

The Reality of Sin

by Darrell B. Harrison

When was the last time you thought about **sin**? I mean *really* thought about it, as in the presence and power of it in your own life?

As Christians, it can probably go without saying that we will readily acknowledge the **existence** of sin but, more often than not, such an acknowledgement is only to the extent that the Bible says it exists. But, how often do we make the effort to go deeper than just a superficial, tacit recognition of the existence of sin to its presence in our heart and its devastating potential to do great damage, not only in our own lives, but in the lives of others?

None of us would disagree that sin is real. However, **saying** sin is real is not the same as acknowledging the **reality** of it. For example, we would all agree, would we not, that fire is hot. But how do we know this? We know it not simply because someone told us, but because we've experienced first-hand the damaging effects it can have on almost any object with which it comes into close contact.

The same is true with sin. It is one thing to **say** sin is real, but it's another thing altogether to actually **know** the reality of it. An excellent example of this can be found in the account of **Cain** and **Abel** in **Genesis 4:3-7**, with the key verse being **verse 7b**:

*(3) "So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. (4) Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering, (5) but for Cain **and** for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. (6) Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? (7) If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, **sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.**" (NASB)*

That you and I view sin as not merely some ethereal biblical principle, but as something **tangible** that must be "mastered", is a mindset that we, as Christian men, need to aspire in our walk with Christ. Sin is not just some boogeyman type "thing" that just happens to pop up as a result of our having had a bad day at work or when the wife or children get on our nerves. It is an ever-present reality that has the most deliberate and destructive intentions toward each one of us.

That sin is described in God's Word in terms of "crouching" and having "desire" is to say it is much more than just a thing; it has a nature, and that nature has a distinct and definitive motive that we must be aware of and learn to overcome ("...its **desire** is **for** you..."). The application of this truth in our lives can be particularly impactful in the home, where men are ordained by God as leaders of their wives and families.

Sin is serious business. In fact, it's so serious that the warning to Cain was given by God Himself, and we would all do well to heed that warning and impress Genesis 4:7 upon our hearts as we endeavor to walk as men of integrity and character, representing our Lord and Master Jesus Christ.