

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.

November

I

2015

THE PERNICIOUS DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN

Jim Stauffer

In both the 18th and 19th chapters of Matthew, Jesus presents to us His view of innocent children. **Matt. 18:3** and said, *Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Matt. 19:14* But Jesus said, *Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for to such belongeth the kingdom of heaven.* From these statements we can clearly see the condition of purity He observed in little children. Absent, of course, is any reference to their condition being that of one in sin.

The concept of original sin, that is, that all mankind is born bearing the sin of Adam, is the end result of a blind pathway followed by men in an attempt to justify other false ideas about sin and redemption. In the following paragraphs we will show why this concept is contradictory to scripture, but let it be said that those who look at an innocent baby and conclude he is sinful because of the deeds of another are without both scripture and conscience.

The Bible speaks very clearly about how man becomes guilty of sin. Paul addresses man's nature in two very notable passages that have often been misunderstood. **Eph. 2:1** *And you did he make alive, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins, 2 wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience; 3 among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest:—* The nature by which we became children of wrath is the same nature that defines the natural man of **1 Cor. 2:14** who is unable to comprehend the revelation of the mind of God because his viewpoint is strictly from the natural or physical side rather than being in tune with the spiritual message of God (**vs. 15,16**). He is indeed the same man described in **1 Cor. 1:18-25**, as one who pits his own understanding against the message of God. How and why do we do this? Listen to the apostle John, **1 John 2:15** *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any*

man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. This is the reason Paul says, *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Rom. 3:23)* His sentiment mimics that of the prophet Ezekiel of the Old Testament. **Ezek. 18:20** *The soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.*

The temptations described by John are faced by every man. It is clear from the words of Paul that at one time or another, we each have failed. James describes the process of sin. **James 1:13** *Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man: 14 but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. 15 Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is fullgrown, bringeth forth death.* Take the time to answer for yourself when this newborn baby has allowed his lust to be conceived and become sin.

God created the heavens and the earth. He created man in His image. In **Gen. 1:31** we read, *And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good.....* Adam and Eve were created free of sin but fell to temptation as all men since have. But as Ezekiel says, I will be accountable for my sin as will my father and my children. My soul is not tarnished by the sin of Adam. That is the reason the scripture attributes the sins I need remission of as my sin. Peter said, *Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of your sins.....(Acts 2:38)*

The immaculate conception is set forth to explain Jesus' birth as an exception to the concept of original sin. The fact is, Jesus was born of flesh and blood just as you and I. Yes, He was born of the virgin who conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. But He was tempted in the flesh as all men are (**Mat. 4:1-10**). He succeeded in resisting those temptations and lived His

continued on page 2

earthly life without sin (**Heb. 4:15**). This very fact made him suitable to be the perfect example for us to pattern our lives after (**1 Pet. 2:21-24**). Furthermore it served for Him to be the perfect, unblemished sacrifice on the cross of Calvary for the sins of all mankind who have failed in their attempts to resist temptation (**1 Pet. 1:18,19**).

God created a pure being in body and spirit in each of us. Our failure as this pure creation to obey the Will of God has led to our sin. No one else is responsible. As a result Jesus came with a twofold purpose. To communicate how we should live by His example and His message. And secondly, to atone for our sins when we fail, through the sacrifice of His perfect life.

No infant can understand all the implications of responsibility to resist sin in order to be accountable at the point of his birth.

Sin and Its Punishment

As a basis of this subject I cite your attention to **1 Jno. 3:4**, which reads, "*Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth the law, for sin is the transgression of the law.*" If there is a definition of sin in the Bible, we have it in the last clause of this verse: "*Sin is the transgression of the law.*" Of course, it means the transgression of God's law. God's law may be transgressed by thought; by feeling, by words, or by actions, for as we learn from other portions of the Word of God, there are wicked thoughts, wicked feelings, wicked words, and wicked actions. This definition is not exhaustive, but it is sufficient for our present purpose.

