

Making the Connection Between Sin and Pain

Sometimes when I sin my body has a physical reaction. Are you aware if this happens to you? Have you connected these dots?

In the past my lower back has become severely tight with pain after I've sinned or if I am in intentional sin. Let's look at Psalm 38:7 (NLT):

"My back is filled with searing pain; there is no health in my body."

Today in my time with God, I read this verse as part of a devotional I was reading. The verse reminded me of times in the past where this back pain that David mentions has occurred for me. This verse is an excellent example of the spirit-mind-body connection. God, in His great wisdom, wired us in a marvelous way (Ps. 139:14)

Our physical pain or discomfort can be a way that God gets our attention and lets us know that He knows we've sinned. I imagine this is what David experienced, as he recounts in Psalm 38.

Sin and Pain—the Connection

Our nervous system and our neural pathways associated with sin and our body can become stronger and stronger over time. I imagine that we each might have parts of our body that feel the pain of our sin. For me, it's my lower back. For you maybe it's the tension in your forehead. Or, perhaps it's in your stomach. Or it may be in your jaw. Or someplace else.

The first time I became aware of this connection was long ago. I was in a relationship with a woman and aspects of our behaviors were not honoring to God or our bodies, His temple.

Over the course of many weeks my back held a lot of tension. I was working in a hospital at the time and had access to many resources. I visited with a physical therapist who worked on me to no avail. I had a deep tissue massage and that did not help measurably. I believe that another reason why I was in physical pain is that I was in conflict with myself spiritually. I knew I was living in sin but continued. When I broke off the relationship, the pain went away within a few days.

I share this with you to help you become aware of this connection between sin and physical pain. Psalm 38:7 really speaks to me. It may not be your back that's in pain due to sin in your life that's intentional. Maybe it's another part of your body. Or, maybe there is no pain physically.

I'm not suggesting that when a person has physical pain, sin is always involved. I do not believe that. Sin and pain do not always go hand and hand. But it can be the case that one's pain is connected to sin in their life. It happened to David as he writes about in the Psalm. It happened to me. Anytime we are sick or have pain, it's an opportunity to call out to God and ask Him to show you if there is any sin in your life.

Further in this Psalm David writes, "For I will declare my iniquity; I am anxious because of my sin ... Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation" (Ps. 38:18, 22, MEV).

The best thing we can do to be free from guilt and perhaps the physical pain associated with sin is to confess our sin to our Savior. {eo}

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