

STUDY OF  
**THE BIBLE DOCTRINE OF SIN**

PREPARED BY

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“FOR WE DO NOT HAVE A HIGH PRIEST WHO CANNOT SYMPATHIZE WITH OUR WEAKNESSES, BUT ONE WHO HAS BEEN TEMPTED IN ALL THINGS AS WE ARE, YET WITHOUT SIN.” (HEBREWS 4:15)

## FOREWARD

The lessons in this series are based on the Florida College Lectures held on February 3-6, 1997. The outlines have been produced from the texts of the lessons found in *The Bible Doctrine of Sin, Florida College Annual Lectures, 1997* and published by the Florida College Bookstore in Temple Terrace, FL.

### Speakers and Topics

What is Sin?	Bob Buchanon
Sin and The Nature of Man	Daniel W. Petty
The Nature of Temptation	Rickie Jenkins
Sins of Omission	Michael L. Vierheller
Sins of The Heart	R. J. Stephens
Sins of The Tongue	Albert R. Dickson
Sins in The Home	Robert E. Speer
The Sin of Division	Al Craig
Atonement for Sin	Bill Moseley
Confession of Sins	Bobby L. Graham
The Punishment of Sin	Thomas L. Andrews
The Word: Safeguard Against Sin	Ed Harrell
Perfecting Holiness	Bill Hall

While the author has borrowed heavily from the lectures, he has included some of his own material as well. For a more thorough treatment of the subject matter, see the lecture book itself. It is my desire that much good and no harm has been done in putting this lesson book together.

## **BIBLE DOCTRINE OF SIN**

LESSON NO.	LESSON TITLE
1	WHAT IS SIN?
2	SIN AND THE NATURE OF MAN
3	THE NATURE OF TEMPTATION
4	SINS OF OMISSION
5	SINS OF THE HEART
6	SINS OF THE TONGUE
7	SINS IN THE HOME
8	THE SIN OF DIVISION
9	ATONEMENT FOR SIN
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11	THE PUNISHMENT OF SIN
12	THE WORD: SAFEGUARD AGAINST SIN
13	PERFECTING HOLINESS

## **WHAT IS SIN?** (Genesis 3:1-24)

### **INTRODUCTION**

- I. SIN IS ALMOST FORGOTTEN IN OUR SOCIETY
  - A. Liberals want to act as if sin cannot be identified.
  - B. However, the Bible plainly teaches that there is such a thing as sin.
  - C. We must be reminded that sin is a horrible thing. (Romans 7:14-25)
- II. SIN IS A TREACHEROUS PROBLEM FOR ALL OF MANKIND
  - A. Every problem in the world is directly or indirectly the result of sin. (Genesis 3:16-19)
  - B. Aging and death result from sin entering the world. (1 Corinthians 15:20-23)
  - C. Diseases such as AIDS are most often the result of sin.
- III. WE NEED TO BE REMINDED OF THE TERRIBLENESS OF SIN
  - A. Part of the problem is that we get used to sin, and some even excuse it. (2 Peter 2:7)
  - B. The world wants to label everything a sickness. (Isaiah 5:20)
  - C. Sin is a “reproach to any people.” (Proverbs 14:34)

### **BODY**

- I. CONSIDER THE OLD TESTAMENT CONCEPT OF SIN
  - A. The fundamental idea was that of disobedience to God.
    - 1. Categorizing sin as sins of weakness, or ignorance, or incidental, serves to minimize it.
    - 2. Adam and Eve wilfully disobeyed God. (Genesis 3:6)
    - 3. Sin grows and multiplies. (Matthew 16:6, 11; 1 Corinthians 5:6; 15:33; 2 Timothy 2:17)
    - 4. Remember that God destroyed the world because of the growth of sin. (Genesis 6:5, 6)
  - B. Under the Law of Moses, explicit terms for sin were used.
    - 1. Iniquity, meaning “perversion, or distortion,” described Israel’s sin. (Numbers 14:32-34)
    - 2. Transgression was conscious rebellion against God. (Job 34:37)
    - 3. Wickedness describes sin after it becomes habitual. (1 Samuel 15:23)
  - C. Sin must be taken seriously.
    - 1. Like many in the Bible, people today are prone to excusing sin. (1 Samuel 15:20, 21)
    - 2. Sin is a mark of one who disobeys God, regardless of the reason(s) for doing so.
    - 3. Sin separates us from God. (Isaiah 59:1, 2)
- II. CONSIDER THE NEW TESTAMENT CONCEPT OF SIN
  - A. As we would expect, the New Testament teaching is similar.
    - 1. While sin is cataloged in several passages, it is not categorized. (Galatians 5:19-21)
    - 2. We must be reminded that all sin is disobedience to God.
    - 3. All sin is ultimately against God. (2 Samuel 12:13; Psalm 51:4)
  - B. Several terms are used in the New Testament.
    - 1. The Greek word *harmatia*, meaning to “miss the mark,” is one of the most common, and describes those who have fallen short of God’s glory. (Romans 3:23)
    - 2. It describes the state of all who sin as well as any single sinful thought or action. (Romans 6:1; Galatians 3:22; 1 Corinthians 6:18; Titus 3:11)

3. The Greek word *parabasis*, translated transgression, involves stepping over a boundary line. (Matthew 15:3; Acts 1:25; James 2:11; 1 John 3:4)
4. Another word *paraptoma*, almost a synonym, means to blunder into forbidden territory. (Romans 11:11, 12)
5. Lawlessness, from the Greek word *anomia*, is a violation of God's law, and is sometimes translated iniquity. (Matthew 7:23; 1 John 3:4)
6. Ungodliness, from the Greek word *asebeia*, is defined by Thayer as "want of reverence toward God, impiety, ungodliness." (Romans 1:18; 11:26; 2 Timothy 2:16; Titus 2:12; Jude 15)
7. Unrighteousness, from the Greek word *adika*, is used when speaking of personal relations between people. (1 John 5:17)
8. Debt, from the Greek word *opheleima*, is used once in the sense of sin. (Matthew 6:12; Luke 11:4)
9. Other words, such as evil, falsehood, darkness, and ignorance, describe various aspects of the effects of sin that man must overcome.

C. Sin has brought devastation to the world.

1. Adam and Eve unleashed its consequences in the garden.
2. Too much time and energy have been spent by "theologians" debating the origin of sin, and too little time has been used to fight it.
3. Calvinism has served only to mask the truth about sin and its deadly consequences.

III. THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT SIN IS CURABLE

A. Man can overcome the deadly effects of sin.

1. This can only take place with help from God. (1 John 2:13, 14)
2. The power of God working in us is greater than the power of Satan. (1 John 4:4)
3. We must not allow sin to reign in our bodies. (Romans 6:12)

B. By God's grace and our faith we can be saved.

1. We can have peace with God, and be reconciled to Him. (Romans 5:1, 2, 6-10)
2. Faith in Christ involves recognizing Him as the One who broke the power of sin. (Colossians 1:20-22)
3. Our sins can be washed away by His blood. (Acts 22:16; Romans 6:3, 4)

**CONCLUSION**

I. WE MUST UNDERSTAND HOW DEADLY SIN IS AS A DESTROYER

II. BY COMMITTING OUR LIVES TO GOD WE CAN BE CURED

III. HAVE YOU BEEN CLEANSED?

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What has the world done to the concept of sin? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How can it be said that every problem in the world can be related to sin in some way? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What are some ways in which we “get used to sin?” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What were some of the terms used in the Old Testament for sin? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Sin \_\_\_\_\_ us from God.
6. Discuss some of the terms used in the New Testament for sin. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Give some words other than the specific terms that describe some of the effects of sin that man must overcome. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. The terrible consequences of sin were set in motion by \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
when they sinned in the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.
9. John said that we can overcome the effects of sin because “greater is He that is in \_\_\_\_\_  
than he that is in the \_\_\_\_\_.”
10. Explain how Jesus’ blood is involved in washing away our sins. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **SIN AND THE NATURE OF MAN**

(Ezekiel 18:1-32)

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **I. THIS TOPIC IS CRUCIAL TO OUR OVERALL SUBJECT**

- A. As we will see, there has been a great deal of controversy concerning man's nature.
- B. Other than angels, man is the only part of creation to whom sin applies.
- C. Only man needs to ask any questions about sin.

