

Sin

(March 28, 2006)

I. Welcome to Heart of the Matter

1. This is a live call-in show (973-TV20)
2. Heart@tv20.tv
3. "Heart of the Matter" is re-broadcast Tuesday mornings at 11 am so if you're watching then, tune in tonight for a whole new live show.

II. I've given a lot of thought over the course of my life – most of it as a result of personal introspection – to the subject of sin

1. What it is / Why it occurs / How it manifests itself in people / And what it does to them in the short and long run of existence.
2. I've discovered a few things about sin which I think are justified by the whole of scripture.
 - A) First, every person on earth is a sinner. And not just some of the time. **"Most of us are in some sort of sin most of the time."**
 - B) Second, I think it is scripturally plain that an all Good-God will never accept sin. All sin, every sin, each sin MUST be paid in full for God to be good. (more on this in a minute)
 - C) Third, these facts cause tremendous fear in the heart of people everywhere.
 - D) And as a direct result of this fear, people AND religions often go to great lengths to revise the facts about sin or God so they can live at peace with themselves.

Sin and/or God revision is usually done in the following ways:

Sin or God is legitimized or justified.

- "It's okay. Everyone does it. It's harmless. I'm a free spirit."
- "God will understand. God is love. I'm not that bad."
- PROBLEM *is* denies a Holy and Good God.
- EXAMPLE OF THE GOOD JUDGE.

Sin is placed into a hierarchy.

- "I'm bad but look at what "so and so" has done!"

- PROBLEM *is all sin – teaspoon or truckload – is rejected and has separated us from the presence of God.*
 - Adam and Eve and apple – no big deal, right?
 - earthly consequences differ but not end result.
 - Allows ALL people to justify their own sins.
- b) Often sin is “balanced” with good works.
- “This much good off-sets this much bad.” (Universal)
 - PROBLEM *omits the need for Jesus and sin becomes acceptable to Good God so long as there is good on the other side.*
- c) Sometimes people try and “self-atone” or “work sin off.”
- Similar to universal balance approach except the sin is being paid for by the individual.
 - PROBLEM: *Removes the need for Jesus.*
 - We are not worthy to pay for sin. Unable.
- d) Sin is eliminated or reduced.
- Over-come sin one step at a time until we have entire lives seemingly under control.
 - PROBLEM: We have all still sinned and are in the negative with God because of this fact.

Let me say something loud and clear at this point: NONE of these attempts are valid when it comes to God or sin.

All mankind have sinned and if they have not accepted Jesus by faith and been reborn, they remain sinful.

If you attend a Christian Church but have not accepted Jesus as the author and finisher of your faith, your personal savior, and the only means to God and you die tonight, you will face Holy God as an unjustified, unqualified, and unredeemed sinner. I’d like to be politically correct here but this is truth.

Let me tell you right now, according to scripture, NOBODY WANTS TO FALL INTO THE HANDS OF AN ANGRY GOD.

What would make Him angry? The fact that He sent His Son down and allowed Him to suffer incomprehensively for all of us and then to have some of us reject this simple easy offering. That will make our all-good God angry.

The good news is most Christian churches have Jesus as the focal point of their worship and study (from infancy to death) so most active Christian believers have a good idea of how vital Jesus is to their eternal life and have to some degree or another turned themselves – meaning their sin, their will, and their lives –over to Him.

Then we come to Mormonism.

What is it about Mormonism that makes so many people claim they are a “C-U-L-T?” As a Mormon, have you ever asked yourself this? Do you think it is really because they are jealous of the Church?

What is it about the Mormon Church that draws such criticism toward their doctrines? Do you think all attackers of the LDS Church are misinformed?

In my opinion, the real trouble with Mormonism is it allows so many people to pass through its doors over the course of their lifetime thinking they are good with God because they have been religiously active.

That religious and active Mormons are allowed to believe they are justified, sanctified, and spiritually regenerated based on their commitment to the Church and its programs.

