

CAUSE

EFFECT



The Effects of Sin

We Trade the Truth for a Lie

“Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves: for that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator.”

(Rom. 1:24-25, ASV)

Truth is never “subjective” or “relative.” Truth is objectively defined by God and His word.

- **“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life’”** (John 14:6).
- **“Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth”** (John 17:17).

As cultures change, so will morals, ethics, and values, but God’s word, His truth, and His expectations for man never change. **“The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever”** (Isa. 40:8).

We must never rely on man and their subjective “truths,” but instead always rely on God’s objective truth, which is the only thing that will save us from eternal punishment.

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When we sin, we trade the truth for a lie and are just like those whom Paul describes.

- These are people who “knew God” but “did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened” (Rom. 1:21, ESV).

The same dynamic is at work today. Satan appeals to our natural desires and urges us to fulfill them in ways that dishonor God.

Let us not be futile in our thinking by listening to the lies derived from Satan, “**the father of lies**” (John 8:44).

After all, if we do accept and take pleasure in his lies, we become one of Satan’s disciples (see 1 John 3:4-8).

Do we really think it’s ever worth trading the truth for a lie?

We Deceive Ourselves and Others

“Evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.”

(2 Tim. 3:13)

When we sin, we may be forced to deceive others to try covering up our sins.

Similarly, when tempted to sin, we also can be guilty of deceiving ourselves into thinking things like:

- 1) **The sin is worth committing.**
- 2) **We can always “just get forgiveness.”**
- 3) **It’s just one sin.**
- 4) **There won’t be any consequences; it’s just a “small thing.”**

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Is one sin really just one sin?

- “I heard another voice from heaven, saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive any of her plagues; for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her offenses” (Rev. 18:4-5, NASB).

Sin has a way of “piling up” without us even realizing it.

- Remember the way David’s sins piled up (2 Sam. 11-12)?
- The same thing happens to us today whether we realize it or not.

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See how sin has a way of
piling up?

Take the basic example of forsaking assemblies on Sunday morning to go fishing with our buddies. By doing so, we:

- 1) Forsake the assemblies (Heb. 10:24-25).
- 2) Sin willfully (Heb. 10:26-27).
- 3) Don't put God first (Matt. 6:33)
- 4) Don't spur our brethren to love and good works (Heb. 10:24).
- 5) Neglect encouraging our brethren (Heb. 10:25).
- 6) Don't teach and admonish our brethren in song (Col. 3:16).
- 7) Don't commemorate the death of Christ (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:17-34).
- 8) Don't contribute our means to ensure the work of the church continues (1 Cor. 16:1-2).
- 9) Set the wrong example for our buddies (1 Tim. 4:12).

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Let's not deceive ourselves.
God takes a “little”
disobedience seriously.

Is it ever “just a small thing” to count the blood of Christ as common?

- “Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?” (Heb. 10:29).

God’s anger is seen against even the most “minor” of sins.

- Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:16-17, 3:16-19; Rom. 5:12).
- Lot’s wife (Gen. 19:15-17, 19:24-26).
- Moses (Num. 20:7-8, 10-12).

Remember, “He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much” (Luke 16:10).

We Negatively Affect Others

When we make sinful choices, we impact more than just ourselves. Consider a few examples.

- When an employee does not do the work his employer requires (Col. 3:22; Eph. 6:5-9), his fellow co-workers suffer, the employer suffers, the customer suffers, and God's name suffers (1 Tim. 6:1).
- A family suffers immensely when the husband/father won't work and provide for his family (1 Tim. 5:8).
- When a person does something that does not violate his own conscience but violates the consciences others, he can cause them to sin (1 Cor. 8:9-13; Rom 14:13).
- When a person does not set a Godly example before his peers (Matt. 5:14-16; 1 Tim. 4:12), he negatively affects their ability to serve God (1 Cor. 15:33), and can even become a hindrance to non-believers obeying the gospel (1 Pet. 3:1-2).

Our Hearts Harden

“Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘Today,’ lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”

(Heb. 3:12-13)

Commit a sin enough times or be exposed to a sin enough and you can be assured your heart will soften towards it until you are completely apathetic and unaffected by its wickedness.

Your heart where will be softened towards sin but hardened towards obeying God.

You can even reach a point where repentance is impossible because your heart has hardened so much.

- **“It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame” (Heb. 6:4-6).**

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The NASB, CSB, and NET footnotes all explain how the word “**while**” could be used instead of “**since**” in Heb. 6:6.

- That would verse would then read, “**it is impossible . . . to renew them again to repentance while they crucify again for themselves the Son of God.**”

The ISV translates verse Heb. 6:6 this way: “**as long as they continue to crucify the Son of God to their own detriment.**”

- In other words, it is impossible to get people to repent while they remain “**slaves of sin**” (see Rom. 6:15-23).
- They are not incapable but unwilling to repent (Heb. 3:12-13).

The next time the thought of “I can always just get forgiveness” crosses your mind when you are tempted to sin, just ask yourself: Will the next time you sin harden your heart? If it does, getting forgiveness will be far more difficult than you initially thought.

We Enjoy Fleeting Pleasure

“By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.”

(Heb. 11:24-26)

The reason sin is always so appealing and enticing is because sin always provides pleasure, so we happily rush into sin because we know we are going to experience pleasure for a moment.

The pleasures of sin do not last. The worldly pleasures this temporal life offers us are not permanent; they are temporary and fleeting (Heb. 11:24-26).

If we sow sin, we may reap temporary pleasure, but we will also reap the consequences.

- **“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart” (Gal. 6:7-9).**

We Bring Forth Death

“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.”

(Rom. 5:12)

The greatest consequence of sin is death.

- **“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” (Rom. 6:23a).**
- **“Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins” (James 5:19-20).**

For some reason, some Christians think it’s wrong to say this, but fear of eternal punishment (death) is a perfectly good reason to want to obey God (2 Cor. 5:10-11).

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Of course, fear of spiritual death should not be the sole motivator for obeying God and abstaining from sin. Among other reasons, we obey God because:

- We have faith in Him (Heb. 11:6).
- We love Him (John 14:21).
- He is so good to us (Rom. 2:4).
- Jesus’s death drives us to live for Him (2 Cor. 5:14-15).

If the eternal effect that sin has on a person’s soul (spiritual death) does not motivate someone to abstain from sin, what will?

Life / Revival is Made Available

“He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors.”

(Rom. 8:11-12)

Sin brings forth death. But a particular attitude towards sin will bring forth life.

- **“I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3)**
- **“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9).**

If you have a penitent attitude towards your sins, life and renewal can result from your missteps.

Every person fights sin everyday. What matters most is recognizing all the negative effects of sin and being willing to turn from that which causes all that negativity. If we do turn from sin, we have the promise of eternal life.

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If a person is accountable, he is a debtor; he is in debt to God for the gift of His Son.

- “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God” (Rom. 3:25, KJV).

“**Propitiation**” means “satisfaction,” as in payment for a debt.

Only the blood of Christ could offer a sacrifice sufficient to satisfy the debt for sin (Heb. 9:26-28). But if you have not accepted Jesus through obedient faith as the means for atonement, then you still owe the debt for your sins.

**Why not accept the only payment that
can keep you out of the lake of fire?**