

“The Lord has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God.”

Psalms 14:2

Have you ever chosen a puppy from a litter? Or rescued a dog from the pound? Inevitably, many are sniffing, eating, sleeping, roughhousing or totally focused on the surroundings. They are oblivious to you. If they knew the wonderful life that they would receive by being your loyal follower, they would immediately beg for your attention the moment you stepped into their environment. But they don't...at least not all of them. You look and look.

Then, there's THE ONE. He looks right at you. His tail tentatively wags. You smile. He wags harder. You move ever so slightly. He senses it and jumps wholeheartedly into your reaching arms. And whole-body wiggling begins. And you KNOW. He is yours and you are his-- for life. So it is with God. For God brings unto himself those who seek Him, not those whose search is in the world.

Many people do not know what sin is. Some people think that it is just something church people talk about so they can prevent other people from having fun. Others think that sin only occurs when doing big things, like killing someone or stealing from others. Many feel that; **“If I am not hurting anyone, then anything I do is all right.”** There are still others who do not believe in the concept of sin. For them, sin does not exist. Lastly, some rationalize sin in order to justify doing something they want or to get something that

is illegal (perhaps not in the eyes of man), but in the eyes of God.

Of course, there are people that know that certain things are wrong, but they perform these acts anyway and simply excuse them by allowing their own desires and plans to supercede any guilt they would bring. Many people learn to separate sin from their concept of character. For example, sinners view themselves as good people, they consider themselves good citizens, good employees, accomplished and individuals of high esteem,

never caring about consequences. Nor do they see character faults in themselves. **They simply do not understand that sin is against God.**

The reason people sin is to fulfill selfish desires, to be in control of their own lives and to pursue happiness. R. C. Sproul states in **Knowing Scripture**, *“What happens in your own life when you act according to what you feel like doing rather than what you know and understand God says you should do? Here we encounter the ruthless reality of the difference between happiness and pleasure. How easy it is to confuse the two! The pursuit of happiness is regarded as our ‘unalienable right’. Both of them feel good, but only one*

endures. Sin can bring pleasure, but never happiness. If sin were not so pleasurable, it would hardly represent a temptation.”

Karl Barth, a famous Swiss theologian, once wrote that all human sin finds its roots in three basic human problems:

- (a) The sin of **pride**
- (b) The sin of **dishonesty**
- (c) The sin of **slothfulness** (laziness)

Take a moment and reflect on your own life. List an example of how each of the above problems (pride, dishonesty, slothfulness) generated sin in your life.

(a) Pride

(b) Dishonesty

(c) Slothfulness

1. Let’s get a better idea of sin as it is taught in the Bible by reviewing the following scriptures: Read Psalm 14 and record your thoughts. The theme of this Psalm is **‘Sinners All’**.



- 1.1. Psalm 14:1-3 **Universal godlessness** – *“The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; There is no one who does good. /The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men To see if there are any who understand, Who seek after God. /They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; There is no one who does good, not even one.”*
- 1.2. Psalm 14:4-6 **Astonishment at the lack of moral understanding.** – *“Do all the workers of wickedness not know, Who eat up my people as they eat bread, And do not call upon the Lord?/ There they are in great dread, For God is with the righteous generation./ You would put to shame the counsel of the afflicted, But the LORD is his refuge”.*
- 1.3. Psalm 14:7 – **Looks forward to the joyful restoration of God’s people.** – *“Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion! When the LORD restores His captive people, Jacob will rejoice, Israel will be glad.”*
- 1.4. Read Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is more deceitful than all else...

- 1.5. Read Mark 7:21-23 *“For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come”*

2. In the second edition of The New Bible Dictionary (p.1117) sin is defined as; **“The most characteristic feature of sin in all its aspects is that it is directed against God”** (Ps. 51:4; Rom 8:7). Any conception of sin which does not have in the forefront the contradiction which it offers to God is a deviation from the biblical representation. The common notion that sin is selfishness betrays a false assessment of its nature and gravity. Essentially, sin is directed against God, and this perspective alone account for the diversity of its form and activities. It is a violation of that which God’s glory demands and is, therefore, in its essence the contradiction of God.” If you do not believe in God or if you believe that God did not have a direct hand in creation, then the concept of sin becomes insignificant.

Write down your thoughts about a world without God in relation to sin.

3. **Many words were used to express sin in the Old and New Testaments.** The following scriptures will give you a better understanding of sin. Read these verses from your Bible in context.