This is simply not true.

“Being found worthy” is not synonymous with being worthy before God.

Sin is handled, paid for, forgiven, and erased by only one thing in heaven or in earth – faith in Jesus Christ.

And if Jesus Christ is the ONLY answer for forgiveness of sin, then Jesus Christ is the ONLY answer when it comes to salvation/eternal life, or exaltation.

Does this make sense?

What was the reason we were separated from God? SIN!
So what is the solution to this separation? The TOTAL ABSENCE of SIN!
And where can we go to have ALL sin eliminated and erased? Jesus!

Not works! Not religion! Not contributions! Not religious allegiance! JESUS!

We are separated from God by sin. Jesus paid for sin. We believe in Jesus. We are no longer separated from God.

We’re going to open the phone lines up now. But relative to Mormonism and sin, I have three charges to level at them. This may sting a bit, but it must be said strongly so there is no question as to where people need to stand relative to sin:

First, what role could works ever play in bringing a person to God if it was sin that separated us from Him in the first place? Why would works be needed when it was sin that caused the separation?

Second, Jesus suffered for the sins of this world past, present, and future over 2000 years ago. When we accept Him our sins are forgiven – past, present, and future. How is the “repentance process” which is used in Mormonism to supposedly bring about forgiveness reconciled with an understanding of the atonement occurring over two thousand years ago?

Last of all, and perhaps the most important question of the evening, “What is the LDS Church doing with its sinners? I understand what you do with those who believe themselves to be worthy. The Celestial people. You build them up, accept them, and give them positions. You praise them, keep them busy, and use them to do further the work of the church. But what happens to your sinners? Those people who just can’t make the Mormon grade?

What do you do with your alcoholics, your drug addicts, your homosexuals, your sexually promiscuous? What happens to the LDS failures? What do you do with those people who struggle with the flesh?

I know what you do. I’ve seen it.

You cause them to either conform or appear to conform to the edicts of Mormonism, or you drive them away with the subtlety and power of a surging tide. You ignore them at the ward, stake, and corporate level.

But the worst thing of all is you are sending them to hell with a first class ticket!

Why? Because you refuse to embrace them as Jesus would have embraced them while at the same time you refuse to teach them the way to overcoming their sinful ways – which is Jesus. Rebirth.

Mormonism is at times like a giant luxury liner pushing forward through the crystal sea. Its first class is all above board, well dressed, sipping Martinelli’s and prancing about in the open air, congratulating each other, welcoming each other, making show for each other. They take family photos at the Captain’s table and put on a pretty good show of things. And the band plays on.

But below deck, in the steerage, in the cargo, in the belly of the ship, you have stuffed all those who have not, who will not, who cannot make the grade.

You turn from them and force them out through silent contempt. They are the disenfranchised LDS. Disowned, and condemned as the weak, the willful, and the shamed.

Stalwart parents send their own children there. Wards send whole families. They will never be your bishops, stake presidents, your relief society presidents, or part of the elite or embraced. They are ignored, never asked to speak, and never invited into the inner circle.

They are your sinners, your different, your struggling with life. And though it is very sad that such have been hidden away or driven from the church, what is really sad is they have not been given any hope.

READ LETTER FROM SALT LAKE CITY TO FRIEND ON NAME REMOVEAL.

I'd like to recommend a new LDS Church to the leaders here in Salt Lake. It is based on Joseph Smith's description of heaven. The Celestial Church can be the existing LDS active and faithful. Let them continue to meet in the chapel and temple and live their higher laws.

But I propose some new buildings or wards. Call them the telestial wards or terrestrial buildings. And the people who attend there are those who just want to follow Jesus. They know they are sinners. They know they have wasted it, as Johnny Cash would say.

Open up some wards for the telestial, President Kimball. Have a stake full of terrestrial types.

Funny thing is, I don't know of too many people who would want to be a part of the Celestial gang. I wouldn't. Would you?