

The Problem of Sin

Romans 3:23; 6:23

*“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”
(Romans 3:23).*

How can someone want to be saved if he does not know he is lost? How can anyone say that sin does not exist?

A MAIN THEME

Sin is one of the main topics in the Bible. God gave the law of Moses to make people aware of sin: “Because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin” (Romans 3:20). The Jew was right when he asked, “Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (Mark 2:7; Luke 5:21). With mankind, the problem of sin is insurmountable! Sin cannot be covered up; it can only be forgiven. When we understand what sin is, we are amazed—not at why God finds it difficult to forgive, but why He finds it necessary to do so at all! Can man in sin be saved? Can God, who is “holy” and far removed from sin, forgive sin? (Isaiah 6:3; see Revelation 4:8). He is transcendent holiness. Only through the cross can this righteous God pardon us.

COSMIC CONSEQUENCES

Adam and Eve took “just one bite of fruit.” That is all it took! No murder, immorality, theft, abuse, or ill treatment was required to coerce mankind to sin. Everything changed in heaven, in hell, and on earth when Adam and Eve sinned! All was different with God, man, and Satan! Everything within man changed. He became alienated eternally from God and distanced from his mate. Mankind would never be the same. No wonder God said to Adam, “Where are you?” (Genesis 3:9). Read Genesis 2 and 3 and tremble! Man is a fallen, condemned sinner.

There is more to this history than “one bite.” Adam and Eve allowed Satan to enter their lives. They listened to Satan, believed him, and obeyed him. They disobeyed God. God is God, and man belongs to Him by right of creation. Adam and Eve rebelled against God’s authority.

A person can only be tempted when he is led away by his own lusts (James 1:14). He sins within before he sins without. Sin is the supreme choice of self. It is the refusal to let God be God; it is man trying to be more than man. Sin is our thinking that we know more, or know better, than God.

Man’s relationship with God is now broken, betrayed, and destroyed. Sin matters to God. In reality, man, when he sins, decides to become his own god.

Away from God, sinners are dead in their sins (Ephesians 2). The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). Our sins, if not forgiven, eternally alienate us from God (Isaiah 59:2, 3). All the war, violence, and chaos in history began with that “one bite.” God told Adam about this before it ever happened. However, God was displaced. Since then, Satan has been the god, prince, and father of this world (John 8:44; 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Corinthians 4:4).

To be saved, sinners must see sin as God sees it. Repentance will not come until sinners sense the horror of sin. People who do not fear God do not fear sin. People with a holy view of God sense the enormity of sin.

God hates sin, and we must hate it; but, sadly, too many do not hate sin as sin. The more holy we become, the more we hate sin because we understand what it does to our relationship with God.

HOPELESS AND HELPLESS

Man in sin cannot save himself. He cannot earn, buy, or deserve salvation. He cannot know enough or do enough to be saved. All that a sinner can do is repent and obey God. No one else can do that for him.

Jesus did not come to die for our hurts or habits. He died for our sins (Romans 5:6, 8; 1 Peter 1:18, 19). When we come to Him, we are washed in His blood (1 Corinthians 6:11; Hebrews 10:19; Revelation 1:5; 7:14). Jesus was made to be *sin*, but not a *sinner* (2 Corinthians 5:14–21).

The choice is ours. We can have our sins punished at the cross through Jesus or have the punishment fall upon us in hell for eternity.

We have only one way to deal with our sins: We must let Jesus forgive them. In order for Him to do this, we must repent of our sins, die to them, and have them washed away in baptism. (See Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:1–7; 1 Peter 2:24.)

*The cross . . .
there is no other way!*