

The Here-And-Now Consequences of Sin (Sin's *Other* Consequences)

We know about spiritual death (Rom.6:23) and eternal damnation (2Thess.1:9). We've heard about them many times. But somehow, they seem far away enough to minimize in our minds- after all, we'll have time to get things straightened out before then, right? And of course, we also have learned to rationalize regarding how *minimal* our sins are by comparison to those of others, and wind up excusing our "mistakes" or "failures" or "errors in judgment" all together.

The truth is that ours has become a *here* and *now* society. What that means is that if the benefits or consequences of the proposition are not immediate, or at least soon, we are typically just not that interested. While sin does indeed have *eternal* consequences of *spiritual death* and *eternal damnation*, which are certainly related but not necessarily synonymous, it also has *other* and *more immediate* consequences that need to be understood also. I must confess that these *other* consequences are, in some cases, discerned from all too personal experiences.

I. Sins *Other* (and more *immediate*) Consequences.

A. **Distraction-** from spiritual goals and spiritual activities, 2Tim.2:4.

Some have ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) and some have ADOS (Attention Deficit Oh Shiny!). In spiritual terms, the *shiny allure* of sin *distracts* us from our *sacred* and *sanctified* purpose, Heb.11:24-25.

We must remain *single-eyed* and *singularly-purposed*, Matt.6:22 (KJV; see also Jas.1:8; 4:8).

B. **Destruction of Influence-** at home, at work, in church, in the world, Matt.5:13-16.

Sin, sometimes only one, destroys our ability to influence others for truth and righteousness. It is not just the loss of opportunity to influence others for *good*; it may also be *destructive* toward a future opportunity for you or anyone else. This is so because despite our interest and intent toward spiritual goals, others that we hope to influence may view our sin as *hypocrisy*.

Sin can thus destroy our influence with:

- Our neighbors, Col.4:5-6; Rom.12:17-21; (UK subway: a man pushes aside and curses another fellow who was trying to let an older lady off first, only to interview with the same fellow for a job later that day!)
- Our co-workers, Col.3:22 – 4:1; and,
- Our families, (spouses, children, and extended families), Col.3:18-21.

C. **Dependence-** it gets worse, we need more, it consumes by pervasiveness, 1Tim.4:2.

Perhaps this is best illustrated by *lust*:

- For *things*, 1Tim.6:3-10; or,
- In regards to *sexual lust*, 1Thess.4:3-8.

Both of these desires can easily become *habit-forming* like a drug- where *more* and *more* of them are required to achieve the desired *high*. Then, what we thought was a *one-time* indulgence, quickly escalates to *complete dependence* and *addiction*.

D. **Derailment-** can lead to complete abandonment of what is believed to be true and right, Gal.6:7-8.

Think about it: How many people do you know that *used to be* faithful Christians, but now never darken the door of the meetinghouse? How did this happen? Did they stop believing in God? Do they no longer believe the Bible to be His Word? Or was it that sin was given a *foothold* through an *all-too-understandable/excusable* (in human thinking) and presumed *one-time* offense that first *distracted* them, then *destroyed* their influence, then made them *dependent*, and ultimately completely *derailed* their spiritual journey toward heaven.

The *parable of the Sower* illustrates this also, cf. Matt.13:18-22, because everyone of the representative *soils* **heard the word**. The last three of them not only *heard*, but also *accepted* it, but only one continued to *bear fruit*. Why? **Sin** was, and is, the culprit.

The great news is it doesn't have to be this way, 1John 1:5-9!