3.1. **Chattath**, a common OT term meaning missing the mark. (Exodus 32:7; Lamentations 5:7) 32:7 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, *“Go down at once, for your people, whom you brought up from the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves.”* 5: 7 Our fathers sinned, and are no more; It is we who have borne their iniquities.”

3.2. **Pesha**, the sense of active rebellion, trespass or transgression of God’s will. (Proverbs 28:13) *He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion*

3.3. **Shagah**, expresses the thought of going astray. (Leviticus 4:13) *“Now if the whole congregation of Israel commits error and the matter escapes the notice of the assembly, and they commit any of the things which the LORD has commanded not to be done, and they become guilty;”*

3.4. **Awon**, this word means to twist and refers to the guilt of sin. (1 Kings 17:18). So she said to Elijah, *“What do I have to do with you, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my iniquity to remembrance and to put my son to death!”*

3.5. **Hamartia**, the major word for sin in the NT. It also means missing the mark but it also covers the thoughts of failure, fault and concrete wrong doing. (Matthew

1:21) *“She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”* _____

3.6. **Adikia**, means unrighteous or injustice. (1 Corinthians 6:8). *On the contrary, you yourselves wrong and defraud. You do this even to your brethren.* _____

3.7. **Parabasis** means that there has been a breach of the law. (Romans 4:15). *For the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation.*

3.8. **Asebeia**, means that that there is a strong sense of godlessness (Titus 2:12). *Instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,* _____

3.9. **Ptaio**, means that one stumbles morally. (James 2:10). *For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.* _____

4. **The Law.** (*The Ten Commandments*) Read Exodus 20:1-17 - *“Then God spoke all these words, saying, ‘I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.*

(1) *You shall have no other gods before Me.*

(2) *You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.*

You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing loving kindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

(3) *You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.*

(4) *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.*

Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your

daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

- (5) *Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.*
- (6) *You shall not murder.*
- (7) *You shall not commit adultery.*
- (8) *You shall not steal.*
- (9) *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*
- (10) *You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor."*

5. **The Origin of Sin.** Before Adam and Eve sinned, sin was present do to the disobedience of some of the angels. See Rev. 12:4:f. The Bible does not deal directly with the origin of evil in the spiritual world, being concerned rather with sin and its origin in human life.

5.1. Genesis 3:1f The serpent deceiving Adam and Eve. _____

5.2. 2 Peter 2:4 *"For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment;"*

5.3. 1 John 3:8 *"The one who practices sin is of the devil."* _____

5.4. Jude 6 – *"And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day,"*

6. **Adam and Eve were tempted to sin.** Was Jesus also subjected to temptation?



6.1. Matthew 4:3

6.2. Hebrews 2:17-18; 5:7-9 *“Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people./ For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted. Hebrews 5:7 “ In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety./ Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered./ And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation.”,*

7. **The ultimate origin of evil is a mystery.**

One of the most difficult questions that Christians have posed to them concerns the problem of evil and human suffering. People frequently ask, if God is all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-good, why is there evil and human suffering in the world?

According to the Bible, the evil we encounter in this world is the direct result of choice on the part of free moral agents. Because God desired to create a world where genuine love was expressed, he gave his creatures (both angels and mankind) free will. Because genuine love can never be coerced, it was necessary that God’s creatures have freedom. Mankind therefore had the choice either to obey God’s loving commands or to rebel against them. Genesis chapter three records in detail how the first man and woman used their freedom to rebel against God. This rebellion, which followed an earlier such rebellion on the part of the angels, is the true origin of evil. Evil and suffering are therefore the result of choice on the part of God’s creatures.

Atheists frequently marshal the argument that the presence of evil in the world proves the nonexistence of God. But this argument is self-defeating because the atheist has no reliable standard upon which to judge what is good or evil. The atheist also has no guarantee that evil will ever be overcome.

The Christian, however has such a guarantee. Not only does the Bible teach that the responsibility for evil rests with angels and men, but it also affirms that God is actively combating evil through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christ's first coming has provided a way for rebellious mankind to be reconciled to God. At Christ's glorious second coming He will do away with evil forever. We rejoice with the Apostle John when he said "there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain" (Rev. 21:4). God's sovereignty has conquered evil. While the origin of evil rests with us, the solution is found in God. (This quote is from CRI Perspective CP0101, www.equip.org)

7.1 Thessalonians 2:7 _____

8. Consequences of sin.

8.1. Man/Woman were made to have fellowship with God. After they disobeyed, and experienced spiritual death, their attitude toward God changed. They now dreaded an encounter with Him.

