

117. How Boundless and Appalling Sin Is.

Repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out. *Acts 3,19.*

We are willing to confess that we are sinners; yet who among us can understand how boundless and appalling sin is? Who knows precisely how far a thing may be a sin which we imagine to be a virtue? Where we think we are right, who knows but that we may be wrong? Where we have arrived at the conclusion that we have done a good thing, who among us is quite sure that he has not been mistaken?

Who, again, can know the number of his sins? The mightiest mind cannot count the sins of a single day. We might sooner tell the grains of sand on the seashore than the iniquities of one man's life. But before God the guilt of even one sin merits His eternal wrath and punishment.

To understand the whole depth of the guilt of sin is quite beyond human power. We are not to think merely of the sins that grow on the surface, but also of the multitude of unborn iniquity, germs of sin that lie slumbering in the soul. Your heart is permeated with sin as the heated piece of iron is with fire. Temptations are the hammers plied upon it. The sparks fly lustily; your sins are the sparks. Can you count them? Can you *guess* the number of the unborn sparks that still lie latent and hidden in the mass of iron? We must confess: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

Think, then, of the spirituality of the divine Law, its extent and strictness. The bare letter is nothing compared with the whole stupendous meaning and severe strictness of the rule. The Law deals with every act, every offense, without hope of pardon. The Law, too, extends to sins of thought; the imagination of evil is sin. To keep this Law is utterly beyond our power. We do not even know the entire fulness of its meaning.

Prayer.

Spare Thy people, O Lord, and give not Thine heritage to reproach; let us not bear our sins. Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of Thy people; Thou hast covered all their sins. Thou hast taken away all Thy wrath; Thou hast turned Thyself from the fierceness of Thine anger. Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause Thine anger toward us to cease. Save us, who trust in Thee alone and neither have, nor know of, any refuge elsewhere. Cleanse us from our secret faults. Save us by Thy grace, for by the Law we never can be saved. Amen.

O Savior, do not chide me!
From Thee I will not part;
Here will I stand beside Thee
When breaks Thy loving heart;

When soul and body languish
In death's last fatal grasp,
Then, in Thy deepest anguish,
Thee in mine arms I'll clasp.

This devotion is one of 318 taken from *Daily Bread* by F. E. Pasche, published by CPH in 1926, but now in the public domain. They have been copied and reformatted by Rev. Bruce G. Ley and made available for distribution by pastors and missionaries.

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