

Coming to Christ

*A study of the Problem of Sin, Faith, Repentance,
Confession, Baptism, Christian Living*



Lesson 1 --- The Problem of Sin

What Sin Does

Where are very few of us who would deny that we have sinned. In a very general sense we might say that there are two types of sin -- things that we do that are wrong and good things that we neglect to do.

Sin Makes Us Guilty

Sin does two things to us. First, it makes us legally guilty before God. We have broken His Law. Second, sin makes us spiritually sick. In this lesson we will look first at our position of guilt before God.

Since the first sin in the Garden of Eden, man has sinned. Not only has man sinned, but man has tried to excuse sin or justify sin (Genesis 3:12-13).

1. *What are some of the excuses that people make for sin today?*

Perhaps the main reason that people deny sin is that it presupposes that there is a God who is Creator and that He has the right to demand a certain type of behaviour. If man simply evolved then no one has the "right" to expect any standard from anyone. Furthermore, we can then blame any anti-social behaviour on our genes or upbringing or any number of reasons which releasing us from guilt and responsibility.

Since as Christians, we believe in a God who is Creator, then we must also understand that He is

within His rights to demand certain standards from His creation. When we break these standards we are **guilty**.

2. *What does 1 John 3:4 have to say about the nature of sin?*

3. *What does James 2:10 add about the relationship between sin and guilt?*

4. *Read and discuss Romans 7:7-12. What does this passage have to say about the relationship between the law and sin?*

Greek words for Guilt

enchos -- "guilty, liable to penalty (Matt 5:21-22)

hypodikos -- accountable, worthy of punishment (Rom 3:19)

opheilo -- to owe or be in debt (Matt 6:12)



Sin Corrupts Man

Note the description of what sin does as found in Eph 2:1,5 and Col 2:13. Sin makes us dead! We were dead in sin.

Paul tells us in Romans 7:20 that sin actually lives in the body. Romans 6:6 calls the body a “body of sin.” Our sin corrupts us.

This does NOT mean that man is so corrupt that he cannot be reached with the Gospel. Jesus spoke of his death when he said in **John 12:32, “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”**

Romans 7:7-12

7 What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” 8 But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. 9 I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. 10 The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. 11 For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. 12 So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

What Can We do about Sin?

Defining New Testament Words

Grace

Grace is sometimes defined as “unmerited favour” and simply means that God is giving us something that we do not deserve.

5. What do the following passages teach about grace? (Acts 15:11; Titus 2:11; Eph 2:8-9)

We can say that God is the source of grace. We can also say that grace is the content of our salvation. Grace is also the method by which God saves us.

Justification

Simply justification means “to declare righteous.” This gives us safe legal standing before God and allows us be viewed as guilt-free. Justification is a legal term and justify is the opposite of the word “condemn.”

Justification is not a change of our character, but a change in our relationship to God. He sees us totally forgiven of all guilt.

6. Read and discuss Romans 5:1, 9; 1 Cor 6:11 as they relate to justification.

Sanctification

Whereas justification deals with our legal position, sanctification deals with our spiritual corruption. Sanctification is a process of being made righteous. We grow in our sanctification and this process should continue until we die. Sanctification means that we are “set apart to God” and are becoming more and more like Jesus.

7. What do the following verses teach us about sanctification? (Acts 20:32; 26:18; Rom 6:22; 15:16; 1 Thess 4:3; Heb 2:11; 10:10-14.)