#### **II. MAN IS THE HEIGHT OF GOD'S EARTHLY CREATION**

- A. We are still made to wonder at God's concern for us. (Psalm 8)
- B. Man was placed in charge of the earth and all that is in it. (Hebrews 2:5-8)
- C. Jesus came in the form of a man, not an angel. (Hebrews 2:9, 16-18)

#### **III. SEVERAL QUESTIONS NEED TO BE ANSWERED**

- A. What is there about man's nature that makes sin possible for him?
- B. Why do people sin, and is sin inevitable?
- C. How does sin affect mankind?

### **BODY**

#### **I. CONSIDER THE NATURE OF MAN**

- A. Man is made in the image of God.
  - 1. God breathed life into man, and he became a "living soul." (Genesis 2:7)
  - 2. Unlike the animals who have life, man was made in God's image. (Genesis 1:26)
  - 3. There is a part of man that lives beyond the grave. (Psalm 16:10)
  - 4. Because we are made in His image and have the ability to choose, we have a moral obligation to obey God. (Genesis 2:16, 17)
- B. Man is accountable for his choices.
  - 1. Adam and Eve chose to act according to their own will and not God's. (Genesis 3:1-7)
  - 2. Their rebellious action fits the definition of sin in the Bible. (1 John 3:4)
  - 3. Motivated by worldly desires mankind often falls short of God's glory. (Romans 3:23)
- C. Notice the outcome of the choice that was made.
  - 1. They were ashamed of their sin and attempted to hide.
  - 2. God called upon them to give account of themselves. (Genesis 3:8-13)
  - 3. Animals are not morally accountable, and, therefore, have no sense of shame.

#### **II. NOTICE THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN**

- A. Some seemed to come naturally.
  - 1. The shame that Adam and Eve felt demonstrates the effect of human guilt.
  - 2. Something had changed once sin entered their lives.
  - 3. They became moral cowards as they attempted to shift the blame to someone else.
- B. Other consequences were imposed by God upon the serpent, woman, the ground, and man.
  - 1. The serpent was cursed above all cattle and beasts, and enmity would exist between his seed and the seed of a woman. (Genesis 3:14, 15; John 8:44; Revelation 12:9)
  - 2. The temptation in the garden was the first effort of Satan to ensnare man. (1 Peter 5:8)

3. The woman would have increased pain in childbearing, and she would be ruled over by her husband. (Genesis 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:13-15)
  4. On man's account the ground was cursed so that it brought forth thistles, and man would have to labor for his sustenance. (Genesis 3:17-19)
  5. Furthermore, man would return to the dust, perhaps a reference to death.
- C. Despite the darkness of the hour, there was a ray of hope for mankind.
1. Ultimately, the seed of the woman would defeat Satan. (Genesis 3:15; Galatians 4:4)
  2. This is what the work of Christ was all about. (Revelation 12:5)
  3. Jesus gained the victory over sin and death. (Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8)
  4. Adam and Eve died spiritually when they sinned even though their physical death was yet to come. (Genesis 3:23, 24; Isaiah 59:1, 2; Ephesians 2:1-5)
  5. Sin and death are universal problems for man. (Romans 3:23; 5:12)
- III. CONSIDER SOME HISTORIC THEORIES CONCERNING MAN'S CORRUPTION
- A. Palagius emphasized the free will of man.
1. Rejecting earlier suggestions that man was somehow tainted because of Adam's sin, he believed that man has the natural ability to "both sin and not to sin, so that we confess ourselves to have always free will." (*The Christian View of Man*, H. D. McDonald)
  2. He did not believe that man sins out of necessity.
  3. Palagius did not believe that God acted directly on the heart of a sinner.
- B. Augustine emphasized the corruption that came upon mankind as a result of Adam's sin.
1. While he agreed that man was created morally upright and free, he believed that the guilt of Adam's sin was passed on to all Adam's posterity at birth.
  2. He believed he found proof for "original sin" in several passages.
  3. Church tradition was in favor of his idea as evidenced by the practice of infant baptism.
  4. He believed that man was only free to do wrong, and sin became universal by procreation, not imitation.
  5. In Augustine's view, enabling grace from God must be given miraculously before one can overcome the curse of sin.
- C. Catholicism entered the controversy in Augustine's day.
1. After Palagius' views were condemned by the Council of Carthage in 418, some only accepted the doctrine of original sin while rejecting Augustine's ideas on predestination and the bondage of man's will.
  2. The Council of Orange in 529 upheld a moderate view of Augustine's ideas concerning original sin and the need for divine grace which was a "superadded gift" of God to restore original righteousness.
  3. The Council of Trent in 1537 affirmed the doctrine of original sin and its consequences by stating that man "was changed in body and soul for the worse."
- D. Calvinism became a prominent doctrine of the Protestant reformation.
1. Most of the reformers, such as Martin Luther and John Calvin, agreed with Augustine.
  2. The Augsburg Confession of 1530, followed by Lutherans, declares that "all men who are born according to the course of nature are conceived and born in sin." (*Creeds of The Churches*, John H. Leith)
  3. John Calvin set forth the complete doctrine in his *Institutes of Christian Religion*.

4. The influence of Calvin can be seen in other religious confessions and creeds such as the Westminster Confession used by the Presbyterian and Reformed churches.
- E. Arminianism became a serious challenge to the traditional Protestant view of original sin.
  1. Jacob Arminius, who lived from 1560-1609, and others in the Netherlands, rejected certain portions of Calvinism such as the total bondage of man's will, predestination based on an eternal decree, and that inherited depravity includes imputed guilt.
  2. They believed that actual sin is that which is committed by the individual, not just the possession of evil tendencies.
  3. He believed that at birth God gives us a special influence of the Spirit to counteract the effect of inherited depravity.
  4. The Methodists, Nazarenes, and Pentecostals generally follow Arminian doctrine.

#### IV. CONSIDER WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT ORIGINAL SIN

- A. Many passages are presented in defense of this doctrine.
  1. One book presents 48 Bible references in defense of total inherited depravity.
  2. Upon closer examination, one discovers that unwarranted assumptions are made in order to arrive at the desired conclusion.
  3. We will only examine a few of the more well-known "proof texts."
- B. Some teach that David claimed that he was born in sin in Psalm 51.
  1. However, in this passage, David takes full responsibility for his sin, and never suggests that he was powerless to resist temptation. (vv. 1-4)
  2. Like all of us, David was born into a world full of sin, but we are not born in sin.
  3. Some seem to be determined to sin, but even that does not argue that the whole human race is born in sin. (Psalm 58:3)
  4. Furthermore, Jesus welcomed infants to Himself, and taught that we must become as little children in order to enter the kingdom. (Matthew 18:1-6)
- C. Others say that Paul taught we are "by nature children of wrath" from the day we are born.
  1. While it is true that the word *phusis*, can refer to the state of someone at birth, it may also mean something that has come about by habit or practice.
  2. The context of this passage shows that they had been influenced by the world around them, and had acquired the nature of wrath. (Ephesians 2:1-3)
- D. Still others say that Paul taught in Romans 5:12 that we are all sinners because of Adam.
  1. Augustine concluded from this passage that in Adam the entire human race sinned.
  2. Notice that the passage goes on to say "for all have sinned."
  3. Furthermore, if becoming sinners was unconditional on man's part, then why wouldn't man become justified unconditionally because of Christ. (Romans 5:17-19)

### CONCLUSION

- I. THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT MAN IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS OWN SINS
- II. EVERY PERSON HAS THE ABILITY TO CHOOSE WHETHER TO SERVE GOD
- III. WE ARE MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD AND SHOULD BE HOLY AS HE IS HOLY

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Out of all creation, sin is only a problem to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Jesus took on the form of \_\_\_\_\_, and was \_\_\_\_\_ as we are, and yet He did not \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Explain what it means to be created in the image of God. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. After Adam and Eve had sinned, they were \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ themselves from God.
5. Give some of the consequences imposed by God on Adam and Eve after they sinned.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What consequence was imposed on the serpent for his role in their sin? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What were some of the differences between the views of Augustine and Palagius about man and sin? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. The man who summarized the views of Augustine and others in a set of books called *The Institutes of Christian Religion* was \_\_\_\_\_.
9. How do we know that Psalm 51 does not teach the doctrine of original sin? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. The word “nature” in Ephesians 2:3 means something that one does by longstanding \_\_\_\_\_, and not as a result of some corruption from birth.

