

## *Pk's Perspectives ...The Problem of Personal Sin*

It occurs to me that one of the reasons we struggle so intensely with personal sin is the fact of the consequences of our sin not always being immediate. Yes, sometimes we promptly reap the effect of sin — but often the consequences of sin do not manifest for days or weeks or months; these are the times we utter a sigh of relief while erroneously thinking we “got away with it.”

Yet followers of Christ never “get away” with sin. God warns us against the deception of thinking He can be mocked even as He tells us that whatever we sow - seeds of obedience or seeds disobedience - we will reap the consequences. Even if there is no visible, external consequence of our sin we are always diminished in our character, our vitality, our sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, and the joy of God's salvation is eroded up until we come to the place of confession and repentance.

Try to imagine a scenario whereby Christ followers experience an instantaneous and visible consequence resulting from sin. Like a boil would appear somewhere on your body every time you sinned — growing larger, more painful, and inflamed with pus with each day that you neglected confession and repentance. I know — it boggles the mind to imagine every sin immediately manifesting as a boil somewhere on your body. Condemning thoughts? Boil. Lying? Boil. Speaking hateful or degrading words to your spouse or children? Boil. Hoarding your anger? Boil. Workplace flirtation? Boil. Cheating on your tax return? Boil. Spreading gossip? Boil. Ignoring an opportunity for ministry? Boil. Unwillingness to forgive? Boil.

Knowing Christians the way I do ( because I am one! ), I suspect you would, for a season, tolerate the boils that could be hidden beneath clothing from the curious eyes of family, friends, and co-workers. However, a boil that appeared on the tip of your nose, your ear, or your hand would bring you quickly to the point of confession and repentance. Yet in coming to Christ seeking forgiveness and healing, would yours be a prayer of genuine humility and repentance for the affront your sin brings to the name of Jesus, or would your heart be more concerned with eradicating the unsightly boils that not only cause you physical pain but also hamper your lifestyle?

Friend, I want you to consider two truths. First - Jesus wants you to choose obedience because of your love, devotion, and passion for Him rather than because you want to avoid a painful boil. Christ desires obedience that springs from a heart that cries out “I want to honor Christ” instead of from a petulant attitude that says “I have to obey if I want to avoid pain”.

Second, I want you to know with absolute clarity that God is always eager to forgive your sin and cleanse you from the stain of your sin. (1 John 1:9) Your heavenly Father's heart is grieved when you allow unconfessed sin to fester in your soul; He so wants to free you from the figurative boils that sin produces in your life. The unconfessed sin you're harboring? Jesus died for that sin...so that by His blood you might receive forgiveness and healing. “Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” Grace & peace, love you. PK