

The Difference between SIN and EVIL

Request: “Could you explain the difference between sin and evil as they relate to the Christian life?”

I meet many Christian who are confused regarding the difference between sin and evil as they relate to the Christian life.

Let me begin by giving a simple definition of sin and evil as they relate to the Christian life.

Sin (hamartia) [missing the mark] **is either violating a revealed divine truth from the word of God or not applying a revealed divine truth from the word of God.**

“What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, ‘You shall not covet.’ But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead.” (Rom.7:7-8)

“Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin.” (James 4:17)

Evil (kakos) [opposed to goodness of character], (poneros) [opposed to divine viewpoint], (phaulos) [opposed to divine good] **is a system of thinking that opposes divine truth either both in belief and behavior.**

“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornication, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.” (Mark 7:21-23; Rom.1:28-32)

This lesson will study five aspects of the difference between sin and evil as they relate to the Christian life.

1. God is NOT the source of sin or evil.

”For Thou art not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; no evil dwells in Thee.” (Ps.5:4)

‘Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am being tempted by God’; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.” (James 1:13)

“And Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone.’” (Mark 10:18)

2. Satan is the source of both sin and evil in the world.

- In 1 John 3:4, sin is described as “lawlessness.”
- In 1 John 3:8, sin is described as “of the Devil.”
- In 1 John 3:12, evil is described as “belonging to the Evil one.”

We see how sin turns into evil in the story of David and Bathsheba (2 Sam.11-12; Matt.5:27-28).

“Why have you despised the word of the Lord by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with sword of the sons of Ammon.” (12:9)

“Thus says the Lord, ‘Behold, I will raise up evil against your own household, I will even take your wives before your eyes, and give them to your companion, and he shall lie with your wives in broad daylight.’” (2 Sam.12:11)

“Then David said to Nathan, ‘I have sinned against the Lord.’ And Nathan said to David, ‘The Lord also has taken away your sin; you shall not die.’” (2 Sam.12:13)

- Notice the difference way the Lord dealt with David regarding the sin and evil?

3. Sin and evil are affected differently by the gospel of grace salvation (1 Cor.15:3-4; Rom.1:16).

The Gospel pardons the unbeliever from sin (Rom.5:12-21; Eph.1:7; 2 Thess.2:11-14; Acts 3:26).

“Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.” (Gal.1:4)

The Gospel delivers the unbeliever from the domain of the rulership of Satan (1 John 5:19; John 7:7; Acts 26:18; 2 Thess.3:3).

“For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” (Col.1:13-14)

4. Sin and evil have different sources within the Christian.

The source of personal sin is OSN (James 1:13-14; Gal.5:16-17; Rom.13:14).

“Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.” (James 1:14; Luke 15:24)

The source of evil is the heart (Mark 7:21-23; Col.1:21; Heb.3:12; Jer.7:24).

“Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, but counselors of peace have joy.” (Prov.12:20; Jer.17:9)

5. Sin and evil have difference spiritual solutions within the Christian.

The spiritual solution to OSN is the indwelling Holy Spirit (Eph.5:18; 1 Cor.6:19-20; 1 John 1:9; 4:4).

“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh.” (Gal.5:16)

The spiritual solution to evil in heart is categorical bible doctrine residing and function in the CWL by faith cycle (James 1:21-22; Heb.5:14; Col.3:8-10; Eph.2:3; Rom.12:2; 2 Cor.5:7; Ps.119:101).

“But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good. Abstain from every form of evil.” (1 Thess.5:21-22)

Evil and not sin will destroy the church and the nation (Eccl.9:3; Gen.6:5-7; Rom.13:3-4; Rev.2-3).

“If that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it.” (Jer.18:8)