

SIN

Years ago, an unusual experiment was conducted on a prison inmate. He had the option of having brain surgery to remove the evil tendencies he had. In return, he could have his freedom. He was then observed to notice changes in his behavior. A few weeks after surgery he murdered someone. Surgery cannot cure sin!

How bad is sin? A little cursing, a little lying, a little lusting? Is it really that bad? People say times have changed and call it situation ethics. The Bible says that what God hated 2,000 years ago, He still hates today. God has not changed, people have. Their consciences are seared and they no longer recognize sin. Sin is no longer called sin. It is called a mistake.

The book of Genesis introduces sin's presence into the world. The book of Revelation speaks of a new earth without the presence of sin. But in between are the sad results of sin's effect on the lives of people. Thorns, disease, and pain in childbirth began after sin entered into the world.

SIN'S DEFINITION

Sin means "to miss the mark". If you have shot archery or guns before, you know that the goal is to hit the bull's-eye. God has given us a book of commands called the Bible. When we fall short, no matter how close we come, it is called sin.

Romans 3:23 says: *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"*

1 John 3:4 *"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."*

In tennis, if a serve goes into the net or lands out of bounds, it is called a fault. The same holds true with sin. We are to live our lives within the boundaries God has set for us. This is to insure us a happier life and a more effective service for God.

SIN'S DESCRIPTION

No one can ever paint sin too black. Here are a few descriptions to help us recognize what sin is. Sin is a weed in the garden of God. Sin is deceitful. Sin is full color on the outside, but only black and white on the inside. Sin comes disguised. Sin takes but never gives. Sin brings pain and shame. Sin binds. Sin blinds. Sin is venom. Sin is a poison. Sin is a rabid dog at your heels. Sin is a leach that wants to drain every ounce of goodness, potential joy, and fulfillment out of your life.

SIN'S DEVASTATION

Sin has no bottom. Sin never stands still. Sin is a cancer that destroys the body and soul. Sin caused Cain to murder his brother Abel. Sin caused the city of Sodom to be a homosexual city. Sin caused King Herod to kill all the baby boys under two years of age. Sin caused Joseph's brothers to sell him into slavery. Sin caused Saul to lose the kingdom. Sin caused Amnon to rape his stepsister. Sin caused Absalom to try to destroy his own father.

Sin may start small but ends up big. Sin always leaves scars. Sin, like a cute puppy, can grow up into a vicious mongrel. Sin will make you stoop to do things you never imagined you would do.

Years ago, a father tried to teach his son about how wrong sin was. Every time the boy did wrong, the father nailed a nail into the tree in the backyard. After several months, the boy was broken-hearted over all the nails in the tree. He asked if his father would take a nail out of the tree for every time he behaved well. The dad agreed. Finally, the day came when the last nail was removed. The son thought he would be excited. Instead, he was saddened. Though all the nails were out, the scars and holes remained in the tree. Though a person becomes a Christian, in this life the scars of sin remain.

A famous painter once searched for a young boy who he could paint as a model for "innocence". He found such a boy and thus completed the painting. About 20 years later he searched for a man who had spent his life in sin to pose for the contrast of the first painting. After much searching, he found just the man who exemplified all that was wicked, wasted, and vile. After the portrait was completed, he asked the man's name. He said, "You know me. You painted my picture 20 years ago when I was a boy." How sin destroys!

SIN WILL TAKE YOU FARTHER THAN YOU WANT TO GO

- Sin leads from a drink to drunkenness.
- Sin leads from dating to adultery.
- Sin leads from cigarettes to cancer.
- Sin leads from a high to addiction.
- Sin leads from a joke to a perverted mind.

SIN WILL COST YOU MORE THAN YOU WANT TO PAY

Sin's checkout price is always higher than the advertised price. Thrill now - bill later! Sin costs reputation, peace of mind, and health.

SIN WILL TAKE YOU WHERE YOU DO NOT WANT TO GO

- Sin took the prodigal to the pigpen.
- Sin took Absalom and Judas to a tree.
- Sin will take you to a gutter.
- Sin will put extra wrinkles on your face.
- Sin will take you to the unwed mother's home, mental institution, and cancer ward.

SIN WILL KEEP YOU LONGER THAN YOU WANT TO STAY

Lot went to Sodom to sojourn (visit). He lived there 20 years and lost his family. Naomi went to Moab to visit and lost her husband and sons. Sin invites you just to visit.

Sin, to a Christian, is like a bullet in the body. There can be no strength and healing until the bullet is removed. I John 1:9 says: *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* Confession for a Christian is to admit to God that we have sinned. After we ask for forgiveness, the closeness to God is there again!

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHRISTIAN SINS?

1. Sickness: I Cor. 11:30 says: *"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."* James 5:15 says: *"And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."* Sometimes sin causes sickness in a Christian.

2. Death: Acts 5 mentions Ananias and Sapphira, who died as a result of their sin. Deut. 32:51-52 says: *"Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel. Yet thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel."* (Moses' life was shortened because of disobedience to God.)

I Cor. 5:5 says: *"To deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."*

I Cor. 11:28-30 says: *"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."*
I John 5:16 says: *"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."* A Christian can sin to the point that God takes him to heaven early.

3. Prayers are hindered. Ps. 66:18 says: *"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:"* When a Christian wants to hold on to sin more than he loves God, his prayers will not be answered.

4. Robbed of joy. Ps. 51:12 says: *"Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."* When David committed adultery, his joy disappeared. A Christian unable to fellowship with the Lord cannot have joy. Scripture says: *"...in thy presence is fullness of joy;..."*. (Ps. 16:11)

5. Chastening comes. Proverbs 3:11-12 says: *"My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."* God spans his children so they can get back to serving him. Love is the motivation for this discipline.