8.1.1. Before sinning Adam and Eve were naked and not ashamed. Genesis 2:25; after sinning what happened? 3:7-10 _____

8.1.2. John 3:20 - *"For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed."*

8.2. Sin is one sided, men/women sin against God, not God against men or women or any part of His creation. However, the consequences are not one sided. Sin elicits God's wrath and displeasure. God cannot be complacent toward sin. After Adam and Eve left the garden, their descendants began to perform many different types of sins.

8.2.1. Genesis 4:8 Cain killed his brother Abel. _____

8.2.2. Genesis 6:7 God was sorry he made man. _____

8.3. The effects of the first sin extend to the entire universe. For example, God cursed the ground and made it difficult and challenging for men/women to work.

8.3.1. Genesis 3:17 God cursed the ground. _____

8.3.2. Romans 8:20 *“For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope”* _____

9. **Forgiveness of sin.** Now that we have a better idea of what sin is and that sin puts us in direct conflict with God, we recognize the importance of asking for forgiveness for our sins. In other words we must repent. We devote an entire lesson to repentance (Lesson 9) but for now, it is important to recognize that repentance goes much further than saying “I’m sorry.” The Greek word metanoia, is the word from which we get the word repentance. It means that we will turn from our sinful ways and turn toward God. It requires a complete change of mind...not a casual “I’m sorry” or “Pardon me”, but a decision made by each of us to change our ways.

9.1. Think of a sin that seems to reoccur in your life. In the privacy of your own room, ask God to forgive you of this sin and make a commitment that you will turn from this sin with great effort.

9.2. Proverbs 28:4-5. Do you forsake the Law? Do you seek the Lord? _____



9.3. An unsaved person must recognize his sinfulness and have a genuine desire to turn to Jesus, believing that His death on the cross paid for his/her sin debt. Accepting Jesus as your Lord and Savior is a definite act of your will. It is a free gift from Jesus to you. But you must accept this gift. Have you ever made that decision? _____

9.4. If you have not, then you can pray in faith now and receive this wonderful gift of eternal life. Read the following prayer and then in your own words and from your heart, pray to receive Jesus.

9.4.1. Dear Lord Jesus, I recognize that I am a sinner and need your forgiveness. I believe that you died on the cross for my sins. I believe that you rose again. I believe that you are alive. Right now I receive You as my personal Lord and Savior and accept your free gift of eternal life. Amen.

10. **Eternal life and eternal security.** One of the first questions you may have after receiving this wonderful gift is; **“Will God ever take away my gift of salvation?”** Sin is very seductive. After we repent, being as sincere as our hearts will allow, we sometimes repeat a sin. Under those circumstances what happens with my relationship with Jesus/ God?

10.1. Do you have eternal life? 1 John 5:11-13 _____

10.2. Can anything separate you from Christ? Romans 8:38-39 - *“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, / nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

10.3. Can anyone snatch you out of God's hand? John 10:27-29 _____

10.4. If you are in Christ and Christ is in heaven, where are you? Ephesians 2:4-6
"But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

10.5. Have you been sealed by the Holy Spirit? Ephesians 1:13, 2 Corinthians 1:21-22

10.6. Can you lose your salvation? _____

11. **As a Christian you will have the desire to obey God.** John the Baptist was the last prophet and was sent by God to prepare the way for Jesus. Indeed, John and Jesus were related (cousins). John was only 6 months older than Jesus. In Luke 3: 21-22 it states, *"Now it came about when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also was baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased."* Though baptism is not a requirement of salvation, it is a picture of what has happen to you spiritually (Romans 6:4; 1Cor. 12:13) and can be a first step of a life long walk of obedience.

11.1. Acts 2:41 Those who had received his word were baptized. _____

11.2. Acts 9:17-18 *"So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he got up and was baptized"*

11.3. Acts 16:30-33. The jailer – They spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. They were baptized. _____

11.4. Matthew 28:19-20 - *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,/ teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

During the week read/sing the following song as a reminder of this lesson.

One Drop of Blood - Ray Boltz

Standing in the Courtroom, when I heard how do you plead, the accuser of the brethren was staring at me. He said we've got your number, there is no escape, for here are your transgressions, your failures and mistakes.

He pointed to the corner where the scales of justice stood, I saw so many failures there, there was nothing good, and in that very moment when it seemed all hope was lost, I said I plead the Blood of Jesus, His death upon the cross.

One drop of blood, fell to the scales, it covered my transgressions and all the time I'd failed.

The enemy was mighty, he came in like a flood, he was defeated by One Drop of Blood.