

Tuesday, April 19, 2016 - Sin in Mathematical Terms

Romans 3:23 – for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God...

Humanity has a sin problem. A problem so large that man has no answer, no solution on his own. Sin causes us to have misplaced priorities and a misguided value system. Unfortunately, many of us turn to the above scripture and act as if God has given us a built in excuse for sin.

Romans 3:23 is NOT an excuse for our sin but an unfortunate reality of how weak humanity is. Sin is a universal condition. It affects everyone, and it has an impact everywhere. Those who claim to live above sin are mistaken; for all have sinned.

Why does sin exist? The book of James provides the answer: man is personally responsible for his own sin. Beginning in James 1:13, the writer tells us, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted from God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man." Men should not accuse God because God cannot be tempted by evil (literally, is incapable of being tempted) and God Himself does not tempt any man. Unfortunately, it is popular in our day to blame others for our failings.

Verse 14 continues, "but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed." The temptation of man occurs by means of an appeal to his own lust or desire. The words translated by "tempted" and "tempteth" in the context of James 1:13 and James 1:14 are appropriately defined as acts of enticement, allurements, or inducement to sin.

How does sin develop? The first stage is TEMPTATION. This stage involves two things: LUST (desires, NKJV) - a strong desire for something and ENTICEMENT - an opportunity and encouragement to satisfy the desire. Put into a mathematical formula: Temptation = Desire + Opportunity. But remember, it is NOT a sin to be TEMPTED.

Verse 15 states, "Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is fullgrown, bringeth forth death." The second stage in the development of sin is SIN ITSELF. Temptation leads to sin only when you yield and ACT upon it. Sin therefore requires the added step of ACTION. Putting it again in mathematical terms: Sin = Desire + Opportunity + Action

The final stage is the consequence of unforgiven sin: DEATH. This refers to spiritual separation from God, which is the "wages of sin" – Rom. 6:23. Ultimately such "death" involves eternal punishment. John writes, in Rev. 21:8, "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." Putting it once more in the form of an equation: Desire + Opportunity + Action + No Forgiveness = Punishment!

But God always provides us the way of escape; do we look for it?

1 Corinthians 10:13 – There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are

able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it.

If we understood the reality of sin, the fact it brings separation between us and God, we would do everything possible to avoid it and its consequences.

Romans 6:23 – For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.