

# THE EXCEEDING SINFULNESS OF SIN!

Romans 7:13-20

## I. INTRODUCTION: I

1. **2** In Romans 7:13 Paul speaks of sin as being “*exceedingly sinful*.”
2. The word sin has almost dropped out of the English language. There are many reasons:
  - A. There has been a general decline in moral values, even among “religious” people.
    - (1) The prevalent “permissive/tolerant” attitude in our society says everyone is free to “do their own thing” and no one has a right to question them (postmodern mindset).
    - (2) BTW: Really there is a “double-standard” because, if you are exhorting people to adhere to God’s standards, then everyone claims the right to question your motives!
  - B. Today it is not politically correct to call sin, sin: In today’s world people do not sin they make “minor mistakes,” they commit “minor missteps,” they have “a slight character flaw” that lead them to have “momentary lapses in judgment.”
    - (1) They are “well-meaning,” but have “somewhat misguided intentions.”
    - (2) For example:
      - (a) People no longer commit the sin of adultery, they merely have an “extracurricular social liaison,” or they are “hiking the Appalachian trail,” (former South Carolina governor Mark Sanford), or they are on a “left handed honeymoon.”
      - (b) Homosexuality is no longer a sin, it’s merely an “alternate lifestyle” that must not just be accepted, but it must be “celebrated”; it’s a “gay” lifestyle don’t you know!
      - (c) Assault is no longer a brutal crime, it’s an “anger management issue.”
      - (d) People no longer lie, they “misremember” (e.g., Hilary Clinton).
3. As a result, society in general, and even members of the Lord’s Church do not appreciate the ubiquitous nature of sin nor sin’s terrible and destructive consequences (Rom. 3:23; 6:23).
4. **3** Briefly this morning I want us to explore Paul’s statement concerning the “*exceeding sinfulness of sin*.” But be careful! Make the application of this morning’s lesson to yourself (2 Cor. 13:5; Matt. 7:3: look to see if there’s a speck in your eye!).

## II. DISCUSSION:

**First, we can see the “*exceeding sinfulness of sin*” by...**

1. **4** Sin’s Ugliness and Depravity:
  - A. The reality is this: There is nothing pretty about sin!
    - (1) BUT, sin appears attractive; that is why it is tempting (instant gratification):

**Heb. 11:24-26:** “By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, <sup>25</sup> choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to **enjoy the passing pleasures of sin**, <sup>26</sup> esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.”

- (a) **Adultery:** Television programs, movies, and songs most often portray adulterous relationships as romantic, wonderful, and praiseworthy.
  - (i) But notice what the inspired wise man said... **Prov. 5:1-5; 6:23-29** (also consider David! 2 Samuel).
  - (ii) It's no wonder Job described it as a "crime"! **Job 31:11:** "For that [adultery] were a heinous crime; Yea, it were an iniquity to be punished by the judges:" (ASV).
  - (iii) Don't be deceived: the few moments of physical pleasure adultery might bring is not worth the emotional and spiritual pain and suffering it invariably inflicts!
- (b) **Drunkenness:** Companies like Anheuser-Busch would have us admire the nobility of their heritage and history in the brewing business.
  - (i) The Samuel Adams commercials present their "brew masters" as if they were on par with renaissance painters!
  - (ii) They and other "brewing companies" show their products in the best possible light (e.g., people having fun, enjoying life, etc.).
  - (ii) They hypocritically encourage people to "drink responsibly," to appoint a "designated driver."
  - (iv) But notice what the inspired wise man says: **Prov. 23:29-35**
  - (v) They don't show you the car wrapped around a tree and the dead, mangled bodies! They don't show you the bruises on the woman's face inflicted by her drunken "significant other"! They don't show you the ill-clad children whose family cannot afford proper clothing because the bulk of their income is spent on booze!
- (2) The ugliness of sin can be seen by the fact that sin kills the souls of men: **Rom. 6:23; Jas. 1:14-16:** "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren."
- B. Sin is the root cause of every heartache, every death, and every tear-dimmed eye.
- C. All sin is ugly and depraved! Not just murder, rape, adultery, and stealing; but so is jealousy, envy, and selfish ambition, and teaching of false doctrines. (**Gal. 5:19-21:** "Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.")
- D. **5** Christians cannot afford to take a lackadaisical and soft attitude toward sin.
  - (1) God does not classify sins (e.g., class I, II, III; venial vs. mortal): **Matt. 7:28:** people were "astonished" at Jesus' teaching; **1 Jn. 3:14-15:** "We know tt we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death. 15 Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him."; **Matt. 5:28:** "But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."
  - (2) It will multiply in the world, we must stand against it (**2 Tim. 3:13-15:** "But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.").

