

4 Class 4 Sin

What is wrong?

It is interesting to note that every worldview acknowledges that something is wrong. Something is wrong with the created order; something is wrong with the human core and relationship. The religious aspect of worldviews attempts to describe what is wrong and how to right it from a religious standpoint. The political wing of worldviews explains that government policies and regulations can solve the human dilemma.

A SENSE OF WRONG can be detected, but this does not ensure that we will understand the wrong or what to do about it.

Every single time, unless one understands what is wrong and how the wrong relates to ultimate reality and the nature of humanity, then the SOLUTION becomes either SUPERFICIAL or CATASTROPHIC.

SUPERFICIAL – It is superficial very similar to putting a band-aid on a cancer.

- A superficial approach to the problem of sin in human experience shows:
 - A misunderstanding of the nature of moral goodness and immoral evil
 - A misunderstanding concerning the nature of God and His law
 - A misunderstanding of the nature of humanity and our moral accountability to God
- A superficial understanding of sin:
 - Might give temporary relief, but does not give long term help
 - Reason is because it does not deal with the truth about sin
 - Some examples of superficiality in perceiving sin:
 - Sin is caused by poverty
 - Sin is low self-esteem
 - Sin is injustice by societal systems
 - Sin is caused by low education
 - Sin is solved by changing your attitude and behavior
 - These are superficial (surface) approaches to sin:
 - They do not rightly understand the nature of sin and how sin is part of the human existence in a fallen dimension.
 - They do not address the real solution to bring real change

CATASTROPHIC – It is catastrophic because the solution brings destruction in an attempt to solve the problem.

- Pseudo-solutions are catastrophic because they build failed hopes
- Pseudo-solutions are catastrophic because they establish false foundations for other issues
- Pseudo-solutions are catastrophic because they inherently oppose the truth
- For more information on pseudo-solutions, see below number 5 under Christianity and Sin

TRUTH ASSERTIONS and Views of Sin (Christianity) – Wrong statements in a belief system connects with all other assertions in the belief system. True statements connect with true statements in all

other aspects of a belief system. Thus, to get SIN wrong is to be wrong in all other aspects of the worldview.

- Sin and Ultimate Reality – The belief about sin reflects on what is assumed to be ultimate in morality, eternality, oughtness, and vision.
 - Sin must be seen for what it is and how it is in relation to God
 - Sin must be seen from God’s perspective
 - Sin must be understood in terms of its rebellion against God and against God’s law
 - Only in this way can we understand the true nature of sin
 - Only in this way can we understand the enormity of sin
 - Only in this way can we understand the nature of sin’s solution (see below)
- Sin and Human Essence – What sin is, and how sin connects to the human essence of being determines how one looks at the nature of the problem and reflects on what humanity is and how humanity relates to the problem.
 - Sin and its effect on the human soul
 - Sin and its effect on the human conscience
 - Sin and its effect on the human emotion (affections)
 - Sin and its effect on the human will
 - Only when we understand sin in its relation to human essence will we understand the nature of sin’s solution (see below)
- Sin and Solution – In addition, what a belief system thinks and asserts about sin dictates how the belief system approaches the idea of the solution. The solution must be in keeping with and effectual concerning sin and its impact on the human condition and the role it plays in ultimate reality.
 - The solution to sin must establish a holy link to God
 - The solution to sin must transform human essence of being
 - The solution to sin must change lives and the world

Christian Worldview and Sin

1. Christianity teaches that the problem with the human race is SIN.
Christianity does not teach that sin is:
 - 1) Not mistakes
 - 2) Not weaknesses
 - 3) Not low self-esteem
2. Christianity teaches that sin is:
 - Wrong deeds
 - Wrong living
 - Wrong heart and human essence of existence and being
 - Wrong relationship with God
3. Christianity describes sin as:
 - Missing the mark

