either way, our sin and its effects did not remain “static,” but continued to spread. Like the ripples created when a stone is thrown in the lake; if they are not stopped, reversed, or obstructed by something, the waves will not end until they reach the shore.

Let us study some Bible examples of the continuing effects of sin and then make applications to our lives.

Adam And Eve

For this study, it would be best to begin with the first couple. They lived in a sinless world for a time (Gen. 2), but when tempted and lied to by Satan (Gen. 3:1-6), Adam and Eve submitted to their selfish wills and ate of the fruit of the tree God had forbidden (Gen. 2:15-17, 3:6). When God spoke to Adam and Eve, He made it clear that there were consequences to their sins. Genesis 3:16-19 speaks of the punishments for the man and woman. God then drove them from the Garden and they had to make a life for themselves away from the Garden God had made for them (Gen. 3:23-24).

Did their sin only affect them? Of course, not. Their sins had an

effect upon them, upon their children, and upon the ground itself. We continue to live with the consequences of Adam and Eve’s sin today! The sin of that time did not remain static, did it? While we do not inherit the guilt of Adam’s sin (Ezek. 18:4, 20), we do live with the physical consequences of what they did on that day.

Cain And Abel

Having been born, not in the Garden, but away from the Garden, we see that Cain and Abel are already having to live with the consequences of their parents’ decisions (Gen. 4:1-2). Dad and Mom’s selfishness in the Garden was affecting the sons!

On one occasion, these two sons of Adam offered sacrifices to God, but one man’s sacrifice was not sufficient (Gen. 4:5). It was not offered “*by faith*” (Heb. 11:4), while the other one was! Had he chosen to correct his sin, all would have been well (Gen. 4:7). Yet, Cain chose to take his anger out upon his brother instead. He therefore went out and killed Abel (Gen. 4:8). Remember, sin does not remain static! Instead of stopping and correcting his way, he chose to continue in his error and actually made things worse.

Therefore, when God spoke with Cain, He punished him for his crime (Gen. 4:11-12). When Cain heard those words, he pronounced his fear that someone else might kill him (Gen. 4:14). Later on, we see that the children of Cain take after their father, and in the seventh generation came Lamech, a man who married two wives, (not one wife, Gen. 2:18-25), and killed a man, bragging about it, and claiming that he will be avenged even more than Cain if someone tried to kill him (Gen. 4:23-24). In other words, sin has not remained static, has it? Friends, are we not yet impressed and scared when we

“*Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.*” (Jer. 6:16)

consider the continuing effects of sin?

David and Bathsheba

When we speak of these two, their sin is well-known, is it not (II Sam. 11:1-27)? In fact, God said that though they had been “secret” in their actions, their punishment would occur *“before all Israel and before the sun”* (II Sam. 12:11-12).

No, the sin would not remain “static,” others would feel the effects of their sin. First, we know that David and Bathsheba have sinned before God and sinned against their own bodies (II Sam. 12:13; I Cor. 6:18-20). At the same time, we find that the child that was conceived in their adultery would die (II Sam. 12:14). Do you imagine that when David began this descent into sin, he was plotting how to kill an innocent man and an innocent child? Yet, this is what happened (II Sam. 11:15-17, 12:19)! What started as David’s lustful look continued until the family was embarrassed and a baby was dead! Sadly, his sin continued to have an effect upon the remaining children, too.

David’s Children

After the tragedies recorded in II Samuel 11 and 12, we find that this is not the end of David’s woes. The continuing effects of sin are felt when we read about Amnon and Tamar in II Samuel 13. As a result of his lust for his half-sister, Amnon tricked and forced himself upon Tamar (II Sam. 13:2, 6, 8-15). After this event, we see that Absalom hated Amnon (II Sam. 13:22), and that after two full years, Absalom had his revenge by getting Amnon drunk and then having him killed (II Sam. 13:23-28). Absalom’s rebellion against David is then recorded in the following chapters, concluding with Absalom’s death in II Sam-

uel 18.

Just think, what started out as a lustful look by David ended in the humiliation of a daughter, the deaths of three sons of David, unrest in the kingdom, and a broken-hearted father! Yes, sin has continuing effects in the lives of people!

Making Applications To What We Have Learned ...

I believe we all can see the continuing effects of sin. Just as the ripple of water (if unobstructed) continues until it reaches the shore, so also, *“your sin will find you out”* (Num. 32:23). There is a reason Peter tells Simon *“repent therefore of this thy wickedness ...”* (Acts 8:22). It was bad enough the way it was, but he needed to repent before things became even worse!

We see today how folks still deal with the continuing effects of sin. How many times have we been made aware of small children who were born addicted to drugs, addicted to alcohol and other things because of something their parents did? It is becoming more and more apparent that if a parent is abusive and acting ungodly toward the children, so also, they are likely to take on those behaviors and be abusive themselves. No, sin does not remain “static”! It continues to touch the lives of people long after the initial incident has past!

One last thing we need to under-

stand is that though sin does not remain static, God has given us a great power. We have the power to repent, and we have the power to reverse the course of sin in our lives (Lk. 13:3; Acts 8:23; Acts 17:30; II Pet. 3:9)!

What do I mean? Please go back and read again the occasions of sin we have studied. Though problems seemed “inevitable,” please understand each person had the choice to change and do what is right in God’s sight! Adam and Eve did not *have* to sin, nor did Cain *have* to murder Abel. Lamech did not *have* to follow in Cain’s footsteps, nor did David and his family *have* to engage in their various sins. At each point along the way, the people could have stopped, repented, and obeyed God’s will. The fact that they did not just shows us what is the easiest to do!

Conclusion

Instead of doing what is the “easiest,” let us do what is *right*! In so doing, we can stop the “ripple effect” and chart a new course — a course that leads us to an eternity in Heaven (Matt. 7:13-14). Isn’t this the enduring message of the Bible? We can be redeemed and follow in Christ’s footsteps (II Pet. 2:21-22). We can stop the continuing effect of sin, but it requires a conscious effort to repent and obey the will of Christ (Act 2:38). Even then, we may not save others, but we can save ourselves!!

Past Radio Questions Are Posted At:
www.southside-churchofchrist.com



I want the truth, give me book, chapter, and verse!

Come and meet with the church at Southside.

Our address: 2920 New Hartford Rd. Owensboro, KY 42303

Meeting Times:

Sunday Morning Bible Study _____ 9:30 a.m.

Sunday Morning Worship _____ 10:20 a.m.

Sunday Evening Worship _____ 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday Evening Bible Study _____ 7:00 p.m.

“What Is Written”: Sunday (12:30 p.m.) on 94.7 & 100.5 FM.

Call: 683-9246 (WBIO) with your Bible questions.

“The Ancient Landmark”: airs Monday (9 p.m.), Wednesday (5 p.m.), & Thursday (11 p.m.) on channel 52.

Website: www.southside-churchofchrist.com (Updated weekly!)

Preacher/Editor: Jarrod Jacobs Elders: Paul Dubois & Jeff Lankford

Phone: (270) 683-5386