- (3) If we fail to keep our guard up sin will soon be in our own back yard; in our own family, in our own lives! (e.g., pornography can lead to adultery, divorce, broken home, etc.; social drinking can lead to alcoholism, DUI, injury, death, etc.). Therefore, self-examination and the study of God's word are critical! (2 Cor. 13:5; Jas. 1:21-25)

**Second, we can see the “exceeding sinfulness of sin” by...**

**2. 6 Sin's Deceptive Nature:**

- A. Which would you be most likely to eat: A foul smell piece of meat, covered with creepy, crawling maggots; or a piece of neatly wrapped, sweet-smelling candy? But what if the candy was laced with a deadly poison? That's how sin presents itself!
- B. Sin does not try to attract us with pictures of skid row, notice the beer commercials: What do the Budweiser or Old Milwaukee commercials say?
- (1) “Use our product regularly and become an alcoholic.”
- (2) “Use our product regularly and you will probably kill someone on the highway, lose your license, and perhaps even go to jail.”
- (3) “Use our product regularly and you'll lose your job, family, health, and your life.” NO!
- (4) “When you say Bud, you've said it all!” and “It doesn't get any better than this!”
- (5) Do they use drunken, homeless people from skid row or the people “drying out” at the Betty Ford Clinic to promote their product? No they use former athletic stars (e.g., Miller Lite commercials a few years ago, funny, catchy, etc.) or beautiful young men and women (usually scantily-clad, because all advertisers know that “sex” sells.) That's called DECEPTION!
- C. The deceptive nature of sin shows the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Sin is deceptive because sin:
- (1) Causes men to blame God (“That's the way God made me!” “Why did God allow that drunk driver to kill my loved one?”): **Jas. 1:13-16:** “Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am tempted by God’; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. 14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.”
- (2) Sin entices men to want to continue in it!
- Rom. 6:1-2:** “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?”
- (3) Sin makes God's law look bad: Rom. 7:9-13 (The “law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good”; but “sin fooled me by taking the good laws of God and using them to make me guilty of death.” (NLT)).
- D. But, sin can only deceive us if we allow it to do so. However, be careful, God will never be deceived (**Gal. 6:7-8:** “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”).

**Third, we can see the “exceeding sinfulness of sin” by...**

**3. 7 Sin's Awful Consequences:**

- A. Sin is not a “good paying” job; the wages of sin is spiritual death: Rom. 6:23; **Jas. 1:15:** “...when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.”
- (1) Another of sin's awful consequences is that it causes man to be alienated from himself—he despises what he has done and what he has become:

**Psa. 38:3-8:** “There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your anger, nor any health in my bones because of my sin. 4 For my iniquities have gone over my head; like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me. 5 My wounds are foul and festering because of my foolishness. 6 I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. 7 For my loins are full of inflammation, and there is no soundness in my flesh. 8 I am feeble and severely broken; I groan because of the turmoil of my heart.”

(2) Another of sin’s awful consequences is that it alienates men from one another:

(a) **Adam blamed Eve:**

**Gen. 3:12:** “Then the man said, ‘The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.’”

(b) **Cain murdered Abel:**

**Gen. 4:12:** “When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth.”

(c) **Withdrawal of fellowship:**

**1 Cor. 5:13:** “...Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person.”

**2 Thess. 3:14:** “And 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.”

(d) **The alienation because of sin is wrecking our nation: Broken relationships and broken homes are responsible for much of our nation’s crime** (e.g., the vast majority of serial killer’s parents divorce when they are between the ages of 8-12 years old).

(3) The worst consequence of sin is that it alienates men from God—it’s like the poles of a magnet; God is so good and sin is so bad there is a natural repulsion: **Gen. 3:8-10:** Adam & Eve hid from God; **3:22-24:** God evicted Adam & Eve from the garden of Eden; **Isa. 59:2:** “But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.”; **1 Pet. 3:12:** “For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.”

(4) God is saying: “I can’t stand to look at you!” **Jas. 4:4**

B. **\*\*** The “exceeding sinfulness of sin” can be seen from its ultimate consequences: **2 Thess. 1:8-9:** “in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,”; **Rev. 20:15:** “And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”

With such consequences, it’s no wonder Jesus said:

**Mk. 9:45-48:** “And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched; 46 ‘where ‘Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.’ 47 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire; 48 ‘where ‘Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.’”

