

Introduction:

1. If I ask you to think about the effect of sin in the life of a Christian, what is your first thought? It actually has some far reaching effects—things that we may not even think about. When we think of sin, we need to think in terms of its effect relative to persons.
  - a. First, we need to think about what it does to ourselves, what it does to me, Romans 6:23.
  - b. Second, it does something to God. My sin makes God my enemy. God does not want to be my enemy, James 4:4.
  - c. Third, it does something to the devil. It makes a friendship with the devil, James 4:7. I cannot afford to be Satan's ally.
  - d. Fourth, it effects other people—a lot of other people.
2. It is this fourth point that we want to explore in this study.
  - a. I think we have far too limited a view of the effects of sin.
  - b. We tend to think only of what sin does to ourselves personally, and to our relationship with God, which is still very serious! Then we say, "But, it's my life. I will answer for it."
  - c. We may say this while totally disregarding the effect of "my life" on other people.
4. How does the practice of sin in my life affect others?

The Lesson:**I. Sin hinders the work of God.**

- A. My sin can obstruct what my brethren are trying to accomplish in the kingdom of God.
- B. Righteousness advances the kingdom of God, while sin hinders it.
  1. The case of Achan's hidden sin, Joshua 7:2-13; 6:18; 7:19-21. One man's sin hurt the advance of the cause of God.
  2. Does the same thing happen today? It may not happen in the same way, but it happens!
  3. See 1 Corinthians 5:1ff. Do you think the work of God prospered among the Gentiles when the people of God tolerated sin in their midst?
- C. Sin hinders the work of God.

**II. Sin destroys my community.**

- A. The things I hate to see happen in my community are the things I am promoting by my sin.
  1. I don't want to see the increase of immorality in this land.
  2. This is my land, my home; it is where my grandchildren must live. I want this to be a wholesome place in which to live.
- B. My sin degrades the land in which I live, Psalms 9:17; Proverbs 14:34.
  1. Look back to the Old Testament and see how the people of Canaan defiled the society in which they lived, Leviticus 18:20-25.
    - a. We hear such things as "Drugs are destroying us. Alcohol is corrupting us. Immoral sex will be the ruin of this nation. The government ought to do something about it...!"
    - b. If we cannot govern our own passions, all efforts put forth by the government will be futile!
    - c. We want the government to get the drug pushers, but if we use those drugs, we are part of the problem!
  2. A righteous *nation* begins with a righteous *me*, Proverbs 14:34.
- C. Sin destroys my community.

**II. Sin influences others and destroys my influence with others.**

- A. No man is an island. Every person's life affects those he associates with.
- B. There are at least two ways in which my sin influences others to sin.
  1. By emboldening them to do what they believe is wrong, 1 Corinthians 8:10. Though the matter in this passage (eating of meat) is not sin of itself, there is an important principle taught. When an older (stronger?) Christian acts in a certain way, the younger (weaker?) Christian may imitate him! Sometimes young Christians imitate the sin of the older.
  2. By discouraging some who are not stable. Some people just give up when they see others sin. They say, "What's the use...?"

- C. Sin also destroys my influence with others.
  1. Those who know I am a Christian, and know I am harboring sin, also know I am a hypocrite, Romans 2:21-22. You cannot teach it if you do not live it!
  2. Teach the man at the liquor store about the delight of being a Christian as you delight in his bottle of whiskey! Teach the man who is living in adultery that immorality is wrong as you laugh at his dirty jokes. You can't do it.
- D. Sin influences others and destroys my influence with others.

### III. Sin makes others ashamed of me.

- A. I not only bring shame on my family and my brethren by my sin, I actually cause them to be ashamed of me.
- B. Sin is an occasion of shame, though we no longer think so in our culture, Ephesians 5:11-12; Romans 6:21.
  1. Paul told Timothy not to be ashamed of his imprisonment, 2 Timothy 1:8. Had Paul committed a crime worthy of imprisonment, Timothy would have good reason to be ashamed of him!
  2. Look at how bad things had become in Israel, Ezekiel 16:27. The people of Jerusalem had committed such sin that even the Philistines were ashamed of their conduct!
  3. See a New Testament example in 1 Corinthians 6:5. Paul was ashamed of the way the Corinthians had conducted themselves.
- C. Sin makes others ashamed of me.

### IV. Sin hinders my prayer for others.

- A. I cannot effectively pray for others while harboring sin.
- B. The practice of sin destroys prayer, Isaiah 59:1-2; Proverbs 28:9.
  1. When the sick, the hurting, or the troubled ask me to pray, I deny them the benefit of my prayers if I am living in sin.
  2. There is blessing from God that might have come to them had it not been for my sin!
- C. Sin hinders my prayer for others.

### V. Sin causes the enemies of God to blaspheme.

- A. There is rejoicing and speaking against the way of God every time a follower of God is caught in sin. The enemies of the Lord get a kick out of seeing Christians fall. It gives them a laugh.
- B. Our misdeeds give occasion to speak against the way of God, 2 Samuel 12:14.
  1. The enemies of God delighted in David's fall.
  2. God's enemies would delight in our fall also, Romans 2:22-24.
    - a. The wicked say things like, "If that's what their God does for them, who needs him? We are as good as those people who follow God."
    - b. It is disgusting to think that atheists like Richard Dawkins, Hugh Hefner, Bill Maher and other God-haters get a laugh when Christians sin! Let's not give them occasion to do that.
- C. Sin causes the enemies of God to blaspheme.

### Conclusion:

1. Yes, it is true; my sin does affect more people than just me. Even if I say I don't care about me, I must care about others.
2. Each of the things above are things that I hate. If I hate them, then why do I love sin? The things I hate are the things produced when I sin.
3. What is the solution? Understand the awful consequence of sin and then repent! James 4:7-10.