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Position Paper 2

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The Fall describes the original sin of Adam and Eve eating the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge and causing all generations afterwards to be affected. We were not intended to suffer the way we do but due to that sin we must fight against it. In Eric Johnson's video of Psychopathology, he explains the three points that sin compromises us as believers, turns us into habitual sinners and that suffering is inevitable.

Johnson explains that the original sin compromises our ability to serve God. He states that "Sin is the bible word for disorder in the world" (Johnson, 2018). Sin causes ethical and spiritual problems we face. He believed that sin is the worst thing in psychopathology because "in God's world it's the only thing that is intrinsically opposed to God's glory" (Johnson, 2018). Johnson believes that sin created a hole that we try to fill with worldly things and that when we try to be autonomous outside of God, we disobey Him which causes us to sin more. We rationalize and blame others for our sins. For example, Eve blamed the Serpent and Adam blamed Eve.

A second point that Johnson makes is that "continually participating in sin creates a habit which becomes a vice and then a sinful nature" (Johnson, 2018). The more you do something, the more you get used to it and it becomes second nature. With sins, we may find ourselves hiding, explaining away or combating what we know is wrong. In the text Bird explains, "The cross is something disciples must explore time and time again as they strive to make its meaning and power wash over them afresh" (Bird, 2016). Jesus Christ died on the cross so that our sins could be washed clean. Even though Jesus brought us into the new covenant, as believers we are tasked with repenting and refraining from sin. Bird also explains that "Jesus is the representative of Israel, who dies as a ransom for the iniquities of the nation and returns to life to usher in Israel's restoration from exile ahead of the new creation" (Bird, 2016). As we are our forgiveness for our transgressions, we are able to draw close to Him.

Johnson makes a third point that sin leads to suffering which can incorporate psychological or physical pain. In the text, "Introduction to the Symposium on Evolution, Original Sin, and the Fall", De Cruz & Smedt state, "Prior to the Fall, humans were in an original state of righteousness, which means they were able to refrain from sinning (though they had the potential for doing so). The Fall has far-reaching consequences: not only did it make humans more fragile and fallible, it infected the whole universe, introducing death and decay to the whole of creation" (De Cruz & Smedt, 2021). As Christian counselors we address our clients' psychological pain and may encounter those who question God's love for them. We know that Christ died for our sins and at times are told that God does not desire for us to suffer. However, some may question God when certain traumatic events occur. Johnson gives an example of a woman who was sexually assaulted by her brother for 8 years who prayed continuously for it to stop and questions her faith. In this scenario her father was a pastor and turned a blind eye to the abuse. Johnson asks the question, "Why is there human suffering in the world?" His answer is that human suffering leads back to the Original Sin and that everyone will suffer. The article states that, "no one will be free from suffering" and "The more we sin, the more we suffer" (Johnson, 2018).

Johnson mentions the difference in sin in Proverbs versus Job. He explains that in Proverbs, we suffer due to our sin and in Job, our suffering is not directly tied to our personal sin. Personally I have struggled in my faith when it comes to examples of the young woman who suffered for years who lived as a Christian and cried out to God. I have seen Christians in my personal life who live for God and are on fire for God but have gone through some of the most terrible things. I sometimes question why God would not intervene or allow his children to suffer. I know that Johnson offers up the previous reasons and have heard other reasons in

church, but I've had a hard time accepting it. This leads to Johnson declaring that sin is created by humans, not God and that we are to repent. MacArthur and Mack state that "More Christians than ever before are lining up at the doors of clinics and professional counselors. (MacArthur & Mack, 2017). Believers who are questioning their faith and trauma are looking to professionals to help them incorporate their Christianity into their counseling and find answers to their pain. However, there's hope, especially in MacFarland's declaration that "God's capacity not merely to call life into being where life is absent, but to upload life even where it has been rejected" (MacFarland, 2010). We are meant to serve Him and repent from our ways. Although we are all affected by the Fall, we are redeemed through Christ who made the ultimate sacrifice.

## References

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