**Fourth, we can see the “exceeding sinfulness of sin” by...**

4. **8** Sin’s Terrifically High Cost:

A. For men sin has both a temporal cost and an eternal cost.

B. **Temporal:**

(1) Consider the example of David: **2 Sam. 12:10-12:** “Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be

your wife. 11 Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. 12 For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.'"

- (a) David's eldest son (Amnon) raped his own sister (Tamar): 2 Sam. 13
- (b) David's son (Absalom) takes revenge on Amnon and murders him: 2 Sam. 13
- (c) Absalom revolts against David, commits adultery openly w/David's wives: 2 Sam. 15-18

(2) Other examples:

- (a) Adultery: I've known Christians (even some preachers and elders!) who've committed adultery: the aftermath is horrible! Divorce, alienation of children (some of whom fall away!), loss of reputation, plus untold harm to the cause of Christ!
- (b) Alcohol: Alcohol use has awful temporal consequences:
  - (i) Over 40% of traffic fatalities are due to alcohol impaired drivers; alcohol related fatalities in 1995 were 17,732; in 2012 it fell to 10,322 (Source: NHTSA).
  - (ii) According the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* 1 in 10 deaths are "due to excessive alcohol use"; it is the leading cause of preventable death; accounting for ~88,000 deaths annually among working age (20-64) adults; "Excessive alcohol use shortened the lives who died by about 30 years."
  - (iii) According to the *U.S. Department of Justice* (1996): "On an average day in 1996, corrections authorities supervised an estimated 5.3 million convicted offenders. Nearly 2 million (about 36%) had been drinking alcohol when they committed their conviction offense."
  - (iv) According to *Livestrong.com*: "Fourteen million [alcohol abusers] of them live in the USA and 6.6 million American children grow up in alcoholic households, according to *Alcohol-Information.com*. More than a million children are victims of child abuse each year, and alcohol is a major factor in nine of every ten cases. Two in five abusive parents are alcoholics."
  - (v) Drinking alcohol has consequences! It's not just about wearing a lampshade on your head and acting "goofy," having a "good time" and then suffering from a "hang-over" the next day!
- (c) Divorce: Divorce has temporal consequences: one article I read lists 9 negative effects of divorce on children (*9 negative effects divorce reportedly has on children*, Lauren Hansen:
  - (i) Smoking habits: More likely to pick up smoking as a habit (48% greater for males, 39% for females)(2013 issue of *Public Health*).
  - (ii) Ritalin use: Over twice as likely to suffer mental health problems requiring treatment with Ritalin (University of Alberta).
  - (iii) Poor math and social skills: More likely to fall behind in math skills and suffer anxiety, stress and low self-esteem as a result (University of Wisconsin).
  - (iv) Susceptibility to sickness: children of divorce run an almost 10% greater risk of "susceptibility to illness...likely due to 'very significant stress' as their lives change dramatically." (University of California-Berkley)
  - (v) Increased likelihood of dropping out of school: the drop-out rate is 18 percentage points higher among children of divorce (*Canadian Journal of Sociology*).

- (vi) Propensity for crime: one in ten children of divorce turned to crime and 8% considered suicide (*The Telegraph*).
  - (vii) Higher risk of stroke: higher incidence of strokes in adults who were children of divorce (sounds very tenuous to me!) (University of Toronto).
  - (viii) Greater risk of getting divorced: children of divorce are twice as likely to get divorced (University of Utah).
  - (ix) Early death: children of divorce averaged almost five year shorter life span (*The Longevity Project*).
  - ☛ Amazingly this article failed to cite the fact that alcohol and illegal drug abuse rates are dramatically higher for children of divorce.
  - ☛ ***And people have the audacity to say it's ok to divorce because "God wants me to be happy!" It sure doesn't make the children happy!***
- (3) Disobedience in general: Sin's terribly high cost can be seen in the (temporal) punishment God has given to those who reject Him (Rom. 15:4):
- ☛ Antediluvians: Gen. 6-8
  - ☛ Tower of Babel: Gen. 11
  - ☛ Sodom & Gomorrah: Gen. 18 & 19
  - ☛ Israel: Assyrian captivity (2 Kgs. 18:9-10; etc.)
  - ☛ Judah: Babylonian captivity (2 Kgs. 25, etc.)
  - ☛ Heathen nations (e.g., judgments prophesied in book of Isaiah)
  - ☛ First century Jews: **Matt. 23:38**: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."
  - ☛ Holocaust: I believe the Holocaust was a punishment of God to the Jews: **Matt. 27:25**: "And all the people answered and said, 'His blood be on us and on our children.'"
- (a) If you don't think God would harshly punish His own people you need to read Deuteronomy 28-31 and Leviticus 26.
- (b) If they were unfaithful and disobedient God promised them some of the harshest punishments imaginable! Elisha the prophet understood this!
- 2 Kings 8:12**: "And Hazael said, 'Why is my lord [i.e., Elisha] weeping?' He answered, 'Because I know the evil that you will do to the children of Israel: Their strongholds you will set on fire, and their young men you will kill with the sword; and you will dash their children, and rip open their women with child.'"
- (c) These punishments included not only these unspeakable atrocities; but also included cannibalism of their own children!
- Deut. 28:53-57**: "You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you. 54 The sensitive and very refined man among you will be hostile toward his brother, toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the rest of his children whom he leaves behind, 55 so that he will not give any of them the flesh of his children whom he will eat, because he has nothing left in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates. 56 The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and sensitivity, will refuse to the husband of her bosom, and to her son and her daughter, 57 her placenta which comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears; for she will eat them secretly for lack of everything in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates."