## THE NATURE OF TEMPTATION

(James 1:1-18)

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. TEMPTATION IS SOMETHING THAT EVERY PERSON FACES

- A. We must understand what the Bible says about temptation.
- B. As with other subjects, we cannot rely on any other source for our information.
- C. False doctrines prevail on the nature of temptation as it applies to mankind.

#### II. CONSIDER THE DEFINITION OF TEMPTATION

- A. Temptation is something done to us, and has nothing to do with whether or not we yield.
- B. Our word “attempt” is closely related to the word “temptation.”
- C. The tempter may fail to persuade us to yield, but we have been tempted nonetheless.

#### III. SEVERAL FACTS ARE CLEAR REGARDING TEMPTATION

- A. Temptations in various forms will come to all of us.
- B. Temptation to sin is not sin, or Jesus would have been guilty of sin. (Hebrews 4:15, 16)
- C. Jesus was tempted in the same ways that we are since He lived on earth as a man.

### BODY

#### I. THE WORD “TEMPTATION” IS USED IN DIFFERENT WAYS

- A. The original meaning was somewhat general.
  - 1. The Greek word *peirazo* originally meant “to try, to endeavor, to attempt to get one to do a thing.” (*Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon*)
  - 2. Luke used it to describe when Paul and Silas **tried** to go into Bithynia. (Acts 16:7)
  - 3. Recall that Paul **tried** to join the church in Jerusalem. (Acts 9:26)
- B. At times, temptation involves a test of one’s character.
  - 1. Not all temptation involves an enticement to do evil.
  - 2. Abraham’s faith was tested in the matter of offering up Isaac. (Genesis 22:12)
  - 3. Like Lot, we may have our faith tested by our surroundings. (2 Peter 2:7, 8)
- C. At other times, temptation takes place with reference to trials.
  - 1. The trial may or may not involve doing wrong. (James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:6)
  - 2. Job suffered many trials as a test of his faith.
  - 3. Our faith can only grow as a result of trials. (Romans 5:3-5; James 1:3, 12)
- D. Perhaps the most familiar use of the word temptation is with reference to sin.
  - 1. Remember that one does not sin by just being tempted.
  - 2. This type of temptation is the work of Satan. (James 1:12-15)
  - 3. God never makes it hard on us; He is the source of good. (James 1:17)

#### II. JESUS WAS TEMPTED TO SIN

- A. There was a time when this was believed by all Christians.
  - 1. The Scriptures plainly teach that He was tempted, but did not sin. (Hebrews 4:15)
  - 2. There are those in the church that do not believe He could have been tempted to sin.
  - 3. Satan used the same approach to Jesus as he does when tempting us. (1 John 2:15-17)
- B. Satan tried to get Jesus to use His power to alleviate the suffering of the moment.
  - 1. He tempted Him to turn stones into bread. (Matthew 4:3, 4)

- 2. Jesus reminded Satan that serving God was the most important thing. (Matthew 6:33)
- C. Next, Satan tried to get Jesus to test His Father.
  - 1. Satan appealed to the vain glory of life. (Matthew 4:5-7; 1 John 2:16)
  - 2. One again, Jesus faced and overcame temptation without any edge over us.
- D. Satan's final appeal was to offer Jesus a shortcut.
  - 1. Jesus spoke of this on a later occasion. (Matthew 16:21-23)
  - 2. Jesus knew that the suffering must precede the glory.
  - 3. Therefore, he rejected Satan's offer of power in return for serving him.
- III. WE MUST RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO SIN
  - A. Like Jesus, we must be familiar with the Scriptures.
    - 1. Jesus answered each time with the Word of God. (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10)
    - 2. We should want to please Him in all things. (1 John 4:18)
  - B. We must choose our companions wisely.
    - 1. The faithful can be corrupted when around the wrong influences. (1 Corinthians 15:33)
    - 2. They will try to involve us in evil. (Proverbs 1:10-19; 1 Peter 4:3, 4)
  - C. A strong commitment is necessary to overcoming temptation.
    - 1. Daniel made up his mind ahead of time. (Daniel 1:8)
    - 2. Others must see the commitment we have.
  - D. Avoid compromising situations.
    - 1. Sometimes we must run away from the situation like Joseph. (Genesis 39:12)
    - 2. David placed himself in the wrong place and yielded to temptation. (2 Samuel 11:1-5)
  - E. Finally, we must watch and pray.
    - 1. We must always be vigilant. (Matthew 6:13; 26:41; Ephesians 6:18)
    - 2. Our adversary, the Devil, is always on the prowl. (1 Peter 5:8)
- IV. WE CAN OVERCOME AFFLICTIONS
  - A. Once again, we need to begin with prayer.
    - 1. We have a high priest, Jesus, who can sympathize with us. (Hebrews 4:14-16)
    - 2. The Bible is full of people who cried out to God for help. (Jonah 2:2; Matthew 14:30)
    - 3. Our strength is in God. (Ephesians 3:16, 20; Philippians 4:13)
  - B. We must remember what is most important.
    - 1. We can rejoice in tribulation because we remember the goal, not because it is enjoyable. (Hebrews 12:1, 2; James 1:2-4, 12)
    - 2. Remember the goal of faithful service to God. (1 Peter 1:3-9)
  - C. Bear one another's burdens.
    - 1. Paul had friends who stood by him and helped him. (Philippians 2:30; 2 Timothy 1:16)
    - 2. These friends helped him bear up under the strain of his trials. (Galatians 6:2)
  - D. Certainly, we must depend on God at all times.
    - 1. God cares for us and will be there to help us. (Matthew 6:25-34)
    - 2. Paul leaned upon God in all kind of circumstances. (Philippians 4:11-13)

## CONCLUSION

- I. SATAN IS OUR ENEMY AND WILL TEMPT US TO SIN
- II. GOD WILL ALLOW OUR FAITH TO BE TESTED SO THAT WE CAN GROW

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Give an example of when the word “temptation” is referring to a testing of one’s faith.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. According to James, we are to \_\_\_\_\_ when trials come upon us.
3. How do we know that one who has been tempted to sin has not sinned yet? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. The Hebrew writer said that Jesus was “tempted in \_\_\_\_\_ as we are, yet without \_\_\_\_\_.”
5. When He was being tempted by Satan, Jesus used \_\_\_\_\_ every time in order to defeat him.
6. What was the real tempting aspect of the Devil’s attempt to get Jesus to sin by offering Him all the kingdoms of the world if He would serve him? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. List some things that will help us in resisting the temptation to sin. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What helped Daniel to resist temptation? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. According to the Hebrew writer, Jesus “endured the cross, despising the shame thereof” because of the “\_\_\_\_\_ that was set before Him.”
10. What kinds of things will help us to overcome afflictions? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## SINS OF OMISSION

(James 4:13-17)

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. THE PHRASE ITSELF IS NOT FOUND IN THE BIBLE

- A. However, the subject is found in several places. (James 4:17)
- B. It is possible to sin by omitting something out that God has told us to do.
- C. This was part of the reason that Jesus condemned the Pharisees. (Matthew 23:23)

#### II. SINS OF COMMISSION ARE MUCH MORE PREVALENT IN SCRIPTURE

- A. Sins of omission are usually a more personal matter than sins of commission.
- B. Sins of omission are a failure to do something that God has required us to do.
- C. Some will be condemned at the judgment for failure to act. (Matthew 25:45)

#### III. LET'S NOTICE SOME DEFINITIONS

- A. Omission is defined as: "1. The act or an instance of omitting. 2. The state of having been omitted. 3. Something omitted or neglected." (*The American Heritage Dictionary*)
- B. The noun is defined as: "Nonperformance of what ought to be done, failure, neglect, delinquency, default, dereliction." (*The American Heritage Dictionary*)
- C. Omitting something can have severe consequences. (Jeremiah 32:23)

