

**Intro:**

“The area of personal sin is likely the first one most people would think about when they think about sin. Of course, they say, sin is real because people sin. But sin is also a reality because we have inherited a sin nature and Adam’s sin was imputed to us. Yet it is true that our personal sins bring home the reality of sin.”<sup>1</sup>

**I. Some Scriptural Evidences**

- A. Demonstration that all people are condemned on the basis of sins they commit personally (Rm 3.9-18)
- B. Passages naming specific sins
  - 1. Lying (1 Jn 1.6)
  - 2. Favoritism (Jas 2.4)
  - 3. Carnality [or worldliness] (1 Cor 3.1-4)
  - 4. Works of the flesh (Gal 5.19-21)

**II. Some Characteristics of Personal Sins**

- A. Their Universality
  - 1. “All commit sins personally except infants.”<sup>2</sup>
  - 2. James states that we all stumble in many ways (Jas 3.2)
  - 3. Paul says that all, both Jews and Gentiles, are under sin (Rm 3.9)
  - 4. Paul repeats the concept, especially noting that even all believers are coming short of the glory of God (Rm 3.23)
- B. Their Visibility
  - 1. Some sins are very visible
  - 2. Other sins are not visible
    - a. Adultery vs. Adultery of the heart (Mt 5.27-28)
    - b. Internal evil desires (Col 3.5-6)
    - c. Sins of omission – not doing what you ought to do (Jas 4.17)

<sup>1</sup> Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Basic Theology : A Popular Systemic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth*, 261 (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1999).

<sup>2</sup> Ryrie, p. 261.

### C. Their Classification

#### 1. There are greater and lesser sins [but all are sins] (Jn 19.11)

- a. Pilate was a Gentile government official – he had less knowledge and governmental authorities to worry about
- b. Caiaphas had greater knowledge (OT) and greater responsibility
- c. Pilate is still guilty and responsible for his own sin in this instance

#### 2. OT distinctions

- a. Defiant sins (sins with a high hand) (Num 15.30-31)
- b. Sins of ignorance (Lev 4.2, 5.1-4)
  - 1) Unintentional, or a matter of weakness or waywardness – not deliberate defiance
  - 2) Withholding evidence, accidental or incidental uncleanness, inability to fulfill a rash vow

#### 3. NT distinctions

- a. Sins committed against much light vs. little light (Lk 12.47-48)
- b. Unpardonable sin (Mt 12.31-32)
- c. Sin unto death (1 Jn 5.16)

“The Roman Catholic church distinguishes venial sins (pardonable sins) and mortal sins (death-bringing sins). A person commits a venial sin when he transgresses the law of God in an unimportant matter. Such a sin is forgiven easily, even without confession. Only the sacrament of penance can forgive a mortal sin. This teaching is not a scriptural one.

“In an analogous fashion, those who believe that a child of God can lose his salvation also make distinctions between sins that are not so bad and that most believers commit sometime but that do not cause the loss of salvation and sins that are bad enough to cause the loss of salvation. What sins belong to each of those categories is usually determined very subjectively.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ryrie, p. 262.

### III. The Transmission of Personal Sins

- A. Personal sins are not transmitted from one generation to another
- B. The affects of personal sins may be transmitted from one person to another, but each is responsible for his own sins

### IV. The Result of Personal Sins

The key idea for the result of personal sins is loss of fellowship (1 Jn 1.1-2.2)

- A. The unbeliever has no fellowship with God because of his sins
- B. The believer loses, mars, breaks his fellowship with God when he sins

### V. The Remedy for Personal Sins

- A. For the unbeliever: repentance from sin and faith in Christ brings about the forgiveness of his sins [Judicial Forgiveness] (Eph 1.7)
- B. For the believer: confession brings about forgiveness that restores the enjoyment of fellowship in the family of God [Family Forgiveness] (1 Jn 1.9)

#### A COMPARISON OF THE SEVERAL ASPECTS OF SIN<sup>4</sup>

ASPECT	SCRIPTURE	TRANSMISSION	PRINCIPLE CONSEQUENCE	REMEDY
Inherited Sin	Eph 2.3	Generation to Generation	Spiritual death	Redemption and the gift of the Holy Spirit
Imputed Sin	Rom 5.12	Direct from Adam to Me	Physical death	Imputed righteousness of Christ
Personal Sins	Rm 3.23; 1 Jn 1.9	None	Loss of fellowship	Forgiveness

<sup>4</sup> Ryrie, p. 263.