

# Sin

*Any attitude, thought or action that stands against the will of God is called sin in the Bible, and arises when we follow our own desires rather than doing what God wants. At its most basic level, sin results when we choose to be our own god, deciding for ourselves what is right and wrong/good and evil. Sin has numerous serious consequences: it prevents us from fully living out our God-given purpose to be His image bearers, causes shame and guilt, gets in the way of us having a relationship with Him, affects our relationships with other people, and also introduced death into God's good creation. The only way to reverse all these negative consequences is to be aware of our sin, take responsibility for it and have it dealt with by God in His way.*

## **What is sin and how does it affect God?**

### **Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-6**

- What was at the core of the sin of Adam and Eve? (*Clue: Whose will/desire did they follow?*).
- Which voice/s do you typically listen to when faced with a choice to do your will or God's will?

### **Genesis 6:5-6**

- Think of the worst thing someone ever did to you - How did it make you feel?
- God sees our sin and it affects him deeply. Why do you think sin troubles God so much?

## **What are the consequences of sin?**

### **Genesis 1:27; 5:3**

- What does it mean to be created in the image of God? After the Fall, in whose image are we born?

### **Genesis 3:22-24; Isaiah 59:1-2**

- How does sin that has not been dealt with, affect our relationship with God?
- Why can't God be in the presence of sin?
- Can anyone remove the wall of sin that separates them from God through any effort of their own?

### **Genesis 4:1-8**

- What did sin introduce into the relationships between people?
- Can you think of a few examples of how sin has damaged your relationship with other people?

### **Romans 6:23**

- What is the payment for sin?
- What gift does God offer that is the opposite of separation from Him and death?

## **What are some examples of sin?**

### **Galatians 5:17-25**

- What is the relationship between the desires of the flesh (sin) and living a Spirit-led life?
- Which of the sins listed in vs 19-21 can you relate to as ones you have struggled with a lot?
- What is the result if we continue in our sinful desires? (vs 21)

### **James 4:17**

- We also sin when we don't do the good which we know we should do. What are examples of such sins?

## **How does sin arise?**

### **Mark 7:20-23**

- Where does our sin come from?
- Why is it important for us to take responsibility for our sin instead of blaming others or some Satanic force?

### **James 1:13-15**

- According to this passage, where does sin start?
- What are the stages in the development of sin? Where does it ultimately end?

## **Why should we confess sin?**

### **1 John 1:8-10**

- How can you know if you are in the light? *If you are honest and open, and don't hide your sin.*
- How does God respond when those who live in the light confess their sins to Him?

### **James 5:13-16**

- How do you think confessing sin to one another brings healing? *Speaking about our sin helps remove guilt, enables getting help from other disciples, accountability, etc.*
- What is the role of prayer? *Creates unity, demonstrates humility and our need for God, unlocks the power of God's Spirit to enable victory over sin, etc.*

#### **FURTHER STUDY**

**Genesis 3:8-11.** Sin causes shame and a desire to want to hide. Can you relate to this?

**Romans 5:12.** What is the link between sin and death? How do you understand this?

**Romans 3:23.** Is there anyone who has not sinned? Do you see yourself as a sinner in need of grace?

#### **REFLECTION**

- How has your sin hurt you? How has your sin hurt others? How has your sin hurt God? Be specific
- Spend some time reviewing these passages about sin with the help of Appendix A:  
**Gal 5:19-21; Col 3:5-9; Mark 7:20-23; Eph 5:1-7; 2 Tim 3:1-5; 1 Cor 6:7-10**
- Write out a list of the sins that you struggle with the most to help you see your need for God's forgiveness and grace. Confess these sins to God.

## Appendix A: Sin Definitions

### From Galatians 5:19-21

**Sexual Immorality** (Greek – *porneia*) – Adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, any sex acts outside of the marriage relationship.

**Impurity** (*akatharsia*) – Denotes those things that make us unclean or impure in a moral sense; i.e. lust, sexual fantasies, pornography, etc.

**Debauchery** (*aselgeia*) – Denotes absence of moral restraint, lewdness, indecency, unbridled lust, excess, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence.

**Idolatry** (*eidololatria*) [lit. – service to idols] – The worship of false gods or idols; putting something or someone other than God as number one in your life.

**Sorcery/Witchcraft** (*pharmakia*) – The use or the administering of drugs, sorcery, magical arts, often found in connection with idolatry and fostered by it. Includes the use of drugs to produce an unnatural state of mind, appealing to the occult powers.

