

HAMARTIOLOGY (32)

Those without Christ are in a miserable and perilous position. Not only will they experience the temporal and natural negative consequences and penalties for their own sin in this life, but they will forever experience the flames of hell in eternal damnation.

(Penalty #2) - The penalty for sin in the case of a believer includes temporal disasters and the loss of rewards.

When God issues a penalty against a believer in this life, His motive is not destructive, as in the case of the unbeliever; it is corrective (**Hebrews 12:5-13**).

Even though it is possible for a believer to suffer all of the natural consequences of a sin, no believer will ever suffer eternal damnation. **A believer may lose eternal rewards, but he cannot lose eternal salvation!** Even when the believer is in his darkest sin, he is still a child of God who will not ever experience the condemnatory wrath of God (**Romans 8:1; John 3:36**).

There is no doubt that God does give chastising penalties to His people who persist in sin and refuse to take hold of His grace and mercy found through confession. The following list includes some of the penalties God will give to a sinning believer:

1. There will be a loss of fellowship with God. **I John 1:3, 6-7**
2. There will be a loss of joy. **I John 1:4**
3. There will be a loss of fellowship with other believers. **I John 1:7**
4. There will be a loss of a sense of security. **I John 2:5; 5:13**
5. There will be a loss of confidence in prayer. **I John 3:19-22**
6. There will be a loss of confidence at the thought of Christ's return. **I John 2:28**
7. There will be an overwhelming feeling of shame. **I Peter 4:15-16**
8. There may be private, plural, or public rebuke from other believers. **Matthew 18:15-16**
9. There may be public excommunication from the church. **Matthew 18:17; I Corinthians 5:7; Romans 16:17; II Thessalonians 3:14**
The real meaning of Biblical excommunication is a severance of fellowship, not membership.
10. There can be many negative circumstances orchestrated by God. **Hebrews 12:11**
11. There can be a loss of spiritual strength. **I Corinthians 11:30a**
12. There may be a loss of physical health. **I Corinthians 11:30b**
13. There may be a loss of physical life. **I Corinthians 11:30c; I John 5:16**
There are sins that will provoke God to physically execute His own child. When this happens, God has taken the ultimate disciplinary action to insure that this rebellious child can no longer be a reproach to Him.
14. There can be a loss of eternal rewards. **I Corinthians 3:14-15; 9:18, 24-27**
15. There can be a loss of permitted spiritual growth. **Hebrews 5:14 - 6:3; I Corinthians 3:1**

Sin is very serious in the mind of God. For the unbeliever, there is no positive hope. For the believer, there may be many negatives, but there is always hope, for the believer is guaranteed everlasting life.