

Sin

By Ron Boatwright

What is sin? “Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4). Sin is breaking God’s laws and commandments. Man tries to categorize sins into little sins and big sins, but in God’s eyes sin is sin. 1 John 5:17 says, “All unrighteousness is sin”.

What does sin do to us? “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 59:2). All accountable people except Jesus have sinned. “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

Man claims that infants and small children inherit sin from their forefathers all the way back to Adam. This is false. Let’s see what God’s word says. “The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself” (Ezekiel 18:20). Each person is responsible for his own sins. Infants and small children do not inherit sins and are not accountable. They have no sin.

How then is sin committed? “But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death” (James 1:14-15). “For the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). This is spiritual death which is being eternally separated from God by being cast into the eternal fires of Hell (Matthew 13:41-42) and punished forever and ever (Revelation 20:10, 15).

Also we can sin by failing to do what we know we should do. James 4:17 says, “Therefore, to him who knows to good and does not do it, to him it is sin.” It is just as sinful to fail to do what God has commanded as it is to do what He has commanded us not to do.

How does one who is not a child of God become a child of God and get rid of his sins? We are to “Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). And as Saul of Tarsus was told to “Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins” (Acts 22:16).

We will sin after we become a Christian although this is not excuse to sin. The apostle John in writing to Christians who had already been baptized for the forgiveness of their past sins says, "If we say we have not sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). How does a person who has been baptized for the forgiveness of their sins continue to get forgiveness of sins that will separate him from God? John 1:7, 9 says, "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." For a Christian to continue to be forgiven of sins he may commit, 1) he must continue to faithfully "walk in the light" of God's word, 2) "have fellowship with one another" as we faithfully worship God in the Lord's one true church, and 3) "confess our sins" when we sin. In confessing our sins we must repent and turn away from those sins (Luke 13:3). If we are faithful in doing this we will be continually cleansed of our sins and will have not sin when we stand before the Lord on the Day of Judgment. We will not be condemned (Romans 8:1) or be eternally separated from God. We will be with God forever in Heaven.