

DOCTRINE OF THE SIN UNTO DEATH

A. Definition and Description.

1 John 5:16 If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not [πρός (prós): in close proximity] with death, he shall ask and He [God the Father] will give life to him who is not in close proximity with death. There is a sin in close proximity with death; I do not say that he should ask concerning this category.

1. The literal meaning of the preposition πρός (prós), plus the accusative of relationship, means “in close proximity.” It can be translated idiomatically “the sin terminating with death.”
2. The sin terminating in death is the sin of not executing the spiritual life of the Church Age. This does not open the door for you to malign or judge anyone.
3. The sin face-to-face with death is a sin which is repeated many times and there is no rebound. Therefore, God’s judgment of this person is always fair.
4. The sin face-to-face with death is maximum divine discipline from the integrity of God. It is the highest form of disgrace that can occur.
 - (1) Divine discipline results from the believer using his own volition to create his own failures in life after salvation.
 - (2) The sin in close proximity with death is described in:

Psalm 7:14 Behold, he shall have labor pains of vanity [warning discipline] because he has become pregnant with frustration.

v. 15 Therefore, he has given birth to a life of deceit [intensive discipline]. He dug a grave [the sin in close proximity with death]. He explored it [the experience of warning and intensive discipline].

v. 16 Therefore, he has fallen into the ditch which he himself has constructed. His frustration will return on his own head.”

- (3) The sin in close proximity with death does not come all at once, but in segments. Failure to use the rebound technique of 1 John 1:9 results in perpetual carnality.

1 John 5:17 All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not in close proximity with death.”

5. 1 John 5:16b means that while you are still dying, you can still sin. It is the sins that intensify the suffering in dying. This is a reference to sinning when you are in the “death-shadowed valley” (Psalm 23:4).

6. When you are going through the valley of the shadow of death, there are certain sins that you can commit face-to-face with dying that are going to make the journey miserable: jealousy, bitterness, vindictiveness, self-pity, fear, worry, anxiety. All of these sins make dying miserable.
7. There are those who sow to the wind and reap the tornado in the death-shadowed valley. The sin face-to-face with death is you creating for yourself your very own dying misery in the death-shadowed valley God has provided for you. This is fair, painful, and terminates in physical death. Sins committed while dying intensify the journey through the death-shadowed valley.
8. The divine initiative of eschatological grace challenges the believer to deploy the problem-solving devices on the FLOT Line of the soul,³ so that you can travel through your own death-shadowed valley with the most fantastic blessings:

Philippians 1:21 For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain.
Psalm 23:4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod [שֵׁבֶט (*shevet*): “authority”] and Your staff [מַשְׁעֵנָה (*mash‘enah*): “protection”], they comfort me.

9. The training for the blessing or profit in dying comes from the daily function of the spiritual skills in your life. This is why 2 Timothy 1:7 says, “For God has not given us a lifestyle of fear, but of power and virtue-love and of sound judgment.”
10. Four categories of death exist.
 - a. Dying grace is given to mature or advancing believers. It is the greatest blessing of life because it is directly related to and is only exceeded by rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ:

Psalm 116:15 Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His godly ones.

Philippians 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

- b. Transfer to heaven apart from death is mentioned for two men:
 - (1) Enoch:

³ The FLOT Line is a military acronym for “Forward Line of Troops.” This tactic has both offensive and defensive applications in the spiritual realm. The believer must learn through doctrine when to apply one or the other in the Invisible War. For offensive actions: (1) personal evangelism, (2) function of the Ten Problem-Solving Devices, (3) Application of the invisible assets, (4) execution of the protocol plan of God, and (5) production of divine good. For defensive actions: (1) Application of the doctrine of eternal security, (2) application of facilitated doctrine resident in the soul, and (3) utilization of divine power which is application of the Word of God.

Hebrews 11:5 By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God. [See: Genesis 5:9–11]

(2) Elijah:

2 Kings 2:11 As they [**Elijah and Elisha**] were going along and talking, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire which separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven.

v. 12a Elisha saw it and cried out, “My Father, my Father, the chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” And he saw Elijah no more.

- c. The sin face-to-face with death. This disciplinary death is given to believers who refuse to execute the spiritual life. It occurs where the believer in the cosmic system takes his own life.
 - d. The exit-resurrection at the end of the Church Age.
11. The sin face-to-face with death is not a specific sin. It is the believer residing and functioning in the cosmic system. All his human good and personal sins add up to motivational evil toward self and functional evil toward others.
 12. The sin face-to-face with death is maximum divine discipline, the most painful experience in life with no alleviation. It implies loss of reward and blessing and shame at the judgment seat of Christ.

B. The Context for the Sin Face-to-Face With Death.

1. The context is the general doctrine of divine discipline. Divine discipline is the sum total of punitive measures by which God judges, corrects, and teaches the believer in time.

Hebrews 12:5 You yourselves have forgotten the principles of doctrine which teach you as sons. “My son do not make light of discipline from the Lord, nor be fainting when you are punished by Him;

v. 6 “For you see, ‘Whom the Lord loves He punishes and scourges with a whip every son whom He receives.’”

2. Divine discipline is confined to time:

Revelation 21:4 “He will wipe away from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”

3. Divine discipline results from the believer using his own volition to create his own failures:

