

The Problem of Sin



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The Problem of Sin

By Ostis B. Wilson

I will read a passage from the 5th chapter of Romans verses 12 through 21.

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were

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made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

In this passage the subject of sin is introduced and it is made clear that sin is a universal thing and affects the lives of every man, woman, and child of Adam’s race; consequently, it is a problem that all of us have to deal with. Therefore, I wish to discuss the problem of sin in this little message.

I hope you will not be like one person I heard about who attended a church service one day. When the service was over, she could tell the color of hair and eyes of everyone around her and how they were dressed and what kind and color of shoes they were wearing, but she could tell nothing about what the preacher said. When she returned home, her mother, who had not gone to meeting that day, asked her about the meeting and what the preacher preached about. She responded that he talked about sin. Her mother asked what he said about sin and she replied, “Oh, I don’t know much of what he said, but I think he is against it.” I hope I can deal with the subject of sin explicitly enough and in strong enough terms that when I have finished you will know I am against sin and there will be no question about it.

There are certainly some here today who are saved from sin and sin is not affecting your lives now. That is good. I would be glad if I could feel that everyone here was saved from sin, but I can’t. I feel certain there are some folks here who are face to face with the problem of sin; and sin is affecting your lives perhaps more than you are aware of, and surely more than you should be allowing it to affect your lives.

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This text clearly states that sin came into this world through one man's disobedience and that death came along with it. Ah, folks, we need to understand sin in its consequences with death at its heels. Sin and death run together and are inseparable companions. Everywhere you find sin, you will find death.

When God made man and placed him in the Garden of Eden, He gave him one commandment and told him in the day he disobeyed that commandment he would surely die. Gen. 2:17, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." In Ezek. 18:4 it says, ". . .the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Again in Romans 6:23 we read, "The wages of sin is death." Then, if we follow on through to the ultimate end of sin and sinners, we find it to be the SECOND DEATH or eternal separation from God in the lake of fire. Rev. 20:11-15 says, "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Sin not only produces death to the soul and separation from God now in this life, but, if persisted in to the end of this physical life, will also produce a second death which is an eternal separation from God in the lake of fire that burneth forever and ever. Imagine

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your being in such a place of torment which will never cease! But that is just where sin will land you if you follow it to the end.

We also need to understand sin in its true color: deforming, defiling, breaking of the righteous law, affronting an awful majesty, profaning a sovereign crown by casting it to the ground. We need to see sin as sin is. But to do this we must be under the influence and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It is only then that sin appears exceeding sinful. Even if saved people get too far out from under the influence of the Holy Spirit, sin will not look as bad to them as it actually is.

The people of the world, or even the religious world today, do not name sin much anymore. With them it has to be some of the ranker and grosser things before it is classified as sin. But they do not possess that quickness or sensitiveness to sin that saints must have to keep themselves free from all sin and its contaminations. This is true because the people of the world are out of contact with the Spirit of God. Jesus said in John 16:8, speaking of the Holy Spirit, "And when he is come, he will reprove [convince or convict] the world of sin, . . ." So it is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict of sin and without His influence and inspiration upon us we will lose our vision of the sinfulness of sin and what sin is. But to people of God living under the direct influence of the Holy Spirit, sin looks just as bad and sinful as it ever did and we have no countenance for sin.

We need to understand sin in its potentials. It has a capacity for vast expansion and an immense scope of evolution. In the most mild sin exists the potentials of the most vicious sin which could be imagined. The fundamental principle of evolution is that what is evolved must first have been involved. In some mysterious form, all the properties of the full grown oak tree existed in the acorn

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from which it grew. In growing from the acorn to the fully developed oak tree it never acquired one property which was not there in the beginning, but just developed and manifested what was already there but could not be seen.