### BODY

#### I. SINS OF OMISSION ARE SINS OF DOING NOTHING

- A. The Pharisees' sin of omission was done out of hypocrisy.
  - 1. They were more interested in what men thought of them than God. (Matthew 6:2)
  - 2. On the outside they appeared to be righteous. (Matthew 23:23, 28)
  - 3. They left out some things, but tried to impress others with what they included.
  - 4. One who continues in hypocrisy can become deluded. (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12)
- B. Some people commit sins of omission because of ignorance.
  - 1. They fail to do what God wants because of a lack of knowledge. (2 Timothy 2:15)
  - 2. Some ignorance is wilful in nature. (Romans 1:28; Ephesians 4:18; 2 Peter 3:5)
  - 3. No sin of ignorance is overlooked by God. (Numbers 15:17-31; Acts 17:30)
- C. Some sin in this way because they believe God's commands are "too hard to receive."
  - 1. The Jews failed to obey the Gospel because they would not accept Jesus. (Acts 4:12)
  - 2. Some do not like the authoritative nature of the Bible. (Matthew 7:13, 14, 21-23)
  - 3. In Jesus' day they quit following Him for this reason. (John 6:66)
  - 4. Too many Christians want to omit any teaching on certain subjects. (2 Timothy 4:1-5)
- D. Rebellion is at the heart of many sins of omission.
  - 1. Saul failed to please God when they didn't do what He asked. (1 Samuel 15:22, 23)
  - 2. Although he tried to blame it on the people, it was still rebellion in God's sight.
  - 3. Those who are rebellious do not like to think about God's wishes. (Romans 1:28)
- E. Some omit the truth out of fear.
  - 1. Abraham omitted part of the truth, and harmed Pharaoh. (Genesis 12:11-13; 17-20)
  - 2. Some preachers omit the truth because they fear losing their paycheck and being branded as a troublemaker. (Matthew 10:28; 2 Timothy 4:2-4)

3. Sins of omission will keep us from being saved. (1 Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 21:8)

## II. SINS OF OMISSION ARE PRESUMPTUOUS SINS

A. Those who omit things from God's word are presumptuous.

1. This is true whenever a sin of omission occurs for a reason other than ignorance.
2. One who sets himself up as a judge of God's word is proud. (Proverbs 6:16, 17)
3. God destroyed people for their haughtiness. (Isaiah 13:11)
4. David was concerned about presumptuous sins. (Psalm 19:13; 119:6)

B. Reverence for God requires us to obey God in everything.

1. Israel was destroyed for this terrible sin. (Leviticus 26:15-18)
2. Notice Israel omitted only **part** of what God required, and obeyed the rest.
3. This was still not acceptable. (James 2:10)

C. We can avoid these sins of omission.

1. Make sure that we are doers of the Word. (Hebrews 11:6; James 1:22)
2. The faithful who please God are always active. (Hebrews 11:2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 20, 27)
3. We need to be busy bearing fruit in our lives. (John 15:1-16)
4. Make sure we love God more than anyone else. (Matthew 22:37)

## CONCLUSION

I. SINS OF OMISSION ARE AS DEADLY AS ANY OTHER KIND

II. THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT WE CAN AVOID THEM

III. LET'S NOT BECOME GUILTY OF PRESUMPTUOUS SINS

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. The Pharisees were condemned by Jesus for omitting some of the “\_\_\_\_\_ of the Law.”
2. What was the apparent motive for the Pharisees’ sin? \_\_\_\_\_
3. According to Paul in Romans 1, who was guilty of omitting God through wilful ignorance? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Why did some quit following Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Why did King Saul omit some of what God had commanded him to do? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Discuss briefly Abraham’s sin of omission. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Sins of omission are also \_\_\_\_\_ sins.
8. Those who omit part of God’s word, and refuse to obey it are actually setting themselves up as \_\_\_\_\_ of God’s word.
9. We can avoid sins of omission by making sure we are \_\_\_\_\_ of the Word, not just hearers.
10. Another way to avoid sins of omission is to make sure that we love God more than anyone else, with all our \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

## SINS OF THE HEART

(Matthew 15:1-20)

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. EVERY SIN HAS ITS BEGINNING IN THE HEART

- A. In the text, it is clear that the Pharisees were only concerned about the outward act.
- B. They didn't associate the relationship of the heart to the act of sin.
- C. This explains why their concern seemed to be limited to the outward appearance.

#### II. THE BIBLE EMPHASIZES THE ROLE OF THE HEART IN MAN'S ACTIONS

- A. We are told that we must watch our heart carefully. (Proverbs 4:23)
- B. It is not enough to control our actions since sin originates in the heart, unseen by others.
- C. We will all some day give account of the thoughts in our hearts. (Romans 2:16)

#### III. WE MUST BECOME AWARE OF HOW THE HEART FUNCTIONS

- A. We must first learn what the Bible heart is all about.
- B. We will discuss some of the common, but often overlooked, sins of the heart.
- C. Finally, we must know how to be cured of "heart disease."

### BODY

#### I. WHAT IS THE HEART OF MAN?

- A. Let's remind ourselves of the Bible definition of sin.
  - 1. Sin takes place when one violates God's laws. (1 John 3:4)
  - 2. Sin can take place when we omit something that God has commanded. (James 4:17)
  - 3. God doesn't expect the impossible from us, only what we can do. (1 Corinthians 10:13)
- B. Now, let's look at the definition of the heart.
  - 1. According to W.E. Vine, it comes from the Greek word *kardia* and "came to stand for man's entire mental and moral activity, both rational and the emotional elements."
  - 2. The "heart" includes the emotions, the reason, and the will.
  - 3. We can begin to see the importance of "guarding" our heart.
- C. We can more fully understand the heart by looking at what the heart does.
  - 1. The heart of man thinks, understands, reasons, and believes. (Genesis 6:5; Matthew 13:15; Mark 2:8; Romans 10:9, 10)
  - 2. All of our intentions, purposes, and obedience come from the heart. (Romans 6:17; 2 Corinthians 9:7)
  - 3. We can trust in the Lord and rejoice in our hearts. (Proverbs 3:5; 1 Samuel 2:1)
  - 4. While there are some things we cannot figure out about the heart, we know that it can be renewed even though the body becomes weaker. (2 Corinthians 4:16)

#### II. WHAT MAKES A HEART EITHER EVIL OR GOOD?

- A. The fact is that every heart is one or the other at some point in time.
  - 1. A person brings forth fruit in keeping with his heart. (Luke 6:45)
  - 2. The heart of man started out pure, but became evil when the wrong choice was made. (Genesis 1:26, 27; 3:1-7)
  - 3. The same is true today when we yield to Satan's temptations. (James 1:13-15)

B. What contributes to one having an evil heart?

1. We are influenced by what we see and hear through the media. (Psalm 119:9-11; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 3:16)
2. We must be concerned about those with whom we associate. (I Corinthians 15:33; Philippians 3:17)
3. We must make sure that we do not involve ourselves in things that appeal to the worldly and sensual things around us. (1 Timothy 4:8; 1 John 2:15-17)

III. LET'S CONSIDER SOME SINS OF THE HEART

A. First of all, we sin when we do not forgive others.

1. Jesus taught that we must forgive others if we expect to be forgiven. (Matthew 5:7; Mark 11:25, 26)
2. We must forgive others since we have been forgiven. (Colossians 3:13)
3. Our forgiveness must be unlimited to those who repent. (Luke 17:3-5)
4. We must be like God and "remember the sin no more." (Hebrews 8:12)

B. Many people sin by being envious of others.

1. According to Webster, envy is "chagrin or discontent at the excellence or good fortune of another; resentful, begrudging."
2. It is "earthly, sensual, and devilish." (James 3:14, 15)
3. Envy has terrible effects on the sinner. (Proverbs 14:30; 27:4)
4. Notice the sins associated and listed with envy. (Romans 1:29-32; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3; 2 Corinthians 12:20; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Timothy 6:4, 5; Titus 3:3; 1 Peter 2:1)
5. Envy has led to murder, selling a brother into slavery, and other terrible deeds. (Matthew 27:18; Acts 7:9; 1 John 3:12)

C. Some are not grateful for what they have.

1. It is God's will that we are thankful. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)
2. We should be thankful for the blessings we receive in Christ. (Ephesians 1:3)
3. We have treasures laid up in heaven. (Matthew 6:19-21)

D. Another overlooked sin of the heart is worry.

1. Jesus commanded that we "be not anxious." (Matthew 6:25, 31-34)
2. We worry over many things that we cannot control.
3. Worrying is a sin. (Philippians 4:6; 1 Peter 1:13)
4. We must learn to rely on God. (1 Peter 5:7)

E. Another devastating sin is hatred.

1. It is also listed among the works of the flesh. (Galatians 5:19-21)
2. We cannot hate our brother and still love God at the same time. (1 John 4:20, 21)
3. It is a sin that destroys one's happiness.

