

HAMARTIOLOGY (4)

enables the homosexual to claim he/she is not responsible for the way he/she is. The Bible, in very specific language, classifies homosexuality as sin. It is a very serious sin that will bring the abandonment of God (**i.e. Romans 1:26-28**) and it is a sin that can be forgiven and is to be stopped (**I Corinthians 6:9-11**).

If sin is viewed as a sickness it enables the sinner to live with himself with a sense of false security, for the reality is, he is heading toward the severe judgment of God. This is why it is so critical that sin be seen in exactly the way God sees it and deal with it in exactly the way God says. In matters of sin, eternity is on the line and any failure to face sin God's way will bring serious eternal ramifications.

(False Concept #3) - Sin is an accident .

There are some who sin and claim they have no control over what they are doing and it is really just an accident. Some try and explain their sin as being an unfortunate happening.

There is no question that man can be overtaken by a sin (**Galatians 6:1**). It is also true that some people are more apt to deal with sin immediately and get on with life, while others continue to dabble in the same type of evil time and time again. But it is not true that sin is an accident. Whenever a person sins, he chooses to do so. It is not an accident; it is not a coincidence; it is a choice. The sooner we are willing to admit this to God, the quicker God can and will deliver us. No one will ever get anywhere in a relationship with God by trying to excuse sin as being an accident. Sin is a choice and all humans have made sinful choices.

(False concept #4) - Sin is nonexistent .

There are those who actually believe there is no such thing as sin. There is really no such thing as right or wrong. As unbiblical and as ridiculous as this may seem, there are many who hold this idea. Several suggest there is no such thing as morality or a standard of what is right or wrong and that each individual determines it for himself. This type of thinking usually suggests that emotional problems are caused by guilt and that no person should ever feel guilty about anything.

The weaknesses with this line of reasoning are many, but the greatest danger of all is that unless a person is willing to admit that he is a sinner, he will never come to terms with his need for Christ and will be forever condemned.

(False Concept #5) - Sin is a mistake .

There are several who hold to the belief that sin is nothing more than a mistake. It promotes the idea that everyone makes mistakes and to "err is human." We would not deny that every human being does make mistakes; but to classify sin as nothing more than a mistake is very dangerous, because it diminishes the gravity of the specific nature of sin and basically neglects to promote that sin must be faced.

HAMARTIOLOGY (5)

Every one of these false ideas concerning sin is from Satan. There is nothing Satan desires more than to have people think lightly of sin or to not face sin. False theories concerning sin are his method of watering down man's real serious condition in his relationship with God.

QUESTION #4 – Why would God permit sin?

Having already studied Theology Proper that clearly reveals God is completely sovereign, a compelling question of theology is the question of why would God permit sin. It is clearly revealed in the Bible that God can prevent whatever He wants to prevent. For example, He prevented Abimelech from touching Sarah (**Genesis 20:6**). It is also clearly revealed that Satan, himself, recognizes God's sovereignty over his ability to inflict evil on someone (**Job 1:10-11; 2:3**).

In view of such revelation, we must conclude that sin is not an "unexpected disaster" in the eternal program of God. As Dr. Chafer states: "The presence of sin in the universe is due to the fact that God permits it. It must serve some justifiable purpose attainable in no other way else God would not have permitted it, or having permitted it, He would now terminate it without delay" (Vol. 2, p. 229).

It must be quickly admitted that no finite mind will ever fully comprehend God's permission of sin. From our perspective we "see through a mirror darkly." From God's perspective, sin and the permission of it is apparently part of the plan and purpose rooted in the infinite wisdom, power, love, and holiness of God.

In attempting to answer the question, Why would God permit sin?, we must always remember that **God is not the author of sin (I John 1:5; James 1:3). God always condemns sin (Romans 6:23)**. Having admitted both of these theological realities, it must also be admitted that God does permit sin. The believer who is beginning to grow deeper in his faith should be able to give a stable defense for why God would permit sin to exist in this world when He does have the sovereign power to prevent it.

We will examine six reasons why God permits sin:

(Reason #1) - Because sin demonstrates the potential of choice .

This is a very deep theological matter in that God created man with the ability to choose, and man made the choice to rebel against God (**Genesis 3:6; Romans 3:11**). When a person believes on Christ, God places within that person His Spirit which convicts him to choose the way of righteousness (**Romans 6:11-13**). Before a person came to Christ, sin was the basis for guilt and condemnation. After a person comes to Christ, the sin choice becomes the basis for glorifying God. When a child of God chooses not to sin and chooses to yield to God's Spirit, that choice becomes a great display of God's Grace and Power. In order for a person to demonstrate such power and victory, there must be a choice made between choosing to sin and choosing not to sin. God is working in every believer to give victory over sin (**Philippians 2:12-13**).

