

“What does it mean to be ‘freed from sin’?”

January 4, 2014

Romans 5:20-6:7 (also 6:14,18)

CORE: To fully appreciate what it means to be “free from sin,” we need a clearer understanding of what “SIN” really is.

- 1. We have a LIMITED VIEW OF SIN if we simply define it as *“deliberate rebellion against God—being willfully defiant toward God.”***
 - **SIN can be expressed this way—but it involves so much more than open defiance.**
- 2. It is vitally important for us to have a CLEARER, BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT “SIN” REALLY IS. This has several powerful benefits:**
 - a. **We will have an INCREASED APPRECIATION** for “so great a salvation” (Hebrews 2:3)
 - b. **We will have an INCREASED EXPERIENCE** of “freedom from sin”—seeing it as much more than the “forgiveness of our failures.”
 - c. **We will have INCREASED CLARITY** in leading people to Jesus.

NOTE: Most people you meet wouldn’t see themselves as being in “open rebellion” against God. (They would define themselves as “believing in God,” trying to earn an honest living, pay their bills, be a good citizen, raise healthy kids, retire in peace, etc.) **Yet, in reality, they have not experienced “freedom from sin” and a “dynamic, growing relationship with God through Jesus Christ.”**

- 3. SIN is a ROOT ISSUE, not just a FRUIT ISSUE.**
 - **It is a systemic problem; the reason Jesus came was to “lay the ax to the root” (Matthew 3:10)**
 - **His “salvation” is more than forgiving what we did wrong—it’s about overcoming & healing what is wrong**
- 4. SIN is “MISSING THE MARK.” (*The most common word for “sin”*)**
 - **Romans 3:23- “All have sinned & fallen short of the glory of God”**
 - **“Fall short”—to drop out of a race; fail to reach the goal**
 - **“Glory”-**
 - **To show—make brilliantly evident**
 - **Outshining—consistent inwardly & outwardly**
 - **Weight, substance—tangible; not theory or mere words**

HERE ARE SEVERAL ROOTS OF SIN:

1. APATHY & INDIFFERENCE.

- This may be the subtlest, most spiritually destructive expression of sin
- People are more likely to be “indifferent” toward God—than “openly defiant” of Him.
- Hebrews 2:3 warns of “neglecting so great a salvation” (not openly rejecting Him); also warns of “drifting away” (not rowing away from)
- Adam’s sin was not as much “open rebellion” as it was “passive indifference” as he abdicated his authority over creation (which included “the serpent”) (*i.e.*, “lukewarm” Rev. 3:16)
- Esau sinned by apathetically giving up his birthright (for stew)!

NOTE: If we speak about sin as purely “willful rebellion against God”—we will have very little impact on people living “moral” (yet, spiritually indifferent) lives!

NOTE: If we only emphasize sin’s effect on our eternal destiny—we overlook its destructive effects on our personal lives, families, communities & legacies!

NOTE: Not every child’s “No” is open defiance. (*Finding their voice, their will, and setting boundaries.*) A strong “yes” to God includes a strong “no” to devil!

2. VIOLATION OF COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

NOTE: All sin, at the root, is a violation of relationships.

- Primary OT message: God desires an “exclusive relationship” with His people.
 - “Have no other gods” (Exodus 20:3) (Psalm 81:9)
 - His greatest grief: Israel’s disloyalty to Him
 - “Always going astray from Me” (Ezek. 14:11)
 - “Unfaithful...committed adultery...mattered so little to her...did not return to me with all her heart, but only in pretense” (Jer. 3:6-10)
- Primary NT message: Here is My Son, Jesus! Hear Him! Receive Him!
 - The “unpardonable sin” (Matt. 12:31-32)—permanently reject Jesus
 - (1 John 2:18-24) Denying that Jesus came “in the flesh”—and made a world of difference!
 - (John 6:48-58) Jesus, “Eat My flesh”—more than communion symbolism—to totally trust in/depend on/confident in all that Jesus accomplished for us! Jesus is LORD (absolute authority)!

3. VIOLATION OF COMMITTED RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS.

- Called to “assemble with” (not simply gather with) one another (Hebrews 10:25)
- NT letters filled with strong words RE: sins of division, offense, harsh judgments, etc. SEE Ephesians 4:1-3 TPT [NOTE: Overcame witchcraft & open lewdness—yet, overlooked subtle sins; i.e., pride, impatience]
- Crucial for us to have authentic relationships with Jesus & with one another. The 2 greatest commandments:

If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:7)

CONCLUSION

**Jesus came “in the flesh” to completely break the power of sin!
What the Law was powerless to do (i.e., “save us”)—“God did” (Romans 8:3).
“When we were still powerless”—“Jesus died” for us (Romans 5:6)!**

- Rekindling passion (i.e., “bring fire on the earth”; “hearts burned”)
- Restoring bride-like devotion