**CONCLUSION**

I. THERE ARE OTHER SINS OF THE HEART THAT WE COULD CONSIDER

II. CHRIST HAS PROVIDED THE CURE FOR THESE AND ALL SINS (1 John 1:7-9)

III. ARE YOU WILLING TO ACCEPT HIS TERMS OF FORGIVENESS?

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. According to Jesus, all sin comes from the \_\_\_\_\_ and defiles man.
2. According to John, sin is a “\_\_\_\_\_ of the law.”
3. State the definition of the heart as given by Vine’s Dictionary of New Testament Words.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. List some of the things that man does with his heart. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. In what condition does one’s heart start out, and what changes it? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. List some of the things that have a great influence on our heart. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. On what basis does Jesus promise us forgiveness? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What does it mean to be envious, and of what are Christians sometime envious?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. List some things for which we should be grateful. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Jesus taught that we were not to \_\_\_\_\_ about having food, clothing, and shelter.

## SINS OF THE TONGUE

(James 3:1-12)

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. SINS OF THE TONGUE HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR A LONG TIME

- A. What we say tells a lot about the kind of person we are.
- B. Our tongue exposes what is in our heart. (Matthew 12:34)

#### II. RECALL THE BASIC DEFINITION OF SIN

- A. Sin is lawlessness, and may be expressed in both deeds and words. (1 John 3:4)
- B. We are most vulnerable to this sin when angry. (Numbers 20:10-12; James 1:19, 20)

#### III. OUR TONGUE MUST BE USED PROPERLY

- A. The constitution of our country allows more freedom of speech than God does.
- B. Although it is a small part of the body, the tongue is often misused. (James 3:9, 10)

### BODY

#### I. NOTICE THE FOLLOWING SINS OF THE TONGUE

##### A. **Slander** is a misuse of the tongue.

- 1. Slander, from the Greek word *diabolos*, means “. . . accusing falsely, is used as a noun, translated ‘slanderers’ in 1 Timothy 3:11, where the reference is to those who are given to finding fault with the demeanor and conduct of others, and spreading their innuendos and criticisms in the church.” (W.E. Vine’s Expository Dictionary)
- 2. Only a fool uses his tongue to slander another person. (Proverbs 10:18)
- 3. Slander is a characteristic of Satan. (Revelation 12:9, 10)

##### B. **Gossip** is another misuse of the tongue.

- 1. Gossip is usually preceded by “I do not know, but I heard.” (Proverbs 11:13)
- 2. Spreading rumors and lies destroys relationships of all kinds. (Proverbs 17:9)
- 3. When we hear something about another, we need to “check it out.”

##### C. **Lying** is an obvious abuse of the tongue.

- 1. It is the telling of a falsehood with the intent to deceive. (Genesis 3:4; John 8:44)
- 2. It creates hardships for others. (Genesis 37:32; 39:14, 15; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12)
- 3. God hates lying, and liars will be condemned to hell. (Proverbs 6:17; Revelation 21:8)

##### D. **Flattery** is another misuse of the tongue.

- 1. The motive behind this form of speech is self-interest.
- 2. David realized that his enemies used flattery. (Psalm 5:9)
- 3. Paul, who set the example for preachers, did not use flattery. (1 Thessalonians 2:4-6)
- 4. People appreciate one who rebukes them, and doesn’t use flattery. (Proverbs 28:23)

##### E. **Profanity** is a very common sin of the tongue.

- 1. Profanity, a form of moral pollution, is quite common in our society.
- 2. Euphemisms, such as “Gosh,” “Gee,” and “Darn,” are another example of profanity.
- 3. All of these are forms of unwholesome communication. (Ephesians 4:29)

##### F. **Vulgarity** has always been a problem.

- 1. It is expressed in jokes that are distasteful, obscene, and indecent. (Colossians 3:8)
- 2. This would include innuendos that are suggestive of something ungodly.

G. **Backbiting** is all too common among Christians.

1. The term suggests evil speaking or malicious slander with the intent to destroy another.
2. According to Paul, it is a mark of a reprobate mind. (Romans 1:28-30)
3. It will usually provoke anger in the victim. (Proverbs 25:23)

H. **Tattling** is closely related to gossiping.

1. It is one reason why a younger widow is refused permanent assistance from the church. (1 Timothy 5:11-13)
2. Going around telling tales about others is destructive.

I. **Careless teaching** is another misuse of the tongue.

1. Teaching God's word must be taken seriously because souls are at stake. (James 3:1)
2. A teacher must "take heed to himself and his teaching." (1 Timothy 4:16)
3. We must "speak as the oracles of God," and not twist the Scriptures. (1 Peter 4:11; 2 Peter 3:16)

## II. WE MUST OVERCOME THE MISUSES OF THE TONGUE

A. Fill our hearts with the **wisdom from above**.

1. As James teaches us, the tongue is misused because it is filled with human wisdom, a wisdom that is demonic, sensual, and self-seeking. (James 3:16)
2. In contrast, the wisdom from above is pure, peaceable, and full of mercy. (James 3:17)
3. Jesus said that the mouth speaks from the abundance of the heart. (Matthew 12:34, 35)

B. Meditate on the **proper things**.

1. We need to imitate the Psalmist. (Psalm 119:15, 16)
2. Paul taught we should meditate on the right things. (Philippians 4:8)

C. Fill our hearts with the **knowledge of God**.

1. We can only partake of God's nature as we learn of it through His word. (2 Peter 1:3)
2. We are able to trust Him. (2 Timothy 1:12)

D. Fill our hearts with the **grace of God**.

1. When our hearts are filled with the grace of God, we will be busy using our tongues to teach others, not to slander and abuse them. (Titus 2:11-14)
2. God's grace will teach us how we are to treat others. (Philippians 2:5-11)

E. Let the **peace of God** rule in our hearts.

1. If we let Christ rule our hearts, then we can control our tongues. (Colossians 3:15)
2. We will not complain about one another, but, instead, we will edify each other.

F. Renew our hearts by the **will of God**.

1. We are transformed as a child of God by first renewing our mind. (Romans 12:2)
2. If our hearts are filled with the will of God, then we can be conformed to His image.

## CONCLUSION

I. THE TONGUE HAS A TREMENDOUS IMPACT ON OTHER PEOPLE

II. LET'S NOT FILL OUR HEARTS WITH SPIRITUAL "GARBAGE"

III. WE NEED TO GUARD OUR HEARTS CAREFULLY

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Jesus taught that the mouth speaks from the abundance of the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. As the example of Moses shows, we are most vulnerable to sin with the tongue when we are \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Discuss what it means to slander another person. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How can we recognize and deal with the sin of gossiping? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. State what it means to tell a lie. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What is a euphemism, and why is it wrong? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What did James mean when he stated, "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren?" (James 3:1) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. We often misuse our tongues when we follow the \_\_\_\_\_ of men.
9. List some things we can do to overcome the misuse of the tongue. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. The first step in being transformed as a child of God is to renew the \_\_\_\_\_.

## SINS IN THE HOME

(Genesis 2:18-24)

### INTRODUCTION

- I. THE EVIDENCE OF A BREAKDOWN IN THE FAMILY IS ABUNDANT
  - A. Consider the case of the eleven-year-old killer who was himself murdered on 8/30/94.
  - B. He had proven his “right” to joining a Chicago street gang.
- II. THIS IS A COMMON STORY IN OUR NATION
  - A. On February 2, 1994, Chicago Police found nineteen children home alone in squalor.
  - B. Three mothers were arrested, but a fourth was in the hospital having another baby.
- III. EVERYONE SEEMS TO BE RINGING THEIR HANDS IN AGONY
  - A. The politicians are offering no real solutions.
  - B. Only the preaching and application of the Gospel can cure this problem.

