

## **What ever became of Sin?**

Sounds like the title of a sermon by a "hellfire and brimstone" TV evangelist, doesn't it? Wrong! It's the title of a book written by well-known secular psychologist Karl Menninger. In his book, he sets forth the observation that years ago people used to talk about sin, but now we no longer use the word sin. ***It's not that sin has lessened or disappeared, but rather that it has been relabeled as crime or sickness.*** This change is important because crime and sickness cannot be forgiven. Instead crime must be punished and sickness must be healed, and sins need to be forgiven. Therefore there are thousands of people who need forgiveness, but have been labeled in such a way that they are looking for healing or punishment .

***Common labels in our society.*** Drunkenness is alcoholism, adultery has become an affair or sexual addiction. Gluttony is labeled an eating disorder, constant thievery is called kleptomania, and homosexuality (something God calls a perversion) man now calls an alternate lifestyle.

In God's word sin is missing the mark of perfection, it is the breaking of God's perfect law. How far does this go? ***James said, "To know right and not do it is a sin!" and Paul said, "Anything not of faith is a sin!"*** But you say, "It sounds so cruel and heartless to call these things a sin! Where is your compassion?" My compassion is evidenced as I speak the truth in love. Sin must be forgiven. Only God can forgive sin. If I don't call it sin, a transgression against a Holy God, which can only be forgiven and overcome through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, then I have done you the greatest disservice.

***Jack Winslow, head of a British mental institution, said, "I could dismiss half of my patients tomorrow if they could be assured of forgiveness."*** We have the GOOD NEWS! We know that all sin can be forgiven in Christ and that we can conquer sin in Christ Jesus. We know that sin needs to be forgiven, but crime needs to be punished and sickness needs to be healed. When I can call it sin and offer forgiveness and victory through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, that offers real and lasting hope.

***What hope is there in the following answer given by a Christian broadcast offering live counseling?*** A woman caller admitted to having illicit sex with "anyone and everyone." First the counselor suggested the problem was the result of wounds inflicted by a passive father and an overbearing mother. Then he said, "There's no simple road to recovery. Your problem won't go away immediately, it's an addiction, and these things usually require extended counseling. You will probably need years and years of therapy to overcome your need for illicit sex." Does that give hope?

***Jesus met a woman at a well*** who previously had 5 husbands and

was living with another. He gently led her to a conviction of her sin and that very day she was bringing the whole town back to Him.

***They brought another woman to Christ taken in the act of adultery.*** After pointing out to the self-righteous judges that all men are sinners and fall

short of the Glory of God, He commanded that woman, "Go and 'sin' no more!"

***Jesus called it sin, not sexual addiction.*** His answer was simple and straightforward. I believe modern psychology and many modern Christians would call his answer too simplistic, ***but the truth is that we are to flee immorality, not walk in the lust of the flesh, but rather walk in the power of the Holy Spirit.*** The great hope is that in Christ that is possible just as much today as it was in the day of Christ. Paul put it this way, "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor male prostitutes, nor homosexuals offenders, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor slanders, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you are washed, you are being sanctified, you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God." ***Praise God that we can be completely washed clean from our sins and set apart from that sin and stand justified before a Holy God through the word of the Lord Jesus Christ.***

Whatever became of sin? ***When did we in the Christian community stop calling sin by its proper name?*** We must take our responsibility before a Holy God. God has given to us His Word and it is profitable for teaching all that we need to know to be rightly related to God and our fellow man. It is profitable for reproof for it points out our sin and convicts us of our wrong doing. It is profitable for correction as it tells us what is right and how to get back on course. Can you believe it is also profitable for training in righteousness? The Word of God, rightly understood and rightly applied, in a spirit of love, will actually be used by the Spirit of God to train our hearts in doing what is right and enable to us keep away from sin. ***The Word of God adequately equips us for every good work. Trust it! Believe it! Practice it! Use it to help others! Call sin by its proper name and then proclaim forgiveness in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

Respectfully,

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