This same law governs the evolution of principles—both righteousness and sin. Jesus gave us this lesson in Matt. 13:31, 32, “Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.” Here Jesus is teaching concerning the elements and principles of righteousness—the kingdom of heaven. It has a very small beginning in the heart and life of the newly converted soul. He is born again, a new life begins, a seed of truth has been planted in the soul—it grows and expands and produces a tree on which is borne all the wonderful, marvelous, luscious fruits of the Spirit in the life. But all the qualities which the consecrated and fully developed life of the Christian is capable of producing existed in that little seed of righteousness and truth wherein it had its beginning.

This is also true of the unrighteous principle of sin. The apparently mild sin of which Adam and Eve were guilty blossomed out in the murder of one of their children by his own brother not far down the line. But we might look on what Adam and Eve did as a mere trifle. They were working in that garden taking care of it; and, according to customary practice, when a fruit grower hires men to work in his orchard, those men are entitled to help themselves to all the fruit that they can use for themselves of whatever kind. But there was something more involved here. God

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had given specific command that they should not eat of the fruit of this particular tree and told them just what would happen if they did. Therefore, this that they did showed a blatant and flagrant disregard for what God had said and manifested an attitude of rebellion against God. All sin involves this same attitude of rebellion against the known will of God and God will rate the enormity of one's sin by the light and understanding he has of the will of God and how he responds to the light God gives him and to God's dealings with his soul. Hence we can see the enormity of the sin of Adam and Eve, and by their disobedience sin entered into the world and the consequences of that sin was passed on to all of Adam's posterity—the entire human race—according to my text.

As a result of this one sin of Adam and Eve, Cain killed Abel, his brother, through envy in just a short while; and as sin continued to spread through the human race (1500 to 1600 years) it had ruined the entire human race and the world was then ready for destruction. We read in Gen. 6:5-7, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."

You might say that 1500 or 1600 years was not just a little while. But it was only a short while in the beginning of a race. It would not be just a little while now, because in this age in which we are now living things happen so fast and developments come so rapidly and so much could happen in that length of time that it would be reckoned a long time. I could say with certainty that in

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the last 100 years—and possibly in the last 50 years—the world has seen more real development and more inventions and discoveries and more advancements in the area of science, etc., than was seen in the whole history of the world from the creation down to the beginning of this last 100 years.

But listen, folks, this condition we are witnessing in our day is just one of the signs of the last days and of the coming of the Son of Man to judgment. It is prophesied in Dan. 12:4, that in the time of the end many would run to and fro and knowledge would be increased. This is happening now right before our eyes, and we are seeing it. But in the beginning of the human race it did not take very long for sin to accomplish the ruin of the entire race.

The world of our day has yet to see the full extent of development of which sin is capable. We have never seen sin at its worst. Sin at its worst has never been seen in this world; at least since the time of the antediluvian world. Now I have extensive scriptural grounds for making that statement. Let us turn to the 15th chapter of Genesis and begin with verse 13. In this case God is talking to Abraham and is making some very broad, sweeping promises. He is promising him the land of Canaan for his inheritance and his seed after him. But He said in substance that their seed would be strangers in a strange land and would serve them four hundred years and after that they would return hither and possess this land. The question might come, “Why not give it to him and to his seed after him at that time?” God gives the answer in the last part of Gen. 15:16, “For the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.” In other words, the Amorites possessed that land and God did not feel justified in uprooting them out of their land and giving it to another people until their cup of iniquity was filled up.

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The scriptures establish this to be God's policy in dealing with peoples all the way through.

In Matt. 23:34, 36 we read, "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation."

God had been sending prophets to the children of Israel all down through the fourteen hundred years of their history. They had rejected them and shamefully entreated them, killed some, beat some, put some in prison and dealt with them in different ways. But their cup of iniquity was not yet full even though through all this time they had repeatedly disobeyed God's commandments, went into idolatry and brought abominations into the land, etc. God was merciful and bore with all this and still held out His hand unto them. In Romans 10:21 it is written, ". . . all day long I have stretched out my hand to a disobedient and gainsaying people." And that day stretched out over a period of 1400 years.

When Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, Whom God gave for the redemption of the world, came and the Jewish nation rejected Him and nailed Him on a cross and shed His blood; this filled up their cup of iniquity. God had not executed judgment upon them before this time because their cup of iniquity was not yet filled up, but their iniquity became full in the rejections of His Son. God decreed that avenging judgment should fall upon that generation for all the righteous blood which had been shed from

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the beginning clear on down to that time because it was in that generation that the iniquity of the Jewish nation became full.

Again in Rev. 17:3-6, we read, “So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.” This woman was the apostate church, and she is pictured here as being full of abominations and filthiness of her spiritual fornication. Her cup was finally filled to the full with the blood of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus. God bore with this for more than a thousand years; but when her iniquity was finally filled, God said in Rev. 18:5-8, “For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.” We see that though God bore long with this wickedness, yet when Babylon’s iniquity was filled up He pronounced judgment.

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These scriptural examples are sufficient to confirm to us God's attitude in dealing with the human family, with nations, and peoples, etc. It has been His general policy to bear long with wrong-doers and not execute judgment until it is ripe for judgment; but when the iniquity is full and it is ripe for judgment, then judgment falls. The fact that the world is still standing is sufficient evidence within itself that the world's cup of iniquity is not yet full. As established in the foregoing cited scriptural cases and others, and according to this standard procedure of the Judge of all the earth, we can confirm with certainty that when the iniquity of this world is full, judgment will fall. Upon the same grounds we can say also with certainty that conditions are going to get worse and sin is going to abound yet more and more than it is now. Regardless of how bad we see things or think them to be, they will get worse yet. Be assured that sin is capable of greater development and reeking more damage and destruction in the human family than we have witnessed up to this time.

You may be thinking of certain individuals under your observation in whom sin has reached a full degree of degradation and ruin, and think you have seen sin at its worst. But that is only individual cases. It is true that a small percentage of people have completely abandoned themselves to sin and wickedness and sin has run its full course in them and brought about their utter ruin. I know some like that myself. But when we survey the overall picture there is still the overwhelming majority of people in this world who hold considerable reservation and restraint in evil doings. Even though they do much wickedness, they do it in secret and among their own kind and not out in the open where righteous people are. But let us realize that the trend is always downward and the drift away from God and right, and the standards of each succeeding generation is lower than the preceding generations, and

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sin and evil becomes more flagrant and open in each succeeding generation. So we can expect more and more people to be coming out in the open and putting their evil doings on display as time goes on toward its end.

Jesus said that as it was in the days of Lot, so it would be in the days of the coming of the Son of man. Let us look a little at how it was with Lot and the cities of the plain (Sodom and Gomorrah) where he dwelt. In these cities sin was rampant right out in the open. It was not done behind closed doors and restricted within closed groups such as much of it is today. We read in 2 Peter 2:7, 8, “And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)” Note that Lot was seeing all this going on—it was right out in the open. Further proof of the depth of these men’s degradation to the extent of having no respect or regard at all for righteous principles or righteous people is found in the 19th chapter of Genesis verses 1 through 11. In this passage two angels came to Sodom and went to Lot’s house and were received by him into his house. The men of Sodom quickly learned that they were there and a considerable company of them came to Lot’s house and demanded that he should bring out these men to them that they might degrade and prostitute them in illicit, immoral acts right there in Lot’s front yard, so to speak. And they were not the least bit timid about making their sinful desires known to Lot, the only righteous man living in the city.

Also this condition was so prevalent and wide spread that in the final analysis not even ten righteous people could be found in the entire city. The angels of God came down to investigate the case and see if it were altogether as the cry had come up to Him. In

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Gen. 18:20, 21, where God was talking with Abraham, we read, “And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not I will know.” The cry of Sodom’s sin had reached to heaven and their cup of iniquity was full. When Sodom was ripe for destruction, destruction came. It had reached a point where God could not overlook it any longer and maintain His own righteousness. It is the same with our world today. When its wickedness reaches the point where God cannot countenance it any farther and maintain His own righteousness, it will be ripe for destruction and destruction will come.