### BODY

- I. THE IMPACT OF SINS IN THE HOME IS GREAT
  - A. It must be noted that sin was committed in various homes in the Bible.
    - 1. There are several instances of **murder**. (Genesis 4:8; Judges 9:1-5; 2 Kings 11:1)
    - 2. **Fornication** was committed by Eli’s sons. (1 Samuel 2:22)
    - 3. **Adultery** and **murder** were committed by David. (2 Samuel 11:2-21)
    - 4. **Incest** and **drunkenness** were committed by Lot and his daughters. (Genesis 19:30-36)
    - 5. Paul wrote of some Christians that had practiced various sins. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)
  - B. Sin takes its toll on the nation.
    - 1. Recall that sin is a “reproach to any people.” (Proverbs 14:34)
    - 2. Even the leaders are the subject of daily scrutiny because of their sins.
  - C. Many denominations and some brethren are caving in on moral issues.
    - 1. They are beginning to accept homosexuals as leaders. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)
    - 2. Already there are churches out West that are “being like the nations around them.”
- II. THE CURE FOR SINS IN THE HOME IS THE GOSPEL
  - A. The family was planned and established by God.
    - 1. Man and woman were created on the sixth day of creation. (Genesis 1:26-31)
    - 2. They were a unique part of creation.
  - B. There are three characteristics of the home as created by God.
    - 1. It is to be a one man, one woman relationship. (Genesis 2:18-24)
    - 2. Marriage is to last a lifetime, and divorce may be obtained for only one cause- adultery. (Matthew 19:9; Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7:39)
    - 3. They are to be faithful to each other. (1 Corinthians 7:2)
  - C. There are other fundamental truths as well regarding the family.
    - 1. Husbands and wives should help each other be saved. (1 Corinthians 7:16; 1 Peter 3:7)
    - 2. Children should be taught to be obedient to God. (Deuteronomy 6:6, 7; Ephesians 6:1)
    - 3. Children should be urged to marry a **faithful** Christian.

### III. SOME SINS IN THE HOME CAN BE AVOIDED BY APPLYING GOD'S WORD

- A. Mankind departed from God's teaching concerning marriage.
  - 1. Just ten generations after creation, God was sorry that He had made man. (Genesis 6:6)
  - 2. God's people were warned about marrying "outsiders." (Genesis 6:2; Exodus 34:12-16)
  - 3. Solomon was led into idolatry by his foreign wives. (1 Kings 11:10)
- B. The primary purpose for woman's creation was companionship.
  - 1. No suitable companion for Adam was found among the animals. (Genesis 2:18, 22)
  - 2. The human race is continued through procreation.
  - 3. Sexual desires are to be satisfied within the marriage relationship. (Hebrews 13:4)
  - 4. One's spiritual welfare is also enhanced in marriage. (1 Peter 3:1-7)
- C. Young people preparing for marriage need to ask some questions **honestly**.
  - 1. Will this person live by God's standard of morality? (1 Corinthians 7:1-5)
  - 2. Will he or she help me go to heaven? (1 Corinthians 7:16)
  - 3. Will this person help me prepare my children for heaven? (2 Timothy 1:5)
  - 4. Is this person worth going to hell for eternity? (Matthew 13:41-43)

### CONCLUSION

- I. REMEMBER THAT NO CHILD ASKED TO BE BORN
- II. IT IS OUR TASK AS PARENTS TO HELP THEM BE SAVED
- III. WE MUST DO ALL WE CAN TO ELIMINATE SINS IN THE HOME

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the only real cure for the breakdown in our society? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Name some of the sins that are found in some Bible families. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What impact is sin having on some denominations as well as among some of the brethren?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. List the three characteristics of the home as created by God. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the one acceptable cause for divorce and remarriage? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What are some other fundamental truths about the family? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. In just \_\_\_\_\_ generations after creation, God was sorry that He had created man.
8. What was the result when God's people married those on the "outside?" \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. State some of the things that God intended to be accomplished within the marriage relationship. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What are some questions that young people need to ask themselves about their prospective mate? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## THE SIN OF DIVISION

(Ephesians 4:1-16)

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. CONSIDER THE TERRIBLENESS OF DIVISION

- A. Imagine waking up in Berlin on August 13, 1961, and seeing the effect of division.
- B. Families were separated in some cases until the wall came down in November 9, 1989.

#### II. DIVISION HAS ALWAYS BEEN A BLIGHT ON THE PEOPLE OF GOD

- A. There was strife between Abraham's servants and Lot's servants. (Genesis 13:7)
- B. Division is one of the things God hates. (Proverbs 6:19)

#### III. WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT DIVISION IS A SIN

- A. It is not just something that is ill-advised, or merely undesirable.
- B. Division is a sin. (Romans 16:17, 18; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 12:25; Galatians 5:19-21)

### BODY

#### I. LET'S NOTICE THE BASIS OF UNITY

- A. From the beginning, the church has been made up of people with different backgrounds.
  - 1. The Jews had sects such as the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Zealots, and Herodians.
  - 2. When the Gentiles obeyed the Gospel, the potential for conflict increased.
  - 3. Two crucial elements of unity are attitudes and doctrine.
- B. Attitudes are crucial to the attainment and maintenance of unity.
  - 1. Facts upon which unity is based are preceded by necessary attitudes. (Ephesians 4:1-6)
  - 2. Without lowliness and meekness, there will be no lasting unity.
  - 3. Meekness is not weakness as proven by Christ. (Matthew 11:28; 23:13-39)
  - 4. Longsuffering, forbearing one another, and giving diligence require effort on our part.
- C. The goal of unity is a worthy one indeed.
  - 1. It requires us to stand firm and "strive together" for unity. (Philippians 1:27)
  - 2. Too much strife goes on in the church, and only the Devil rejoices.
  - 3. We must do only that which is best for others. (Philippians 2:2-4)
  - 4. Jesus is our example of one who put others first. (Philippians 2:5-11)
  - 5. Division could be avoided by practicing the "golden rule." (Matthew 7:12)
- D. Truth is equally important in our effort to avoid division.
  - 1. A good attitude combined with error is not acceptable to God either. (2 John 9-11)
  - 2. Other warnings are given by God concerning teaching false doctrine. (Galatians 1:8, 9; Colossians 2:8; I Timothy 6:3-5; 2 Peter 2:1-22)
  - 3. Oppose error by "speaking the truth in love." (Ephesians 4:15; 2 Timothy 4:1-5)
  - 4. Some division is necessary when truth is at stake. (1 Corinthians 11:19)

#### II. LET'S EXAMINE THE ROOT CAUSE OF DIVISION

- A. Division is not a problem that only faithful brethren have.
  - 1. Rest assured that all denominations and brethren in apostasy are embroiled in controversy from time to time.
  - 2. Some settle it through organizational control which shifts the focus away from the individual.

B. Division comes when men follow human wisdom.

1. James discusses the differences between human and divine wisdom. (James 3:13-18)
2. It comes when men have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition. (James 3:14-16)
3. Such a person may not appear to be that way on the surface.
4. We know something is wrong when we have a “knot in our stomach” as we assemble.
5. Peace is from God and comes when we use His wisdom. (James 3:17, 18)

C. Division comes from the wrong kind of desire.

1. Quarrels and conflicts result from selfishness and pride. (James 4:1, 2)
2. Like Diotrephes, certain men love to have the preeminence. (3 John 9)
3. The church is the only place they feel like they can exercise control over others.
4. They usually convince themselves that they are “standing for the truth.”
5. Swirling around selfishness are jealousy, faction, lust, and envy. (James 4:6, 10)
6. All of this results in brethren being judged unjustly. (James 4:11, 12)

D. Let’s notice two examples of this occurring.

1. A dispute arose among the apostles concerning who was the greatest. (Luke 22:24)
2. The church in Corinth was full of division. (1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 11:18, 19)
3. Paul identified one of the causes as carnality. (1 Corinthians 3:3)
4. Another one that he discussed was pride. (1 Corinthians 3:18, 20; 4:8, 10)
5. They were “puffed up” from the Greek word *phusioo* meaning to blow up or inflate. (1 Corinthians 4:6, 18; 8:1; 1 Timothy 3:6)
6. Pride keeps us from seeing the value of others. (Romans 14:3; 1 Corinthians 12:24, 25)

### III. DIVISION IS A WORK OF THE FLESH

A. The sin of division is clearly a work of the flesh.

1. Of the sixteen sins listed, eight are associated with division. (Galatians 5:19-21)
2. Remember that “they which practice such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.”

