What roles do sin and conversion play in Christian living?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SIN</th>
<th>CONVERSION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is sin?</td>
<td>What is conversion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposite of sin?</td>
<td>- elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal vs. social sin?</td>
<td>- relation to 3 Cs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Interlocking Paths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- repentance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- discipleship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- prophecy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Is Sin?

Scripture offers many different images of sin.

- Intentional violation of God’s law (covenant) - rebellion against God’s reign \{pesha\}
- Idolatry - treating the finite as ultimate
- Lack of right relationship; wickedness \{awon\}
- Hardness of heart
- Hamartia - missing the mark/target
Sin is a state of being alienated from God.

Sin refers to an injury or breach in our integral relationships: it creates a chasm between:

- God
- Neighbour
- Authentic Self
- Self
God

Sin involves saying no to goodness and, ultimately, to God. Ex. *Ungrateful servant/debtor* Matthew 18:23-35

Neighbour

If you do not love your neighbour whom you have seen, how can you love God whom you have not seen? *1 John* 4:20

Authentic Self

Authenticity requires integrity. Integrity holds the various part of the self together & sin “disintegrates” or distorts the self.
Personal vs. Social Sin

• Personal Sin
  • Primary agent = individual
  • Personal = the most immediate sphere of individual freedom

• Social Sin
  • Primary agent = community as a whole
  • Structures of Sin = established patterns of communal interaction
    § E.g. prostitution of children in Asia
    § E.g. sweat shops
ULTIMATELY THE TWO REINFORCE EACH OTHER

Individual Sin

Structural Sin

Individual exercise of freedom is shaped by social structures.

Social structures are shaped by individual actions.
**Sin vs. Sins**

**Sins** = particular actions which orient human freedom away from God

**Sin** = an overall orientation away from God
3 LEVELS OF SIN

Acts
words/thoughts

Dispositions
Lasting tendencies to action/being

Character
orientation of identity away from God
Conversion = the opposite of Sin

Healing wounds in relationships through forgiveness & mercy.

The process of healing is called conversion or *metanoia*—turning away from sin and towards God (radical, root change of heart; John the Baptist)
Conversion =

- Change of the whole person
  - Heart
  - Mind
  - Soul

- The transformation of character that flows from right relationship

- The central message of Jesus is the reign of God--
- The reign of God is the fruit of conversion--
Three Interlocking Paths of Conversion

• Repentance
• Discipleship
• Prophecy
Repentance

• To feel a sorrow for sin that moves one to change

• Turn away from sin and towards God’s life and love

• Falling out of love with evil and falling in love with God
Discipleship

“Come follow me.”

Leave all other securities behind and follow Jesus

A journey to a strange and unknown future; an adventure with risks

“Seek the kingdom first and all else will follow.”
Prophecy

- “Private conversion is really no conversion.” (Conn, p.235)
- True conversion is both personal and social.

- See and speak the truth, unmask injustice
- Stand with the oppressed in struggle for justice
- Work for real social change
Summary: Major Elements of Conversion

1) Character Transformation - identification with the Christian story
2) Divine Agency - initiated, directed, and sustained by God
3) Human Agency - free response to God’s invitation
4) Ongoing - lifelong process of sanctification;
   2 steps forward, 1 step back
   “born again” Christian
5) Personal & Social (e.g. South Africa, Northern Ireland)
Conversion as a Dance with God

Learning to dance with God involves growing into rhythm with God.