

of accountability. At this point, we have all committed sin (Romans 3:23), except for Jesus Christ (Hebrews 4:15)!

Physical consequences. All the horrible things about this world have direct ties to sin. Certainly, this is not the way God originally designed the world. Consider some physical consequences of sin: Premature death, jail time, diseases, health problems, losing your job, breaking trust, ruining your reputation, destroying relationships, hurting people, etc.

Spiritual consequences. The physical consequences of sin pale in comparison to the spiritual consequences! For, sin results in spiritual death (Romans 6:23; James 1:15). Death simply refers to a separation. Physical death is a separation between body and spirit (James 2:26). Spiritual death is a separation between the sinner and God (Isaiah 59:1-2). This is how the Bible speaks of being dead while alive spiritually (1 Timothy 5:6). Then, if you die physically while you are in sin, you will experience eternal spiritual death (eternal separation from God in Hell, Revelation 21:8; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9; Matthew 25:41, 46; Mark 9:47-48).

The Problem Of Sin

We deserve spiritual death since we have chosen to violate God's law. God doesn't leave us. Rather, we leave God whenever we sin! We leave His ways of holiness and righteousness to fulfill our own selfish ambitions and desires, demonstrating we would rather fulfill our own fleshly desires than be in fellowship with Him and receive His blessings. Romans 6:23 describes the punishment of spiritual death as being our wages (what we earn) for sinning against God. And, every sin is equally deserving of this punishment (no matter how *big* or *small* it may seem to us, Romans 1:28-32)!

We can do nothing to justify ourselves. When you understand the devastating spiritual consequences of sin, you should desire to be justified (made just-as-if-I'd never sinned). However, there is nothing you can do to remove the consequences of your past sins by yourself (even if you never sinned again and did every good thing God wants you to do). You would be hopelessly lost and headed for eternal punishment in Hell – if you had nothing else to provide you with hope. Thankfully, God has provided a Savior so you do not have to be hopelessly lost in sin. His name is Jesus!

Conclusion

Sin is a devastating problem for mankind. It is far greater than any other problem we could ever face! This problem deals with the soul and will condemn us to eternal punishment in Hell unless we can be saved.

Answers To Life's Most Essential Questions



Perhaps you have heard about sin. But, maybe you do not fully understand what sin is. Where did sin come from? What makes something a "sin"? And, why is sin so bad? In fact, of all the diseases and illnesses that have plagued people throughout history (i.e. leprosy, cancer, smallpox, tuberculosis, diabetes, dementia, etc.), there is nothing that has been as widespread or deadly as sin! Therefore, you must make two determinations about sin: To stay away from sin in the future and to seek forgiveness of your past sins.

The purpose of this lesson is to learn some basics about sin, some examples of sin, and why sin is so dangerous.

The Introduction Of Sin To The World

God did not create mankind in sin. God created the world (Genesis 1:1). Then, He created people in His image (Genesis 1:26-27). After this, He declared that everything was very good (Genesis 1:31). But, how could a holy God create people in sin and then declare His creation to be very good? He could not – and He did not! In fact, Genesis 2 shows God created a true paradise on earth and did not create evil. Rather, mankind was sinless.

God gave mankind a law. God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:16-17). The law and its consequence (death) were not too difficult for them to understand. But, they both had free will to either obey God or disobey God.

Satan tempted Eve. Satan enters the Bible story (in the form of a serpent) and tempts Eve in Genesis 3:1-5. Of course, Satan lied about what would happen if they ate from the tree. Then, he made it look appealing by saying their eyes would be opened and they would become like God in knowing good and evil. This made it sound like God was trying to keep something away from Adam and Eve that was beneficial to them rather than something that was harmful. Eve responded by giving in to the temptation and satisfying her own desires (thereby disobeying God, Genesis 3:6). She also gave some of the fruit to her husband, who also ate.

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They suffered the consequences for sinning against God. Since God cannot lie (Titus 1:2), God meant what He said and said what He meant! Genesis 3:14-24 records the punishments God gave to Adam and Eve. These included labor pains in childbirth, painful labor in working the ground, being driven out of the garden, and being separated from the tree of life (which would result in physical death). So, this earth would no longer be a blissful paradise that was free from evil, suffering and death (Genesis 5:5). But, more than physical consequences, Adam and Eve experienced a change in their relationship with the holy God. This separation from God (spiritual death) occurred the day they ate the forbidden fruit and was the worst consequence of all! Therefore, sin entered the world through Adam and Eve and has continued ever since. And, there is much we can learn from this. Furthermore, we continue to experience evil, suffering, and death in this world because of sin.

