

Facts About Sin

David Halbrook

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge (Prov. 1:7). Without this fear, there are many facts we will never know. Today, consider some facts about sin you will never know without including God in your knowledge.

Sin is real Some people do not take sin seriously because they do not believe it is real. God uses death to help humans know that sin is real (Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23).

What sin is Do you know what sin is? It is not inherited guilt or nature. God says that sin is lawlessness and is committed, not inherited (1 John 3:4; Ezekiel 18:20).

Sin puts us in darkness Sin is an attack against God and puts us in the darkness of Satan (Colossians 1:13; Ephesians 2:1-2). If you are not in God's army, you are on Satan's side.

We will answer for our sins We may avoid and ignore the subject of sin today, but Jesus said that we will *give account of it in the day of judgment* (Matthew 12:36).

Whether your sin is gambling, homosexuality, lying, etc., you need to know the facts of sin. There is more you need to know, so contact us for a free CD of two lessons on this subject or contact us with your comments or questions.

Editor's Note: The last two Sunday mornings in April, I preached on this subject. Sin is not fun to think about, but the problem of sin is the reason why the gospel is necessary. Can you find a way to use our *Arkansas Weekly* article? If you know someone who would listen to the CDs on this same topic, ask David for the CDs.

Simple opportunities to teach the lost and assist each other.

Pray for: Janice White, The Ledgerwoods, Novela Puckett, Samuel Southall, others with ongoing trials, our brethren who are travelling, and new Christians among us.

The list for preparing the Lord's Supper needs just a few more names. We continue to need people to offer a few minutes to post a short verse on the signboard. Can you?

We assemble each Sunday at 10AM, 10:45AM, 5PM & Wednesday at 7PM

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

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What Is Apostasy?

Kyle Pope

The word *apostasy* means an, “1) Abandonment or renunciation of one’s religious faith or moral allegiance...2) By extension, the abandonment of principles or party generally” (*Oxford Dictionary of the English Language*, Vol. 1, p. 390). It is derived from the Greek word *apostasia* (ἐποστασία) meaning, “a defection or falling away” (*Strong’s Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament* No. 646). The Greek word is used twice in the New Testament. The first, in an accusation made against Paul that he was teaching the Jews to “**forsake** (*apostasia*)” the Law of Moses (Acts 21:21), and the second, in a passage offering comfort to the brethren in Thessalonica that Judgment Day had not already passed—first “**the falling away** (*apostasia*)” must come (2 Thess. 2:3). The New Testament makes it very clear that very soon after its deliverance into the world “**the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints**” (Jude 3), would suffer from attempts to “**pervert the gospel of Christ**” (Gal. 1:7). In our lives personally and in matters of doctrine and practice Christians must always be on guard against apostasy (or turning away) from sound faith.

If you spoke to the average person in many churches throughout the religious world they would probably tell you that it doesn’t much matter what a church does as long as the *attitude* of its members is right. It is true that the Bible teaches a great deal about the attitude with which we should approach God in worship. However, it also says a great deal about what a church practices. Paul told the church in Thessalonica, “**if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed**” (2 Thess. 3:14). He wasn’t just talking about good attitudes—they were to walk “**according to the traditions received from us**” (2 Thess. 3:6). In Paul’s first letter to the church in Corinth, although he devoted a great deal of time to moral issues, such as chastity (6:12-20), marital faithfulness (7:1-40), respect for the conscience of others (8:1-3), self-denial

(9:1-27), and love (13:1-8), he also firmly taught them about proper conduct in the assembly (14:26-40), proper observation of the Lord's Supper (11:17-34), personal responsibility within the church (12:1-31), and proper use of the church collection (16:1-4). In this very epistle Paul asserted, **“the things that I write to you are the commandments of the Lord”** (14:37). Certainly our attitude must be right, but in practice and doctrine it is clear that churches must do *only* those things for which we can establish authority in Scripture. To do otherwise is to turn to apostasy.