B. Let’s take a brief look at these eight terms associated with division.

1. Enmities (hatred, KJV) describes the animosity between groups of people as well as individuals.
2. Strife (variance, KJV) is the outgrowth of viewing someone as an enemy, and can result from arguing over words. (1 Corinthians 1:11; 3:3; 1 Timothy 6:3, 4)
3. Jealousy (emulations, KJV), from a word often translated zeal, is a resentment that fuels division. (Romans 10:2; 1 Corinthians 3:3; 2 Corinthians 12:20)
4. Outbursts of anger (wrath, KJV) describes one who suddenly blows up over something.
5. Disputes (strife, KJV) describes the actions of those who are selfishly ambitious. (James 3:14)
6. Dissensions (seditions, KJV) is a word meaning “standing apart” and aptly describes the situation in many churches as division grows. (Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 3:3)
7. Factions (heresies, KJV) describes the end of the division process and it may result in a new congregation or opposing groups within the congregation.
8. Envying (envyings, KJV) is the displeasure one feels at the good fortune of another, and it often leads to resentment. (Ephesians 4:13, 15, 26)

- C. How can we identify a factious person?
1. Such people are often critical of others and their efforts.
  2. They always want to be in the limelight.
  3. Only certain people are invited into their home.
  4. They have “home studies” that turn into gripe sessions, or sessions where error is taught.
  5. He or she refuses to speak to certain people.
  6. They team up with and talk to a select few about starting a new congregation.
  7. They encourage secret meetings.
  8. They take a sudden interest in the weak and disgruntled members, hoping to gather support for an approaching showdown.
- D. What should be done once such a person is identified?
1. The church should mark and turn away from them. (Romans 16:17, 18)
  2. After two warnings, they must be refused fellowship. (Titus 3:10, 11)
  3. The sooner they are disciplined the better off the church will be.

## **CONCLUSION**

- I. THE BERLIN WALL CAME DOWN AND THE CITIES WERE UNITED
- II. THERE SHOULD BE NO DIVISION IN THE KINGDOM OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE
- III. WE MUST BECOME PEACEMAKERS (Matthew 5:9)

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Division is named in the Old Testament as one of the things that God \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The two crucial elements of unity are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Show that meekness does not imply weakness. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. In order to attain unity, it is necessary for us to always think of others as more important than \_\_\_\_\_; our example in this regard is \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Show that a good attitude alone is not enough in trying to maintain unity among Christians.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Division occurs when men follow \_\_\_\_\_ wisdom instead of \_\_\_\_\_ wisdom, and are like \_\_\_\_\_ who loved to have the preeminence in the church.
7. Using some or all of the eight terms associated with division in Galatians 5:19-21, show how division may take place in a local church. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. List some of the things to watch for in identifying a factious person. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What should be done to someone who is a factious member of the church. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Jesus said, "Blessed are the \_\_\_\_\_ for they shall be called sons of God."

## ATONEMENT FOR SIN

(Leviticus 17:10-16)

### INTRODUCTION

- I. THERE IS A CONNECTION IN THE BIBLE BETWEEN BLOOD AND ATONEMENT
  - A. In our text, the blood under consideration was animal blood. (Leviticus 16:29, 30)
  - B. However, this blood was not sufficient. (Hebrews 10:4)
- II. JESUS PROVIDED THE REAL ATONEMENT FOR MAN'S SIN
  - A. He offered His blood as a sacrifice for sin. (Hebrews 9:11-14)
  - B. The blood atonement of Christ is denied by modernists.
- III. THE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST IS MAN'S ONLY REMEDY FOR SIN
  - A. Without His shed blood, there is no forgiveness of sin.
  - B. Let's study what the Bible says about atonement and other related concepts.

### BODY

- I. NOTICE THE WORD "ATONEMENT" ITSELF
  - A. There is no agreement on the original meaning of the Hebrew word.
    - 1. The general feeling is that the word meant to cover in the sense of expiating or placating.
    - 2. The idea was that when a sin was committed, the blood was offered to cover or atone for the sin by removing it from God's view.
    - 3. This was the purpose of the sacrificial system of the Old Testament.
  - B. The word is found only once in the New Testament.
    - 1. It is translated reconciliation in some versions. (Romans 5:11)
    - 2. The lack of a Greek equivalent means that we must look to other words as well.
  - C. We will pursue the subject according to the primary meaning in the Old Testament.
    - 1. Abel's blood was "uncovered," and cried out to God. (Genesis 4:10)
    - 2. Even animal blood was to be covered. (Leviticus 17:13)
    - 3. Job felt that if his blood were covered, no vindication would be made. (Job 16:18)
    - 4. Ezekiel used this idea to speak of Israel's blood waiting to be avenged. (Ezekiel 24:6-8)
    - 5. Isaiah used this as well. (Isaiah 26:21; Numbers 35:30-40)
    - 6. Another way Isaiah expressed it was that God would cast sin "behind His back," or out of view. (Isaiah 38:17)
- II. THERE ARE SEVERAL RELATED CONCEPTS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT
  - A. One such term is **reconciliation**.
    - 1. Reconciliation was needed because of sin. (Leviticus 6:30)
    - 2. There was a sin offering in behalf of the priests. (Leviticus 8:15)
    - 3. Reconciliation was connected to the matter of the scapegoat. (Leviticus 16:20-28)
  - B. Another term to be considered is **expiation**.
    - 1. It is found three times in the Old Testament.
    - 2. In one instance it had to do with purifying water. (Numbers 8:7)
    - 3. In another case it had to do with the guilt of murderers. (Numbers 35:33)
    - 4. The third usage is with reference to God's atoning for His land. (Deuteronomy 32:43)

5. In each case there was a need to purify something because of sin.

C. A third term is **ransom**.

1. The careless owner of an ox who killed a man could redeem himself from death by the payment of a ransom. (Exodus 21:29, 30)
2. Once something was redeemed, it was set free from the constraints that it may have had.
3. The Septuagint uses various forms of the Greek word *luo* meaning “to release on receipt of a ransom.” (W.E. Vine)

D. Another related concept is the matter of **satisfaction**.

1. The term is found only in the Old Testament and was applied in one passage to the life of a murderer. (Numbers 35:31, 32)
2. Only the shedding of his blood could **satisfy** God.
3. This is a point that needs to be considered in sentencing murderers today. (Genesis 9:6; Romans 13:4)

### III. LET’S CONSIDER THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING ABOUT ATONEMENT

A. First we will look at the concept of **reconciliation**.

1. Reconciliation is the result of the atonement of Christ. (Romans 5:10, 11)
2. Man becomes God’s enemy through sin, and needs to be reconciled.
3. The apostles were given a “ministry of reconciliation.” (2 Corinthians 5:18)

B. The idea of **expiation** is also found in the New Testament.

1. Man needs to be purified from sin. (Romans 3:23)
2. The cleansing agent is the blood of Christ. (Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18, 19; 1 John 1:7)
3. The animal sacrifices only served to purify the flesh. (Hebrews 9:13, 14)
4. Once we are purified, we are God’s possession. (Titus 2:14)

C. Another term to be considered is **propitiation**.

1. Christ is the propitiation for sin through His blood. (Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:2)
2. Coming from the Greek word *hilasterion*, it contains the concepts of both satisfaction and mercy. (Hebrews 9:5)
3. The publican used a form of the same word as he asked for mercy. (Luke 18:13)

D. The concept of **satisfaction** is also in the New Testament.

1. One of the results of sin is anger on God’s part.
2. Those who walk after the ways of the world cannot please, or satisfy God. (Romans 8:8; 2 Timothy 2:4)
3. Only Christ’s blood could satisfy a holy and just God once sin has been committed.

E. A final term to be considered is **ransom**.

1. When one serves sin, the choice is made to be its slave. (Romans 6:16)
2. Jesus came to give His life as a ransom for all. (Matthew 20:28; Hebrews 2:9)
3. Those who are redeemed are said to be “bought with a price.” (1 Corinthians 6:20; 7:23)
4. This ransom was made for all men, and not for just a few as Calvin and others taught.

## CONCLUSION

I. JESUS CAME TO TAKE AWAY THE SINS OF THE WORLD (John 1:29)

II. WE MUST HAVE HIS BLOOD APPLIED TO OUR SINS (Romans 6:3, 4)

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. The blood of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ could not take away sin.
2. Discuss the general meaning of the Hebrew word for atonement. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Why did Abel's blood "cry out to God?" \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Why did Job not want his blood to be covered? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. On the day of atonement, one goat was sacrificed and another was used as a \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The term "expiation" has to do with the need for something to be \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Under the Law of Moses, what could be done under certain circumstances to avoid paying the penalty for some sin? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Paul said that he and the other apostles were given the ministry of \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Jesus came to give His life as a \_\_\_\_\_ for the sins of all.
10. The apostle John wrote that Christ is the \_\_\_\_\_ for the sins of the whole world.