6. Reaping comes. Galatians 6:7-8 says: *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."*

When a Christian sins, seeds are planted in the garden of life. A harvest is to be expected. A Christian:

- a. reaps what he sows
 - b. reaps more than he sows
 - c. reaps unexpectedly
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7. Children are affected. Exodus 20:5 says: *"Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;"* When a person sins, the effect goes as far as to the great grandchildren! No man is an island. We are constantly affecting others by our actions. Our sinful tendencies will be passed down to our children.

8. Shames Christ. Hebrews 6:4-6 says: *“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”* Sin is what caused Jesus to die on the cross. It is not a light thing to God when one of his children sins.

THE STEPS TO SIN

James 1:13-15 says: *“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”*

The steps to sin are **L S D**: Lust Sin Death. God never tempts Christians to sin to see how good a Christian they are. The devil tempts to sin. The first step to sin is lust (desire). That is how the devil tempts. He knows what our desires are and simply “opens the door” so we can fulfill them. If someone is entertaining the idea of adultery, the devil simply has available a ready participant. If someone has a desire for liquor, guess who “drops by” and offers them a drink? This is why a Christian needs to carefully guard his thought life and desires. If what we want is wrong, the devil wants to give it to us.

James 1:14 speaks of a Christian being “enticed”. This is a hunting or fishing term. Enticement is a lure to get the animal or fish away from safety. The devil uses many lures. He may use music, TV, old friends, money, moving, nature, a new house, a job, fame, a boy friend or girl friend, etc. His tackle box is full of proven lures that work. What has he used on you? Although he cannot read our minds, he does know human nature. GUARD YOUR DESIRES!

THE FIRST SIN

Genesis 3:1-7 says: *“Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.”*

The first sin took place in the Garden of Eden. The devil was present in the form of a serpent. There was a series of steps he took Eve through to get her to sin:

1. The devil appeared to the follower first (verse 1). Eve was approached first - not Adam. The devil tries to tempt those under authority first.
2. The devil questioned God's Word (verse 1). *"¼ Yea, hath God said ¼?"* That is why the devil is today attacking the authority of God's Word. If there is one mistake, it's authority is diminished. If you begin doubting God's Word, you will soon discard his command. The devil is behind the many "versions" of the Bible so people will doubt if any of them are true.
3. The devil majored on what Eve was not allowed to do (verse 1). *"¼ Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"* God told Adam and Eve that they could eat of every tree in the garden but one. You mean if you are a Christian you can't do this and you can't do that? Christianity is a can religion, not just a can't! Do not let the devil make you feel that you are missing out on something by being a Christian.
4. Eve talked to the devil and tried to reason with him. She was to "resist" the devil. Instead she listened to him. Do not listen to people or entertainment that entice you to do wrong.
5. Eve did not know the command of God well enough (verses 2-3). When she tried to quote what God said, she misquoted the command. Ignorance of God's commands will always lead to trouble. The disciples of Jesus were discouraged and disillusioned after the resurrection because they did not know the Scripture about the resurrection.
6. The devil lied (verse 4). *"¼ Ye shall not surely die."* All sin is based on the lie "you can be your own god". No one can tell you what to do. Be your own boss. Study the Word of God so lies will be recognizable.
7. The devil mixed truth with error (verse 5). He said that Eve would see and become as God. Part was true. She would see that she was naked. The other part was a lie. The fruit did not make her more like God. All false religion is based on some Scriptures or truth mixed with error.

EXAMPLE:

SALVATION gets you to heaven (TRUE)

SALVATION + BAPTISM gets you to heaven (FALSE)

TRUTH + ERROR = LIE

8. The devil worked on Eve's desires (verses 5-6). Perhaps Eve ate the fruit because she believed it would make her wise and more like God. She loved God and wanted to be more like Him, so perhaps that is why she ate it. See the importance of reading the Bible daily and being faithful in church? It is to keep you from believing the devil's lies.
9. Her sin affected her husband (verses 6-7). Not only did she break God's command but also enticed another to sin. Our sin always affects others.
10. Their sin separated them from God (verse 10). Adam and Eve died spiritually that day. They were afraid, naked, and hiding. What a true picture of sin's affect on us.

IS THERE ANY HOPE?

Will a Christian ever stop sinning? No. Not until we get our new body in heaven will we be free of sin's power. But do not give up! You may not stop sinning, but you can hate it when you do.

JESUS

Hebrews 1:9 says: *“Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”*

Jesus was the only sinless one who ever walked on the face of the earth. How did he have such victory? He was totally yielded to the Holy Spirit of God. That caused him to hate sin. As he hated sin, it caused him to be totally yielded to the Holy Spirit.

Hate Sin - Holy Spirit filled
Holy Spirit filled - Hate Sin

To the degree we love right and hate sin in our lives, we will be filled with the Holy Spirit.

LET US HATE SIN!

NAME: _____

REVIEW SIN - STEP 13

1. Define sin _____
2. Sin can be forgiven but always leaves _____
3. List what happens when a Christian sins:
 - a) _____ b) _____
 - c) _____ d) _____
 - e) _____ f) _____
 - g) _____ h) _____
4. When the devil tempts he _____
5. What is the first step to sin? _____
6. The devil has a box full of _____
7. Make a private written list of lures you have been vulnerable to in the past.
8. The devil questions _____
9. The devil usually majors on what you _____
10. _____ + _____ = _____
11. What reference describes Jesus' attitude toward sin? _____
12. When will Christians have complete power over sin? _____
13. Make a list of 30 sins you ought to hate:
