

The Truth Behind Sin

The world has adopted a false standard of moral ambiguity. Because of this many have a lighthearted view of sin. Bluntly put, many dress up sin as something harmless or cute, they put it into categories of major and minor, and so long as you have not committed adultery or killed anyone you're okay.

That is man's understanding and not the truth of the matter. The truth is that sin is a matter of grave importance. God spoke concerning sin through Isaiah in **Isaiah 59:2** "*But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.*"

What Sin Is:

Sin is any breaking of God's law or natural law. Or in other words sin is to be in rebellion against God. This is because God is holy and sin is the exact opposite of what God is. John explains it like this in **1 John 3:4** that "*Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.*" John further explains that it is not just anyone that lives a lifestyle of sin that is in sin but anyone who has any unrighteousness is in sin. In chapter **5:17** John tells us that "*All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not leading to death.*"

Sin is not the consequence of anyone's ancestor, anyone's family, or anyone's culture. Sin starts within the heart and is the sole responsibility of the individual. Jesus said in **Matthew 15:18-20** that "*the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders. These are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man.*" Sin has to start somewhere and Jesus tells us that it starts from within us. This is why Jesus says in the sermon on the mount that simply not doing the action is not enough. It is not good enough not to commit murder or adultery but we are to remove the hate and lust from within us. James tells us in **James 1:14-15** that "*each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.*"

Sin also is not limited to just breaking God's law directly. One also sins when we know the right thing to do and do not do it. These are what we call sins of omission. We omitted something that we were suppose to do. James put it plainly in **James 4:17** "*Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.*"

When we violated God's law it is called sin. But sin is more than just the violation of God's law and unlike human law has long lasting consequences.

What Sin Does to You:

Sin has long lasting effects on you and everyone around you. Yes, the immediate consequence is that it removes you from God but its effects do not stop at the chasm. Sin will always lie to you and it does so very effectively. **Hebrews 3:13** admonishes us to "*encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.*" It promises you the world and gives us destruction. It comes to you as a friend and leaves as your worst critic. Look over in **Genesis 3:4-6** and pay attention to the before and the after. "*The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! 5 For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.*" Satan promised enlightenment and reward if they just ate from the tree, if they would just sin. And we are well aware of what happened afterward. Adam and Eve were banished from the garden and it is interesting to note that Satan was nowhere to be found.

Sin also weighs you down. Paul in warning Timothy about the dangers of false teachers makes a statement in **2 Timothy 3:6**. Paul says here "*For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins...*" This passage makes it clear that sin has a weight to it. A weight that will only slow us down and make life ever more difficult. This is why the Hebrews writer in **Hebrews 12:1** says that we need to "*lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,*"

In the process of sin weighing you down and getting you all tangled up within it, sin is putting you deeper into the shackles of bondage. Into slavery. We as Americans love our freedom and we make sure the world knows it. But a vast majority of this country is enslaved. Note the words of Jesus in **John 8:34**, “*Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.” (John 8:34)* I cannot make it any more plain. All who transgress God’s law have sold themselves into slavery. They have presented themselves as an offering for sin. “*Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?” (Romans 6:16)*

The Solution to Sin:

Nothing of our own doing will be able to save us from sin. Not our goodness or any amount of good deeds can free us from its shackles. “*For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.” (Isaiah 64:6)*

It took Jesus being offered up as sacrifice to atone for our sins. “*For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Hebrews 9:13-14)* It took God’s son, who knew no sin, to give Himself on our behalf that we might be reconciled to God. To free us from sin!

In order to come into contact with His redeeming blood we must submit ourselves to His gospel, to His yoke, to His mercy. On the day of pentecost when the gospel had been preached in its entirety the crowd ask “Men and brethren what shall we do?” Do for what? To be free from sin. “*Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38)* “*Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.” (Acts 22:16)*

