

Sin: the reason we need Christ

Dear Reader,

Recently we celebrated Christmas, the commemoration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

Who was Jesus Christ? The Bible tells us that He was God, born in the human nature - truly God, truly man.

Why must He become truly man? To die on the cross, saving us from sin.

Sin? Does sin really exist? What is sin? Is sin bad? Is salvation from sin necessary? Is Christ the only savior from sin?

How many people, even those who might say they are "Christian," say "No" to these questions.

What is sin?

Sin is not just political incorrectness. Sin is not just that which society calls taboo. Sin is worse than that - much worse.

Sin is man trying to live apart from God, or trying to live as if he is God. Sin is man determining for himself what is good and bad, right and wrong, truth and lie, setting aside what God says about these in the Bible.

The Bible calls sin *transgression* - going outside a fence or crossing a boundary. In His law God gives us a fence inside which we must live. Like the cow that escapes its fenced pasture, sinners go outside the fence.

In its original languages, the Bible refers to sin as *missing the mark*, like an archer that misses his target. Our target must be God's glory; all our life and actions we must aim toward God's glory. But we sin; we miss the mark. Only, we miss not by being off center a few inches, or by narrowly missing the target; we miss, by turning around and aiming our life in the opposite direction - *man's* glory.

Sin, then, is more than just something we do; it is more than killing, than unlawful sex, than stealing, all of which God's law forbids.

Sin characterizes our whole life. Sin is what we *do*, because *sinner* is what we are. That is to say, sin is a matter of our nature. As it is the nature of rotting garbage to stink, so it is the nature of man to sin. Even in little things, by seeking ourselves and not desiring to bring glory to God, we sin.

From where does such sin come?

First, sin comes from our heart. The ten commandments teach this, for the last of them forbids covetousness - an act of the heart. So King David, confessing his own sin, prayed for a "clean heart" (Psalm 51:10).

Second, sin comes from our parents. King David said it well: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5).

Third, sin comes from Adam and Eve, the first humans to live on the earth. Yes, we must take Genesis 1-3 as literal history. Yes, Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. And yes, part of God's punishment on them for this was that they would be sinners, and their children would also.

What is sin's reward?

Sin seems enjoyable. Its reward is pleasure - though that is quickly over.

The other reward which sin gives lasts forever: death. “The wages of sin is death,” Romans 6:23. As God told Adam would happen, Adam’s sin brought death on himself and the whole human race. Death in the body, and death in the soul.

The body lives awhile; but it will die.

The soul is already dead: it does not seek God!

And at death, if we are not saved from our sins, both body and soul go to hell.

Sin is this bad.

We need salvation, not only to go to heaven after we die, but also to live for God and enjoy true peace and happiness in this life.

Christ bore the sins of those who believe in Him!

So salvation is necessary; and Christ is the only savior from sin. He bore the sins of His people!

He was born, to die. Eternally God, He took our human nature to Himself, and with it the guilt and curse of our sin, to die for us.

He died, of course, in His body.

But in dying in His body, He endured God’s wrath against sin - the horrors of hell!

And rising again, He showed that He earns for us God’s righteousness and favor, and life and peace.

So, while the believer is still a sinner in his nature, he is forgiven by grace; and though he still sins, he is sorry for his sin and strives to live unto God.

This is why Christ’s birth was necessary.

This is why the Christian does not deny sin, but confesses that he is a sinner.

And this is why Christmas, for the true believer, is not just once a year, but every day.

Pastor Douglas Kuiper

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

I John 1:8

So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many . . .

Hebrews 9:28

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:23