

LESSON THREE

SIN

A. WHAT IS SIN?

Scriptural References:

"Sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4).

"All unrighteousness is sin" (I John 5:17).

"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23).

"...Knoweth to do good, and doeth it not to him it is sin" (James 4:17).

"Of sin, because they believe not on me" (John 16:9).

"An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin" (Proverbs 21:4).

"The thought of foolishness is sin" (Proverbs 24:9).

In these Scriptures we have sin defined. The modern tendency is to look upon sin very lightly. The majority of people take an attitude of complacency towards sin and look upon it as the accepted thing. To them sin is just ignorance or a complex in the character, which some psychiatric counseling can correct. However, such is not the case. Sin is deep seated, embedded in the very heart of man's fallen nature.

Looking back to the beginning of sin in the fall of Satan and then later in the fall of our first parents, it is possible to summarize in a threefold manner:

1. Pride - This is undoubtedly the original sin as Satan exalted himself and reached for deification (Isaiah 14:12-15).
2. Unbelief - This sin had to be planted in Eve's heart before she could be deceived in the transgression (Genesis 3:6).
3. Disobedience - This was the act of disobedience, which followed as the natural result of the other two (Genesis 3:6).

Many Hebrew words were used in the Old Testament to express the thought of sin. Some of the concepts of sin are expressed by the list of words following: a missing; a failing; wickedness; confusion; iniquity; perversion; guilt; transgression; rebellion; vanity; lying; deceit; evil; and error.

The main New Testament Greek words for sin express the following concepts: depravity; desire; lust; disobedience; lawlessness; and unrighteousness missing the mark.

Schofield summarizes sin in another threefold manner:

1. An Act - the violation of or want of obedience to the revealed will of God.
2. A Nature - enmity toward God.

3. A State - absence of righteousness.

In attempting to define sin we can only arrive at a partial understanding of its true nature. The exceeding blackness and the terrible horribleness of sin can never be fully grasped by our finite minds and limited understandings.

B. GOD HATES SIN.

The fact that God is love and that God is light demands that He hates sin. It is impossible for God to love the soul of the sinner without at the same time hating sin. The absolute pure and spotless nature of God revolts at the sight of sin.

God hates sin. Every true child of God should share in this hatred for that which is wrong. The moment that we can smile upon iniquity we are far from God. May the Lord help us to see sin as exceedingly sinful to look upon it as He looks upon it. May we ever see it as that which nailed Him to the tree. Willful known sin will separate man from God, hinder his prayers from being answered, and finally will mean eternal death. No sin will enter heaven. It must be confessed, forgiven, and remitted.

C. CAN SIN BE HIDDEN?

Scriptural Reference:

"Thou God seest me" (Genesis 16:13).

"Be sure your sins will find you out" (Numbers 32:23).

"Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7).

Sin will always be exposed for the one simple reason that sin is against God and He sees not only the outward act, but also the inward thought and desire. It is impossible to sin and get by.

D. WHO ARE SINNERS?

Scriptural References:

"But the scripture hath concluded all under sin" (Galatians 3:22).

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no not one: There is none that understandeth...all the world become guilty before God..." (Romans 3:10-23).

"And so death passed upon all man, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12).

Every man is a sinner and needs to be saved. If one individual could have made himself righteous by the deeds of the law and his own good works, then every man could also become righteous. Since this could not be, it was necessary for Jesus Christ to provide salvation for man.

E. CAN SIN BE LISTED OR NAMED?

Sin may only be listed in a partial manner for sin is actually a condition of the heart. The list of sins is too great to ever be listed completely. However, we may begin:

1. **WORKS OF THE FLESH** (Galatians 5:19).
Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.
2. **WORLDLINESS**.
Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, pride of life, love of money, love of pleasure, etc.
3. **CARNALITY**.
Pride, malice, envy, selfishness, backbiting, gossiping.
4. **SINS OF OMISSION**.
Lack of prayer, church attendance, witnessing, etc.
5. **PRESUMPTION** (Psalm 19:13).

And so the list continues to grow without any apparent end in sight.

F. THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN.

1. **SEPARATION FROM GOD.**

Scriptural References:

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psalm 66:18).

"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2).

This separation broke the fellowship between God and man and created a gulf that the grace of God had to span in order to redeem sinful man.

2. **DEATH, PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL.**

Scriptural References:

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12).

"For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

All sin is fundamentally an attitude and an act of rebellion against God. It is a challenge to the supremacy and Lordship of Almighty God. This is expressed by the question that Joseph asked while under temptation. "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9).

God would cease to be Lord if He could tolerate, condone, and accept sin. This explains why the law of God is that the soul that sinneth shall surely die. Everywhere at all times the consequences of sin is death.

LESSON THREE

SELF HELP TEST

A. Why does God hate sin?

B. Why must all sin be judged?

C. Quote one Scripture with reference to prove that sin cannot be hidden.

D. Name TWO main consequences of sin:

1. _____

2. _____