

## Scriptures and Doctrine :: Sin and Sinners

### Sin and Sinners - posted by meetwes, on: 2009/1/3 13:50

This forum is really helpful and useful in understanding the word. Thanks All!

I would like correct or clarify my understanding on sin and sinners.

Considering our sinful nature inherited from Adam, what exactly is repentance and what should the salvation message to sinners focus on?

Is repentance the acknowledgement of that fact that I am a sinner because of my sinful nature and then believe in God's redemption plan through Christ for salvation? If so, I seem to put the blame of my sin on my sinful nature, not myself. Also with this approach I acknowledge that I have no power over sin, so I need His power and I am saved the very moment I believe in God.

Or is it that I deliberately sinned (I could have chosen not to sin) so I need to change my actions and accept God's salvation plan through Christ? In this approach I can say with conviction I am guilty. However, since it is me who has sinned, I have to change my actions before being accepted by God. The onus seems to be on me to prove my repentance.

What should the gospel message to sinners focus on? Probably a combination of both?

### Re: Sin and Sinners - posted by TroyorTakoda (), on: 2009/1/3 16:44

Before I even read the last line of your post, I was thinking that it is both, because I believe we choose to sin because it is of our nature to sin because of who we are, until we come to God and He makes us a new creation. I believe that who we are makes us do what we do, because a bad tree cannot produce good fruit.

I think it was Brother Ravenhill who said that Jesus didn't come to make bad men good. He came to make dead men live. He totally changes our very nature, making us new, and that is what empowers us to behave differently.

While it is true that in a sense we did inherit a sinful nature, we still have to take responsibility for our own actions. We can't just say, well blame it on Adam, or that the devil made me do it, because the bible clearly teaches that a man goes astray because of his own lusts, and because we chose to do it.

It is true that without Christ we can do nothing, but with God all things are possible, and so a man before salvation is said to be a slave to sin, because without the power of God living inside him, he cannot by his own strength stop sinning. We cannot change our actions before we come to God, but rather we come to Him and ask Him to live through us, and then He will change us. In this strength that He gives us, He will enable us to continually walk in repentance and to continue to say no to sin.

John the Baptist spoke about showing proof or "fruit" of repentance, and if we have been saved and we are walking by the Spirit, we will have the fruit of the Spirit in our lives, which includes the self-control to say no to sin.

Jesus never said that you can't judge a book by its cover, but rather he said that you will know a tree by its fruit. I think one of the most awesome things about when we walk in the Spirit so that He sets us free, it also benefits those who see the change in our lives, and they will know God is real and powerful, and will want to question us about what made such a radical change in our lives.

Some would say, as Charles Finney pointed out, if God made me this way, then how can it be my fault when I sin if I can't help it? But God has given us a choice to come to Him and be saved and receive the indwelling Spirit who will empower us to stop sinning.

Just acknowledging that we are sinners is not repentance, though. Repentance is a turning away from sin, and unless we do that, no amount of crying or saying we're sorry will help us if we walk away and keep doing the same things we did before.

I believe the salvation message should focus on the total depravity of man (and no I am not a Calvinist) and the power of God to forgive us, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, and to empower us to walk in a life of surrender to Him.

**Re: Sin and Sinners - posted by Lordoitagain (), on: 2009/1/3 19:11**

GREAT QUESTIONS! and GREAT ANSWERS!

I've always liked to refer to this passage in 2 Corinthians regarding repentance:

2 Corinthians 7:8 ¶ For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season.

9 ¶ Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

10 ¶ For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

11 ¶ For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

The people at Corinth received Paul's first epistle making them aware of their sin. Apparently they were blindly going on in a religious "Christian" way with obvious sin that they had not turned from. Sin IS a choice, although the tree is planted in our garden when we are born, we choose to pick the fruit and eat it:

James 1:13 ¶ Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

14 ¶ But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

15 ¶ Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

When the people of Corinth read Paul's first epistle, and saw the greatness of their guilt, they had a reaction . . . SORROW . . . GODLY SORROW . . . which led to repentance. Their repentance was proven in the way that they reacted to their sorrow:

"what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter."

When God makes a sinner aware of the GREATNESS of his sin, he will either believe God and react as the people of Corinth did, and end up totally washed, and clear in the matter by confessing (1John 1:9), or he will ignore the voice of the Holy Ghost knocking on the door of his conscience, and continue to believe that his sin is not such a big deal.