

Sin is Not Merely an Abstract Idea

-Jim Hyest-

One of the greatest challenges of life is to realize and consistently maintain an awareness that this physical world is the illusion and the spirit world is the reality; hence, we are prone to misperceptions about life. Being products of western civilization tends to make the misconceptions worse because we express things in abstract terms. We are likely to dismiss and accept things intellectually rather than, as the modern expression is, holistically. Sin is one of those abstract terms. When we speak of redemption from our sins, we are inclined to relate to that idea disinterestedly. Being saved, as it were, from an abstract idea does not do much to involve the emotions; therefore, humans tend to appreciate an abstract idea abstractedly. We respond to it half focused, clinically, and dispassionately. Man's response to God begins in the mind but it is supposed to flow from there to the passions or, as the KJV expresses it, the "**bowels** of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering (Col. 3:12, emp. add.)." When we say that we are redeemed from our sins, we respond to it as though someone has paid our speeding ticket and we didn't even have to show up in court. The reality is we have been redeemed or saved from a horrible and irredeemably merciless slave owner, Satan. We are not saved from an idea, but an up close and personal, powerful, and insatiably hateful being. In Christ we have an escape from enslavement to this terrible being to another who is not only greater than Satan in power, but the embodiment of every virtue that is his opposite. We have only one choice to make between two entities and both involve enslavement. Do we want enslavement to the evil entity described above or enslavement to the One who is all just, but also infinitely kind, merciful, long-suffering, and self-sacrificial who desires only to bestow goodness on His slaves, even to the adoption of sons and a share in His divine nature?