HAMARTIOLOGY (6)

When this victory is demonstrated, when a believer chooses not to sin, he brings great glory to God with his choice.

Sin absolutely proves that no one of his own accord will choose God, and it also proves that by God's power one can glorify God. These choices cannot be made without the existence of sin. The sin problem is not a mere problem of choice - it is a problem of a nature and mysterious decrees and permissions of God.

(Reason #2) - Because sin demonstrates the great value of redemption .

When one considers the tremendous sacrifice that God paid to deliver people from sin, we can certainly admit that sin does demonstrate the value of redemption is extremely high. The price of our redemption is the blood of Jesus Christ (**Acts 20:28; I Peter 1:2**). Sin is something that does show us the tremendous cost of our salvation.

It is one thing to pay a high price for something of value, but it is quite another to purchase something of no merit or value. Sin shows us how much God is willing to pay for such worthless sinners like us.

(Reason #3) - Because sin promotes proper theological knowledge .

It must be admitted that in order to have a proper understanding of God, judgment, righteousness, Christ's suffering, grace, and even rewards, there must be the existence of sin. Sin teaches us of God's holiness and perfections. Sin teaches us reasons for judgment and the need for righteousness. Sin teaches us the reason for Christ's sufferings and our own sufferings. Sin teaches us of God's grace. Without the existence of sin, our theological knowledge of many things would be greatly lacking. God desires that we learn as much as possible about Him, and sin is something that ultimately can teach us much about God.

One of the great theologians of the Bible was King David. David was a man who knew much about the subject of sin. There is an interesting text of Scripture in which David is thinking about his sin and how he strayed - **Psalm 119:67**. In this verse he is admitting that he was afflicted by sin, he went astray, but now was back on track; he was very faithful to the Word of God. In **verse 71** David makes a remarkable statement - "It is good for me that I was afflicted that I may learn Thy statutes." David believed that one of the positives that came out of his sin was the fact that he learned more of God's Word. Sin actually became a teacher that gave David a better theological understanding of God, His character, and His Word.

The truth of God is able to set one free from their sin, but the truth of God will first cause one to see his sin. When one is willing to see sin and face sin, one can be set free from sin. David realized his sin had actually enabled him to learn more of the things of God to the point that he could say, "It is good for me that I was afflicted."

HAMARTIOLOGY (7)

(Reason #4) - Because sin promotes a knowledge for angels .

It is very clear that the angelic world carefully monitors humans, specifically in regard to their obedience to God and their sin. The idea of obeying God and submitting to what is right is clearly seen in the context of angelic observation (**I Corinthians 11:10; I Timothy 5:21; Revelation 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14**).

There is no doubt that angels learn much from watching humans who submit themselves to the Word of God. In order for them to learn things, sin must be in existence.

(Reason #5) - Because sin demonstrates God's hatred for evil.

It is very evident from **Romans 9:22** that one reason God permits sin is because ultimately it will demonstrate His hatred for it. This Divine hatred will work itself out in a powerful demonstration of His wrath, the likes of which is described in the book of Revelation (**i.e. 15:1-4**). No judgment that would demonstrate God's wrath could have been possible without the existence of sin. It is apparently one of the reasons why God permitted sin (**see Proverbs 16:4**).

(Reason #6) - Because sin demonstrates God's grace .

This is truly one of the great mysteries of God. God permits sin and this permission enables us to understand more of His grace (**Romans 5:20-21**). The more one sees of his own sin, the more one recognizes God's grace (**Luke 7:47**). Perhaps the most famous hymn ever written - "Amazing Grace" - was written by a man, John Newton, who had been a slave trader and was saved from a terrible lifestyle of sin. He truly did have an amazing view of God's grace.

It has been my observation over the past, in nearly thirty years in ministry, that some of the most highly committed and dedicated servants of God are those who, at one time, had lives plunged deep into sin prior to the grace of God transforming them. When you hear these people discuss the grace and mercy of God, you soon realize that for them it is very personal and very real. There is a supernatural authority that rings from such a one when discussing God's grace. There is no question that this is a clear Biblical reality - "but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (**Romans 5:20**).

Believers who have never plunged deep into sin are in a very enviable position, but they must be on constant guard against a self-righteous Pharisaism that misses understanding the doctrine of the pure grace of God (**i.e. Luke 15:11-32**).

The creation of the universe demonstrated God's infinite wisdom, power, and glory. The creation of life also demonstrates all of these things, plus could demonstrate God's love. But in order for the angelic world and the human world to see God's grace, there must be the existence of sin. One of the richest experiences for a believer in Jesus Christ is to get to the point where one can truly begin to grasp the theological reality of a "grace that is greater than all our sin."