While all of us sin, we obviously fail to recognize the enormity of sin. I believe I would esteem above every other gift that could be bestowed upon me as a preacher, the power adequately to conceive what sin is, and adequately to set it before the people. It is impossible for us to relate the enormity of sin for two reasons: First, a failure on our own part to realize the greatness of it and second, our inability to gather up such words and such figures of speech, as would with any sufficiency, set it forth to our hearers. The pleasures of sin have blinded our eyes to its enormity.

After considerable reflection on the matter, I am persuaded that the only accurate gauge which we have with which to measure the enormity and heinousness of sin, is the punishment that God has decreed against it. God is infinite, unlimited, in all His attributes; infinite in love, in mercy, in compassion, but when we find the terrible punishment which the likewise infinite justice of God necessitated that He metes out to man because of sin, then we can have some concept of God's reaction and feeling toward the greatness of sin. Paul said in a discussion of the Law of Moses, that the Law was given "*That through the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful*" (**Rom. 7:13**).

Many are the unpleasant things which befall man in this life which come as a consequence of man's sin

and disrespect of God's law. From its earliest history, the world has been laden with a vast burden of woe and pain and death. The journey of human life is strewn with tears; the whole earth on which we live has become dotted with cemeteries. Death, preceded by incalculable pains of the body, the whole period of the life filled with interchanging smiles and tears, anguish of hearts relieved by times of joy and happiness, have been our history. "*Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin*" (**Rom. 5:12**). All of this pain and woe, Paul said is caused by sin. It is a punishment the infinite God laid upon man -- because of his sin.

While we experience these discomfitures here because of sin, without the aid of revelation, the nature, extent, duration, and the severity of any punishment that might be suffered hereafter would be the subject of simple conjecture. All the details would be left in the dark. We must depend upon revelation for the answer to our questions concerning the matter. To it then we turn, and the question set before us divides itself into some four points.

First, "Is there any punishment for the wicked after death?"

Second, "Is there a future, final and universal judgment, such as we have heard of?"

Third, "What is to follow in the way of punishment, if anything, after that universal judgment?"

Fourth, "How long, if there is such punishment after the judgment day, will it continue?"

First, "Is there then any punishment after death?"

Notice particularly **Luke 12:4**, where Jesus addressing his disciples, said, "*My friends, be not afraid of them who kill the body, but after that have nothing more they can do.*" They can take your body and burn it and dismember it, but that does not hurt your soul. They have no more that they can do which inflicts any pain upon you. "*But,*" He continued, "*I will forewarn you whom to fear. Fear Him who after He hath killed, hath power to cast into hell.*" Furthermore, in **Luke 16**, the rich man died (**verse 22**), and in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment in the flame, so there definitely is punishment after death for the alien, and unfaithful.

Secondly, "Is there, according to the Word of God, and beyond all uncertainties of interpretation, and all questions about the meaning of words, such a final judgment as we have been taught to believe?" The word "judgment" is used and applied many times to judgments that occur here on earth. Many imagine that this is the only use of the term. But the Apostle told us in **Heb. 9:27**, "*that it is appointed unto man once to die, and after that the judgment.*" In addition then to all the judgments on earth, there is a final judgment that comes after death. This judgment will be universal in its nature. "*So then each one of us shall give account of himself unto God*" (**Rom. 14:12**). "*When the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall he sit upon the throne of His glory and all nations shall be gathered before him*" (**Matt. 25:31; Jno. 5:28,29**). "*And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the*

throne" (Rev. 20:12). So the judgment following death will be final and universal in its nature.

Thirdly, What is to follow in the way of punishment, if anything? Rationally speaking, were there no punishment provided there would be no point in having a judgment. God's infinite justice necessitates punishment to those who have violated His infinite holiness by disobeying His righteous commands. Do you remember how this punishment is set forth in the Bible? *"Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels"* (Matt. 25:41). Everlasting Fire! A lake that burns with fire and brimstone. The most excruciating torture, I believe, that human flesh can experience, is to be burned with fire, and that represents this suffering after the judgment. Furthermore he said, *"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth"* (Matt. 25:30). Men gnash their teeth only, when they are enraged against themselves, when they are tormented with anguish and self-reproach. Such then, is the answer to our third question. "Will there be any punishment after the final judgment?"