**Hatred** (*echthra*) – Denotes attitudes and actions pertaining to enemies; the opposite of love (agape).

**Discord** (*eris*) – Contention, strife, wrangling to get your way at the expense of others.

**Jealousy** (*zelos*) – An envious and contentious rivalry; a zeal in pursuing something.

**Fits of rage** (*thumos*) – An outburst of hot anger, wrath; very similar to discord, but focusing more on the heart condition that produces the outburst.

**Selfish ambition** (*epitheiai*) – Denotes a person who, being so consumed with self-interest, always ends up in disputes and arguments; being consumed with self; pride; defensiveness.

**Dissensions** (*dichostasia*) – Denotes dissension or division which would include racism, a prejudiced attitude, bigotry, etc.; deciding that you or your group is better than another.

**Factions** (*hairesis*) – Denotes the forming of a group or sect based on false teaching, with no regard to “the truth”, usually a doctrinal issue; self-righteousness; dissensions arising from diversity of opinions and aims.

**Envy** (*phthonos*) – Dissatisfaction and resentment caused by the advantage or prosperity of others.

**Drunkenness** (*methel*) – Denotes drunkenness, habitual intoxication, either getting drunk or the habitual use of alcohol or drugs.

**Orgies** (*komos*) – Used generally of feasts and drinking parties that are protracted till late at night and indulge in revelry or partying.

**And the like** (*homoios*) – Involves anything else that is similar or resembles or is in any way like the above-mentioned things, including all variations of the sins listed.

### From Colossians 3:5-10

**Greed** (*pleonexia*) – Excessive desire for what one does not have, especially wealth or possessions.

**Malice** (*kakia*) – The desire to inflict injury, harm or suffering on another.

**Slander** (*blasphemia*) – Verbal abuse against someone. Wounding someone’s reputation.

**Filthy language** (*aischrologia*) – Speech of a kind that is generally considered in poor taste or swearing.

**Lying** (*pseudomai*) – To speak falsely or deceitfully.

### From Mark 7:20-23

**Theft** (*klope*) – The act of stealing.

**Murder** (*phonos*) – Killing a human being.

**Adultery** (*moicheia*) – Sex where at least one person is married.

**Deceit** (*dolos*) – Concealment or distortion of the truth for the purpose of misleading others; fraud.

**Lewdness** (*aselgeia*) – Absence of restraint; obscene or indecent.

**Arrogance** (*huperephania*) – An offensive display of self-importance.

**Folly** (*aphrosunee*) – Lack of prudence or good judgment; foolishness; lack of sense.

### From Ephesians 5:1-7

**Obscenity** (*aischrotes*) – Behaviour that is socially or morally inappropriate or indecent.

**Coarse joking** (*eutrapelia*) – Offensive or distasteful joking.

### From 2 Timothy 3:1-5

**Lover of yourself** (*philautos*) – Loving oneself; selfish.

**Lovers of money** (*philargyros*) – Fond of money; covetous.

**Boastful** (*alazon*) – Bragging.

**Pride** (*huperephanos*) – An offensive display of self-importance.

**Abusive** (*blasphemos*) – Harsh or insulting language; mistreating, especially physically.

**Disobedient to parents** (*apeithes*) – Unwillingness to follow your parent's instruction.

**Ungrateful** (*acharistos*) – Unthankful; unappreciative; not acknowledging or demonstrating gratitude.

**Unholy** (*anosios*) – Being in opposition to God or what is sacred.

**Without love** (*astorgos*) – Hard-hearted; unfeeling; without regard for others.

**Unforgiving** (*aspondos*) – Unwilling to show mercy; irreconcilable.

**Without self-control** (*akrates*) – Unable to govern one's desires; lacking in moderation.

**Brutal** (*anemeros*) – Savage.

**Not lovers of the good** (*philagathos*) – Unfriendly; hostile; showing no compassion.

**Treacherous** (*prodotes*) – Traitor, betrayer.

**Rash** (*propetes*) – Reckless; thoughtless; acting before thinking or getting advice and perspective.

**Conceited** (*tuphoo*) – To swell or inflate with pride; puffed up.

**Lovers of pleasure** (*philedonos*) – Loving pleasure.

### From 1 Corinthians 6:7-10

**Cheating** (*adikeo*) – To defraud; swindle; to take from others in a dishonest way.

**Homosexuality** (*arsenokoites*) – Intimate or sexual relation with the same gender.

**Stealing** (*kleptes*) – To take something that does not belong to you.

**Swindling** (*harpax*) – To cheat a person or business out of money or other assets; to obtain by fraud or deceit.