Again, we see from this scriptural description of Sodom that if it is to be in the days of the coming of the Son of man as it was in Lot’s day, as Jesus said, we can expect sin to become more wide open, rampant and flagrant, and an unbearable burden to righteous people. This is what we have to look forward to so far as this world is concerned.

Before passing from this case of Sodom, let us consider one other thought. When the angels had witnessed the depths of Sodom’s sin, they asked Lot if he had any of his family there beside what was in his house—sons or daughters and sons-in-law—and if so to hasten to them and tell them to get out of the city quickly because they were going to destroy it. Lot went to his daughters and sons-in-law with this message of judgment fresh from the angel’s lips; but it says in Gen. 19:14 that he was unto them as one that mocked. It just sounded like a good joke to them.

But why was it that Lot was able to accept the message of the angels and believe that Sodom’s doom was imminent and his daughters and sons-in-law could not? Lot had been brought up in

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the outside world where life had been different from what it was in Sodom. Also, he had been under the tutorship of his Uncle Abraham. He knew a different way of life and had something to compare with so he was able to see how grievous the sin of Sodom was. But his children did not have this advantage. They had grown right up in, and that had just come to be a way of life with them. Perhaps they did not even know but what most people lived that way and they were just not able to recognize the fact that Sodom was all that bad as to deserve destruction.

So it is in our world today. Our children who are growing up in this wicked and adulterous generation see the way of life of the world, but it has been pretty much this way ever since they got here and this is all they have seen. They have grown up in this atmosphere and become accustomed to it so it does not look so bad to them. Becoming accustomed to a thing dulls one's sensitivity to it. But we who are older can remember when there were strict standards of modesty and high standards of morality and we have something to compare with and measure by. But in this permissive age in which we now live, there are no standards that are absolute; everything is on a relative basis, and such a code of ethics tends to drag down and destroy all standards of life.

The upcoming generation that is growing up in this wickedness do not know how things have been before now, so these things are common practice to them. They have no chance at all unless we are able to prevail with God that the influence of the Holy Spirit will come upon their hearts and minds to give them understanding and help them to see these things in their true light and as God sees them. We read in John 16:8 that when the Holy Spirit comes He will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment to come. There certainly is not much fear of God

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before the people these days. And, in passing, I will say there is not the degree of godly fear among Christian people that there should be. If one has the Holy Spirit in his heart and is living and walking under the influence of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit will convince him of the pertinent facts and realities of the judgment and what the judgment will mean. But the influence of the Spirit is lightly felt in the world today; therefore, there is little or no fear of God before the people. Consequently, they are not even considering any judgment to come; and many, including a good number of preachers, do not believe there will even be a judgment.

One brother attended a service one night. When he went to work the next day he said to the man working with him: "I wish you had been with me last night and heard what I heard. I believe it would have made you think." He said the man just shrugged his shoulder and said, "I don't want to think." This is all too characteristic of many people. They just are not thinking much about realities and have little or no conviction of judgment nor knowledge of what it is going to mean to stand before God in judgment. Neither do they have a conviction of sin nor any vision or understanding of the sinfulness and enormity of sin. This is all because people are too far out from the influence of the Holy Spirit and it all sets up the stage for the complete collapse of all moral and spiritual standards and behavioral codes and patterns and opens the way for the farther advancement of sin into the open on a broad, broad front. Only through the divine inspiration of the Holy Spirit is one able to draw the sharp line of demarcation between light and darkness, right and wrong, truth and error, good and evil, righteousness and unrighteousness, sin and holiness, and direct us in the right course.