Now finally, how long will that punishment which comes after the judgment, and which is described in these horrid terms, endure? How long shall the punishment last? Christ stamped the word "eternal" upon the duration of the sinner's punishment. *"And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life"* (Matt. 25:46). Eternal punishment for some and eternal reward for others. There are people who would tell you that the reward for the righteous will last forever, but the reward of the wicked will be completed at death. In other words, death is the final and complete punishment. Annihilation is the punishment for the sinner; but remember, the Lord said "eternal punishment" and "eternal life." If "eternal" life means forever, then "eternal" punishment means for the same duration. We know from their meanings that there is no end for either. We see then God's infinite hatred of sin by the fact that he is going to punish the sinner with everlasting punishment in the lake of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. How is it, then, that a man or woman, can consent to live in sin day by day and still realize the awful consequence of such a life? Knowing that they shall incur this awful penalty, that if they were to die today, this would be their unending fate, how can they fail to reproach themselves for being sinners, and to fly away from it to the only means of escape found in Christ Jesus our Lord?

But thanks be to His blessed name; however, great the sins committed, however numerous they are, and however just the awful sentence that has been passed against us, there is a way of escape. This is had by obedience to the terms laid down in the gospel of Christ. *"Repent and be baptized, everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins"* (Acts 2:38).

There is salvation through no other means, so we must be saved by obedience to the gospel.

By Cecil Willis -- Via Truth Magazine, XX:1, p. 3-4, January 1, 1976

DISOBEDIENCE

Must a Thing Be Prohibited

In the first chapter of Hebrews Paul refers to angels through whom the former law was made known, and in the second chapter, raises the question, *For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation? Which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard.* (Heb. 2:2,3) Thus it appears that the chance of escaping punishment for disobedience now is less than it was then. *A man that hath set at naught Moses' law died without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment think ye shall he be judged worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace? For we know him that said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense. And again, the Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* (Heb. 10:28-31) It is still true under the gospel dispensation that vengeance belongs to God, and it is still a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. The disobedient died without mercy then: the disobedient in this dispensation will receive a "sorer" punishment.

Dispensation of Grace

Some think that because we live under the dispensation of grace, we will not be held to as strict account as were the Israelites. Know, my brother, that grace to forgive the penitent, and to help him do right, is not license permitting him to trample under foot, the Son of God and to count his covenant an unholy thing. They despised Moses' law when they disobeyed it as if it was not a worthy rule of conduct, and we trample under foot the Son of God when we refuse His rule in our hearts. Paul says, *To you who are afflicted, rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus.* (2 Thess. 1:7,8) Again, *But unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil.* (Rom. 8:9) Jesus says, *Every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof.* (Matt. 7:26,27)

Sound Doctrine, C.R. Nichol, R.L. Whiteside, Vol. 1, Pages 140, 141

Eph. 2:19 So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, 20 being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; 21 in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

1Pet. 2:9 But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

Visitors welcome

We conduct in home Bible Studies

We offer Correspondence Courses

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

OUR ADDRESS IS:

7845 Cottonwood Dr.

Lenexa, Kansas 66216

913-764-9170

Check out the following websites

thelenexaedifier.com

facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist/

lenexachurchofchrist.org

NEWS AND NOTES:

PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR PRAYERS: GRANT CLOTHIER AND J.R. DANIEL, JAN PATRICK AND JON COONES.

STEVE WIMP IS IN REHAB AT TRINITY NURSING, 62ND AND MASTIN IN SHAWNEE, ROOM 610.

BIBLE CLASSES: SUNDAY: GOSPEL OF JOHN - RON PECK - WEDNESDAY: THE THEME OF THE BIBLE - JIM STAUFFER

SUNDAY SERMON: WHAT DOES MY LIFE INSPIRE



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10