Most of the religious world considers it *legalistic* to hold to only those things that the Bible teaches and to reject (so-called) “improvements” or “additions.” In their view people who do this **“strain out a gnat and swallow a camel”** (Matt. 23:24)—the description Jesus used of the Pharisee, whom he charged had neglected the **“weightier matters of the law”** such as **“justice, mercy, and faith”** in their meticulous tithing of even their spices (see Matt. 23:23a). In this text, however, Jesus doesn't teach that God is unconcerned with small things. On the contrary, concerning tithing of spices Jesus said **“these you ought to have done without leaving the others [i.e. the “weightier matters of the law”] undone”** (Matt. 23:23b). In other words, those who follow Christ should make certain that their attitudes *and* their actions are right in the sight of God. How can anyone say that it doesn't matter to God whether churches follow the Bible or not? Jesus said, **“not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven”** (Matt. 7:21). Paul spoke of those **“having a form of godliness but denying its power”** (2 Tim. 3:5). It is possible to be religious—it is possible to call Jesus “Lord,” without having a true relationship with God in Christ—without enjoying the **“power of God unto salvation”** (Rom. 1:16). This is apostasy.

[Faithful Sayings (1-12-14); Bulletin of the Olsen Park Church of Christ]

The Importance of Thoughts

Bill Crews

If you are concerned about your character, your conduct, your life and your destiny, then be concerned about your thoughts. “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life” (Prov. 4:23). The heart is the mind, and the mind is the center of thoughts. “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Prov. 23:7). A man may not be what he appears to be, but he is what he thinks.

What goes into your mind, then, is extremely important. Be careful about the interests you acquire, the tastes you cultivate, the desires you develop. They shape

what goes into your mind. The conversations you listen to, the scenes you observe, the movies you view, the TV programs you tune into, the newspapers, magazines and books you read, the songs by which you are entertained, the jokes you laugh at, the things you are taught all have a part in feeding information into your mind.

You evaluate and monitor all that you hear and see. Your standard for evaluation and your conscience are vital and play their roles. You may seek out or receive what is vulgar or distorted, or you may reject and refuse it. You may pursue and embrace what is wholesome and true, or you may have no interest in it and neglect it. Be cautious, particular and selective about what goes into your mind. If you allow garbage to go in, then garbage will come out in the form of words and deeds. What goes on in your mind is also extremely important. Be careful about your thoughts, meditations, desires, ambitions, daydreams and fantasies. You determine what goes on in your mind. You are the master of it because you have control over it. It is your own little secret world—except that God knows all about it, and will one day bring it to light when you have to answer for it in the judgment (EccI. 12:14; Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 2:16; 2 Cor. 5:10). And sooner or later it will find expression in your life and make itself known.

We cannot be like God without thinking the thoughts of God. We cannot know the thoughts of God apart from the revelation of the things of God in the word of God (1 Cor. 2:11-13). We cannot have the thoughts of God in our hearts apart from reverent study of and meditation upon the word of God, coupled with a sincere desire to do the will of God (Jn. 7:17).

<http://www.stonestreetbcv.com/id43.html>

“And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.” **Hebrews 4:13**

These words are part of the conclusion to a section in which the author of Hebrews has reminded his readers that many of those who were led out of Egypt by Moses did not enter into the rest in Canaan. Why had they perished in the wilderness? The deceitfulness of sin (3:12) and a lack of true faith in God and His word led to disobedience (3:18-19; 4:2, 6, 11). Though God had delivered them from the bondage of Egypt, they perished in the wilderness.

Let's not misunderstand—victory is possible and 4:14-16 speaks of grace to help in time of need, but we will not receive the rest unless we are diligent to obey (4:11). The words of 4:13 should be words of comfort if we are truly receiving the word with faith and diligently seeking to obey, but if we are only “putting on a show,” know that “all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”

(Brief Thoughts, John Gibson www.pepperroadchurch.org/resources/articles/2013/)