- Violating or transgressing God's law
- Rebellion against God
- Enmity with God
- An evil heart: A heart that is bent against God and His law and sovereign authority.
- Dishonoring the Lord: The extension of a nature of sinfulness is found in the multiplied acts, words, and patterns of living that dishonor the Lord.
- All aspects of the human nature and condition are involved: The human mind, emotion, and will are affected to the degree that although we live by our choices, we are unable to choose what we do not want, and what we want is to be selfish and sinful.
- Separation from God: Sin separates us from God, and it takes God's sovereign act of gracious salvation in and through Jesus Christ, the gospel, and the work of the Holy Spirit to transform us.
- Sin is self-idolatry, selfishness, and self-determinism
- Sin is impurity
- Sin is deceitful and lies
 - Deceived about God
 - Deceived about sin
 - Deceived about truth
 - Deceived about freedom
 - Deceived about life and reality
 - Sin deceives us/lies to us by saying:
 - Lie – we are in control
 - Lie – what matters is what we want to be and do
 - Lie – we are not accountable for our sins
 - Lie – there is no such thing as sin
 - Lie – there is no judgment
 - Lie – God's truth is only imposition of cultural mores
- Sin is enslaving
 - Sin promises freedom and self-expression but enslaves
 - Sin takes us from the light and puts us in the dark
 - Sin removes us from our God and His life
 - Sin brings destruction and death
 - Sin enslaves:
 - Our will to do only what sin we want to do
 - Our affections to love only that which is not right
 - Our minds to cease to think in true categories and logic

4. Christianity Teaches that Sin is a Denial of God's Transcendent Exaltation and Authority

- Sin denies God's existence, or
- Sin denies God's significance
- Sin denies God's authority
- Sin denies God's right
- Sin denies God's truth
 - Sin as transgression against God's law
- Sin is violation of God's holiness
- Sin as rebellion against God

5. Pseudo-solutions of False Worldviews – We introduced this earlier in the talk, but let us look more closely at the pseudo-solutions that false worldviews give:
 - Come from a false understanding of reality and ultimate reality
 - In fact, if we have a false notion and perspective of ultimate reality, then we will be in error concerning every other important aspect of worldview thinking. To be in error about ultimate reality is to be in error about everything else, including what the human problem is (and what the problem is with the entire created order).
 - Misunderstand the nature of the problem
 - To misunderstand the nature of the problem of sin will certainly instigate false notions about what the solutions are. As we stated earlier, these false views of sin will lead to superficiality and catastrophe in every area possible:
 - Wrong view of humanity/people
 - Wrong view of self
 - Wrong view of oughtness/ethics
 - Wrong view of God
 - Wrong view of history
 - Come from human understanding, and not God's
 - Good examples of this are to see the false statements in the Humanist Manifestos I, II, III (see examples of Humanist Manifesto documents at the end of these notes)
 - All wrong views of sin begin with human life, thinking, and experience, rather than God
 - Sin's idolatry forms the nature and meaning of solutions
 - It is interesting to note (as we often do in our studies) that Romans 1 clearly states that idolatry is inevitable for those who reject God.
 - Idolatry includes the exaltation of self to the level of deification and the perversion of thinking and feeling to the level of reprobation.
 - Sin as warped fabric of material reality
 - The mind is warped
 - The emotions are warped
 - The will is warped
6. Sin and reprobation
 - Reprobation is that stage in sinful rebellion where the sinner no longer perceives any aspect of godliness, divine true, and guilt. The conscience is calloused to the point where it either no longer operates, or it does so according to a totally false sense of measurement. God has given the sinner over to his sin, and the darkness becomes all-encompassing.
7. Sin as consummate despair
 - At some point in sin's domination and insurgence in the human experience, darkness becomes so deep and consuming that despair sets in. This is close to the end game; this is the point where Satan's will is being carried out. Life is becoming only about death.

Summary Points for Continuing Contemplation

1. Wrong ideas about sin reveal wrong ideas about God and will inevitably and consequentially establish the basis for wrong ideas about solutions in the human problem.
2. Christianity teaches that at every level sin is deceptive, promising good and joy, but is destructive in every aspect of life:
 - 1) Individual life
 - 2) Relational life
 - 3) Societal life
 - 4) Spiritual life
3. Christianity's view of sin must be rightly understood so that the right view of God's solution to the sin problem might be also rightly understood.