**Lev. 26:27-29:** “And after all this, if you do not obey Me, but walk contrary to Me, 28 then I also will walk contrary to you in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. 29 You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters.”

- (d) Their punishment would be utterly terrifying!

**Deut. 28:66-67:** “Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life. 67 In the morning you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were evening!’ And at evening you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were morning!’ because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see.”

- (e) The reason for their punishment was crystal clear!

**Deut. 29:24-28:** “All nations would say, ‘Why has the LORD done so to this land? What does the heat of this great anger mean?’ 25 Then people would say: ‘Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt; 26 for they went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods that they did not know and that He had not given to them. 27 Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against this land, to bring on it every curse that is written in this book. 28 And the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger, in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day.’”

- C. **9 Eternal: 2 Thess. 1:7b-9:** “...when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,”; **Rev. 20:15:** “And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”

- (1) The starkness and terribleness of God’s eternal punishment of sin should be even more sobering if we recall the terrifying temporal punishments we just discussed.  
(2) That being so, it’s no wonder Jesus said:

**Mk. 9:43-48:** “If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched — 44 where ‘Their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.’ 45 And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched — 46 where ‘Their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.’ 47 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire — 48 where ‘Their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.’”

- D. Sin’s terribly high costs, both temporally and eternally, arise from the enormously high price God had to pay for it:

- (1) Nearly everyone can quote John 3:16 from memory (**Jn. 3:16:** “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”).  
(a) When we hear this verse it normally brings positive thoughts to our mind; but if you really think about this verse also contains a great deal of pathos.  
(b) What happened when “God...gave His only begotten Son”?  
(c) Jesus, a sinless, perfect man (in actuality the very Creator! Jn. 1:3) suffered excruciating physical pain, unimaginable mental torment, and unmitigated shame.  
(d) Why?



- ☛ There's no doubt it was the greatest act of love ever shown! **Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8:** “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
- ☛ But sin put Him on the cross! **1 Pet. 2:24:** “who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness — by whose stripes you were healed.”; **1 Pet. 3:18:** “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,”
- ☛ The value of something is in proportion to its purchase price: **Acts 20:28:** “...the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”

(2) The Hebrew writer gives us further insight into the Lord's eternal punishment of sin:

**Heb. 10:28-31:** “Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. And again, ‘The LORD will judge His people.’ 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

- (a) The same God that dished out the punishment to the antediluvians, the Sodomites, and the Israelites who ate their own children will dish out eternal punishment to the lost!
- (b) Why? Because of sin! Surely that shows the “exceeding sinfulness of sin”!

### III. CONCLUSION: 10

1. How bad is sin? Don't let sin fool you through its deceptive nature! **Heb. 3:13:** “but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” (**Heb. 11:25:** “passing pleasures of sin”; NLT: “fleeting pleasures of sin”)
2. Sin is so bad, it necessitated the death of the only begotten Son of God!  
**1 Jn. 4:10:** “In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”
2. Reminder: we have all sinned! (**Rom. 3:23; 1 Jn. 1:8:** “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”).
3. Reminder: the wages of sin is death (**Rom. 6:23; Rev. 20:15; 2 Thess. 1:7-9**).
4. Thanks be to God that through His abundant mercy there is a remedy for sin! Only Jesus can give us relief from the guilt and the eternal consequences of sin!  
**Matt 11:28-30:** “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”
5. Will you be free **TODAY** from the “exceeding sinfulness of sin”?

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