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Some say the world is getting better, but I deny that. I say the world is steadily getting worse, and it is going to get worse yet. The trend today is much worse than when I was a boy. It is much worse today than it was ten years ago. If we are still here ten years from now, I prophesy that it will be much worse than it is now and the downward trend will be much more rapid than it has been in past years. The Scriptures say that God made man upright but he has sought out many inventions (Eccl. 7:29). But it seems from the way this text is worded that man's inventions have not helped his uprightness but have rather led him astray from his uprightness. Each invention calls for another; and each thing opens up the way for something else, and in our day these things follow one after another in such rapid succession that we can count on the trend being much more swift in the years ahead than now or in the past.

Now let us realize that sin is not only progressive, but it is also aggressive and will invade different phases and areas of one's life beyond what he intended it to. Jesus gave us a parable of the Kingdom of heaven like this in Matt. 13:33, “. . . The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.” When a woman prepares her dough for bread, she puts leaven (yeast) in it and lets it set a while and that leaven works its way through every particle of that dough until when the bread is baked, one cannot take even a little pinch of that bread without getting some of that leaven. It is all through it.

Jesus mentioned in this parable about three measures of meal. We ordinarily think and speak of man as a two-fold being—inward man and outer man, soul and body, spirit and flesh. But in some technical sense, which I may not be able to explain, some scriptures break down the analysis of man into three parts and

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makes a distinction between soul and spirit. In Heb. 4:12 it speaks of the word of God dividing asunder of soul and spirit. In 1 Thess. 5:23, Paul prayed that “your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless.”

Now Jesus, in this parable, spoke of the Kingdom of heaven being as leaven put in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened. That is just the way with the elements of the Kingdom of heaven—righteousness, truth, and holiness. They are planted (hidden away in the soul) but they begin to work there and manifest themselves in different phases of one’s life until within a little time they have worked their way into every phase of his life and permeated his entire being—spirit, soul, and body. But just as the principles of righteousness will work through one’s life this way, so also will sin. If sin is in your life in one area today, you can be certain it will be in your life in a greater and more positive way tomorrow. If sin is in your life in one area today, it will invade into different areas tomorrow. It will in a little time work its way into every phase and area of your life and permeate your entire being—soul, spirit, and body.

Once, when I was holding meeting in another state, a mother came to me requesting that I pray for her son. And as she presented her request she gave some of the details that were involved in his case. I had met her son a few times and also his family. He had a good wife and nice children and a good home. But he allowed himself to become infatuated with another woman. In the course of time he divorced his wife and forsook his family for this other woman. When his divorce was final and he was eligible, he married this woman. When it reached that point, it kind of shook him up some and he began to realize how far he had gone and what he had gotten into. The mother said her son never spent one night

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with that woman, but just as soon as the ceremony was over he sent her home and he went his way and instituted divorce proceedings immediately to dissolve that marriage. That fellow never intended to get in that shape. But he did get in that shape, and when he did and it reached that point with him, it woke him up and he began backing out of it right then.

Now the moral of that story is that sin is not only progressive, but it is also aggressive and sin will dominate its subjects and sin will have its way. You let sin exist in your heart and life and sin is going to control you. Have you ever seen a person, when the damnable deed has been done, walk the floor, wring his hands, pull his hair, clench his fists until his fingernails cut into his flesh and stain the palms of his hands with blood, gnash his teeth and say, “Oh why did I do it? Why did I do it?” He did not intend to do that, but sin brought him to it. He did it because sin will dominate its subjects and sin will have its way. Oh, how much all need to understand the potentials of sin and that it is a dangerous and destructive thing to dabble with. Just a little shuffling of circumstances; just one more sin or a sin of a different kind may open up to one a field or scope of sin which may lead into depths of woe that he had not even imagined. Just another step in the wrong direction may bring one to the point of no return—involve him so deeply and complicate things for him until he can see no way out. Just another day or even another hour in sin may bring developments that will seal his doom.