Understanding Sin

Definition of sin. The Greek word for “sin” is an archery term. Whenever an archer would miss the target with the arrow, the arrow would be said to have “sinned.” So, sin is missing the mark God has set for how we should live in the New Testament scriptures. Remember that God is perfectly holy, and we must be holy to be in fellowship with Him (1 Peter 1:15-16; 1 John 1:5-7). So, missing the mark is extremely consequential!

Sin is lawlessness. The Bible defines sin as “lawlessness” (1 John 3:4). To be “lawless” is to act against the law, as if there is no law to govern that area of your life (i.e. like it is lawless to exceed a speed limit). So, sin results when you act like God has not given you a law to live by. For example, Adam and Eve acted as if God had not given them a law when they ate of the forbidden fruit. So, when an individual commits murder, he/she sins because God has given a law to forbid such. When an individual has sexual relations with someone other than his/her spouse, he/she sins because it breaks God’s law regulating sexual relations. When an individual hates his/her enemy, he/she sins because God has given a command to love one’s enemy. Therefore, everything outside of God’s standard of right is sin (1 John 5:17; James 4:17).

Two categories of sin. God has given two kinds of laws. He has told us things He does *not* want us to do and some things He *does* want us to do. We can sin regarding each, and they are equally devastating. Sins of “commission” occur whenever we do what God has said we must not do. This includes having unlawful sexual relations, lying, stealing, coveting, gossiping, using profanity, etc. Then, sins of “omission” occur whenever we fail to do what God has said we must do. This includes failing to teach the gospel, failing to do good to those we have opportunity to help, failing to pray for our enemies, failing to love our spouses or children, etc.

Examples of sin. There is no single passage in the Bible that lists every sin that can be committed. But, there are some non-exhaustive lists (particularly with sins of commission) that should be considered seriously (Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Romans 1:28-32). Consider each word in these lists carefully to understand what is taught. Then, continue learning more about God’s law so you can be sure you avoid sin!

How sin works. Satan works to lure people into sin. For example, Adam and Eve appeared to have no interest in violating God’s law concerning the tree of knowledge of good and evil until Satan told them some things that were not true and made the tree look good. The Bible continues to warn us about Satan’s work today (1 Peter 5:8). Although Satan will not literally stand in front of you or whisper in your ear, he works in many ways throughout this world. In everything, he should be viewed as your enemy who wants to destroy you spiritually – tempting you to fulfill your physical desires rather than obey God’s laws.

James 1:14-15 gives the picture of how temptation relates to sin. Temptation occurs whenever the physical part of your person is drawn away from what is right and enticed by the desire to do something that goes against God’s laws (just as Satan did with Eve). But, just being enticed is not sin. Temptation is like a fisherman’s lure – luring the fish away from what is safe and enticing it so it will act on its desires and bit the hook. If temptation is answered correctly, there is no sin. For, Satan can only tempt you; he cannot make you sin! If Eve had refused to disobey God, she would not have sinned. And, if you resist the devil’s temptation by refocusing yourself on God’s law and choose to obey God rather than fulfill your own desires, you will not sin. However, when you allow your desire to conceive, sin is the result. Whenever Eve chose to please her own physical desires rather than obey God, she sinned. And, when you choose to please yourself rather than obey God, you sin.

Sin’s Devastating Effects

All people continue to sin. Sin did not stop with Adam and Eve. You can read about people sinning throughout the Old and New Testaments. And, people continue sinning today, as Satan continues luring people away from God (1 Peter 5:8). In fact, we are all fighting a war for our souls between living to please our fleshly desires and our souls. Satan wants us to please ourselves so we will be destroyed, while God wants us to listen to Him so we can be saved. Sadly, Romans 3:23 teaches that we have all been guilty of sinning against God. Not a single person has reached a point of spiritual accountability and has not sinned.

That said, we do *not* inherit our sin from Adam or our parents. Although many religious organizations teach this as part of their beliefs, this is *not* Bible doctrine (Ezekiel 18:20; Matthew 18:1-4; Romans 5:12)! Each person is responsible for his/her own sin. We are born sinless. Then, we reach a point