Let us realize that sin is no respecter of persons. It will ruin you just like it will ruin anyone else who tampers with it. God’s word has faithfully recorded by way of warning to us that “Sin is a reproach to any people”—and that means you, too. Perhaps you may know persons who are so defiled and corrupt that you would

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not even want to brush shoulders with them nor associate with them. A brother once said to me about another person whom we both knew, “I feel that I would be contaminated to even shake hands with him.” But let us remember when thinking of such people that the only difference between us and them is the grace of God. The most debauched character you know came here with the same innocency that you and I did. We were all born on the same plane. Sin ruined them, and sin will ruin us the same way if we pursue it. Considering that we all started out just alike; then just a little shuffling of circumstances and changing of environments, etc., and by now he might have been in your place and you in his.

There is a subtle something in human nature that always causes one to feel that it won't happen to him just like it did to someone else. This is a very dangerous tendency. We see things happen to other people but somehow we feel that it “won't happen to me that way.” We see sin ruin other people's lives but we feel, “I will escape that kind of calamity in my life.” We seem to feel immune from the calamities that befall other people. I knew a man once; had visited with him numbers of times and talked with him about salvation and his need of God at various times. He even came to the altar in one of our services and professed salvation. But that did not last. One morning he went down from the upstairs apartment where he was living to get his morning paper. On the way back up the stairs something happened to him. A stroke hit him and he went down unable to move on up the stairs to his door. Other men had to be called to carry him on up to his apartment. As they were carrying him in, he said, “I never thought I would ever come to this,” and went into unconsciousness from which he never rallied but passed into eternity in a few hours.

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Perhaps that man had seen the same thing happen to other men in his lifetime and may have helped to carry other men in when this had happened to them; but, in the face of all that, he never expected it to ever happen to him.

We see people fall and hear of many people falling dead with heart attacks and passing into eternity without warning, and we know such things are going on all around us all the time. But we still go on thinking such a thing will not happen to us. That is human nature and it is dangerous—very dangerous.

A number of times in the teachings of Jesus, He rehearsed to his hearers about the evil doings of different peoples and what happened to them and the calamities which befell them suddenly and unawares. He always concluded those lessons by saying, “Watch ye therefore.” In other words, be alert, watch everything, don’t overlook anything because the same things that happened to these people can happen to you, too, if you don’t keep on your guard. If sin has ruined other people and brought reproach and miseries upon them, it will do the same to you if you dabble with it.

I wonder if you have had to make some concessions in order to keep in favor with your friends and the crowd you run with. Have you had to let down a little on your standards and give in a little here and there on things you have been taught and believe in? I dare say you have. But if you have, I assure you that is not the end of the matter. If you have had to compromise your conscience some and let down and give in a little on the standards you have heretofore held, you will have to make more concessions and let down some more. Remember, the trend is always downward and the drift always away from God and right. And when you cut loose from your moorings and let down some and give in a little here and

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there, it weakens you to the extent that you will not be able to withstand pressure and persuasion even as well as you did at first. When your foundations become undermined, it sets you adrift and you have no idea where you may wind up. One thing always leads to another and the drift is always downward. Sin is going to undermine the foundations of our institutions and our society in general yet more and more.

Let me close this little message with the exhortation of the apostle Peter, “Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” Acts 2:40.

The good news I bring you today is that there is a way out of sin and a deliverance from its bondage and dominions. Throughout the passage of scripture in Romans 5:12-21, which formed the text for this little message, we have two men spoken of and the work and effects of both of them upon our lives. There was the man, Adam, who committed the first sin and introduced sin into the world and the doleful effects this had on all of the human race. Then there is the man, Christ Jesus, Who came into the world on a mission of redemption to save His people from their sins and destroy the works of the devil out of their lives and to deliver them from sin’s doleful bondage and break the power and dominion of sin in their lives. We should be very glad there are two men here; not only one. Our plight would be grievous indeed if there were only one man, Adam, presented here. But the second Man, Christ Jesus, came to recover the human race from the depths of miseries to which sin had sunk them and he possessed power and authority over the devil and all his power and works and with His own blood purchased a sufficient amount of grace to lift every fallen son of Adam out of the miry pit of sin and set him on high.

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The grand finale of this passage is “. . . But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Ostis B. Wilson