## CONFESSION OF SINS

(1 John 1:5-10)

### INTRODUCTION

- I. GOD HAS ALWAYS INSISTED THAT MEN CONFESS THEIR SINS
  - A. People who have done wrong have always been required to admit it.
  - B. This is necessary for us to do with each other if relationships are to be right.
- II. THIS REQUIREMENT LEADS TO A HOST OF OTHER QUESTIONS
  - A. What is confession, to whom must it be made, and how specific must it be?
  - B. Do abuses of the practice mean that we should not confess sins at all?
- III. WE MUST LOOK TO GOD'S WORD FOR THE TRUTH ON THIS SUBJECT
  - A. This will force us to deal honestly with our own sins.
  - B. The Lord has spoken on this subject as He has on all other matters pertaining to salvation.

### BODY

- I. LET'S LOOK AT A HISTORY OF CONFESSION OF SINS IN THE BIBLE
  - A. God has always required that one confess his or her sins.
    - 1. While no specific teaching is found prior to the Law, the general truth is found.
    - 2. Those who confess and forsake their sins will prosper. (Proverbs 28:13)
    - 3. God may have been attempting to give Cain a chance to confess his sin. (Genesis 4:9)
  - B. Under the Law of Moses, a confession of sin was required along with the offering.
    - 1. Even sins of ignorance had to be confessed once they became known. (Leviticus 5:1-5)
    - 2. David prayed for God's word to reveal his sins to him. (Psalm 19:12)
    - 3. The high priest confessed the people's sins over the scapegoat. (Leviticus 16:21)
    - 4. Confession also accompanied restitution in certain cases. (Numbers 5:6, 7)
  - C. The Psalms of David clearly reflect what is required as one confesses sins.
    - 1. One must be totally frank and honest about sin in his life.
    - 2. Consider David's confession of his sin with Bathsheba. (Psalm 32:5; 51:3, 4)
  - D. Next, consider the preaching of John the Baptist.
    - 1. We cannot tell how specific their confession of sins was.
    - 2. The confession of sins accompanied their baptism. (Matthew 3:6)
  - E. Confession of sins is a part of the Gospel for Christians.
    - 1. Many saints in Ephesus openly confessed their sin. (Acts 19:18)
    - 2. Confession of sin is commanded as a condition of forgiveness. (James 5:16; 1 John 1:9)
  - F. A confession of sins is an admission of guilt.
    - 1. When we sin, we "miss the mark." (James 5:16)
    - 2. The Greek word for confession, *homologeō*, literally meant "to say the same thing."
    - 3. In short, we are admitting that we are guilty as charged.
- II. LET'S LOOK AT THE CONCEPT AND PRACTICE OF CONFESSION
  - A. The concept of confession implies several things.
    - 1. The first presupposition is that sin is real, not imaginary.
    - 2. The second is that individuals can be and are guilty of sins.
    - 3. The fact that we must confess sins means they are not already forgiven as Calvin taught.

4. There is a divine requirement that one guilty of sin must confess his sin.
  5. It is possible for one to know of his sins.
- B. Some people attempt to offer substitutes for confession.
1. They offer some good deeds, such as liberal giving, as a substitute for confession.
  2. Others try to separate themselves by time or distance from the sin.
  3. Still others depend on the forgetfulness of others as a substitute for confession.
  4. Some people rely on their popularity to override the need to confess sins.
- C. Other popular substitutes are actually abuses of the Biblical practice of confession.
1. Some people come forward, ask for the prayers of saints, but fail to confess the sin.
  2. Others offer general statements such as, "I've sinned," or "I've not been as faithful as I should have been."
  3. Establishing a "confessional" on the front seat does not take the place of confession of sin to the individuals involved. (Matthew 5:23, 24)
- D. A genuine confession of sin is mandated in the Bible.
1. One who would desire to remain in fellowship with God must confess his sins as a part of "walking in the light." (1 John 1:7-9)
  2. Such confession is to be made "one to another," not to a priest, preacher, or anyone else in a one-sided arrangement as is practiced by some churches. (James 5:16)
- E. There is a need for both public and private confession of sin.
1. We must make it clear that these exact terms are not found in the Bible.
  2. However, the need to be reconciled to a brother, or to deal with a brother alone establishes the need for a private confession of sin. (Matthew 5:23, 24; 18:15-17)
  3. Some in Ephesus made it known publically that they had repented. (Acts 19:18)
  4. Private sins need not be made public, and public sins cannot be kept private.
- III. A PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARD CONFESSION OF SIN IS IMPORTANT
- A. Everything that we do, whether right or wrong, is related to our attitude.
1. Controlling the heart is crucial to the task of regulating our attitude. (Proverbs 4:23)
  2. Remember that we are to renew our minds. (Romans 12:2)
- B. Consider the case of David in the Old Testament.
1. He did not try to conceal his sin any longer, but begged for forgiveness. (Psalm 51:4)
  2. As is the case with genuine repentance, David changed his life.
- C. Let's summarize the teaching found in this example.
1. David was emphatic: "I have sinned." (v. 4)
  2. By asking to be delivered from "blood guiltiness," David wanted forgiveness for all the sins that were involved in Uriah's death. (v. 14)
  3. It was directed to God. (v. 1)
- IV. THERE ARE BENEFITS TO CONFESSION OF SINS
- A. All of God's commandments were given for our own good.
1. Moses stated this principle to Israel after the Law was given. (Deuteronomy 6:24)
  2. The same truth is taught by Paul in the New Testament. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17)
- B. Confession of sins brings great benefits to those who determine to seek God's forgiveness.
1. Others can pray for us and help us to become strong. (James 5:16)
  2. We can have a clear conscience. (Acts 23:1; 24:16)

3. By confessing our sins, we are more determined to do right. (2 Corinthians 7:11)
4. Others are encouraged by our willingness to confess our sins. (Matthew 5:16)
5. It is a demonstration of obedience. (1 John 5:18)
6. Last, but certainly not least, is the benefit of forgiveness and renewed fellowship with God. (1 John 1:7-9; 2:1, 2)

## **CONCLUSION**

- I. THE PRODIGAL SON CAME HOME AND CONFESSED HIS SINS TO HIS FATHER
- II. HE WAS WELCOMED BY HIS FATHER ONCE HE CHANGED HIS LIFE
- III. WE MUST BE WILLING TO CONFESS OUR SINS IN ORDER TO PLEASE GOD

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. The Bible says that those who \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ their sins will prosper.
2. Describe what happened under the Law of Moses when a person discovered they had sinned.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is a person really admitting to when confessing a sin. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. List some things implied by the concept of confession of sins. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. State some of the substitutes that people offer instead of confessing their sin. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What is the basic error of the Catholic church regarding confession of sins? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What determines when a sin is to be confessed privately versus publicly? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What do we learn from David's confession of his sin with Bathsheba? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. List some of the benefits of confessing our sins. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What do we learn from the story of the prodigal son and his return? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **PUNISHMENT OF SIN**

(2 Peter 3:3-10)

### **INTRODUCTION**

- I. PUNISHMENT FOR WRONGDOING IS DISAPPEARING FROM SOCIETY
  - A. Too many are willing to excuse criminals for a variety of reasons.
  - B. Anyone who speaks in favor of punishment is seen as unloving, harsh, and extreme.
- II. WE ARE REAPING THE CONSEQUENCES OF THIS PERMISSIVENESS
  - A. Too much attention is given to why the crime was committed.
  - B. Punishment is a necessary deterrent to crime.
- III. WE MUST KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT PUNISHMENT AND SIN
  - A. We must remember that the flood was God's punishment for sin. (Genesis 6, 7)
  - B. Punishment for sin is a basic truth of the Gospel. (Romans 6:23)

### **BODY**

- I. LET'S DEFINE PUNISHMENT AND SIN
  - A. Let's notice both the English and Greek definitions of the word punishment.
    - 1. According to Webster, punishment is a "penalty inflicted for an offense, fault, etc."
    - 2. The Greek word that is translated punishment carries with it the idea of penalty, punishment, and vengeance as demanded by justice. (W.E. Vine's Expository Dictionary)
  - B. Now let's recall the definition of sin.
    - 1. It often comes from a word that means "missing the mark."
    - 2. Moses Lard once wrote that sin ". . . is simply the breaking of the divine law, no matter what may be the specific nature of the act done."
- II. NOW LET'S NOTICE SOME TRUTHS ABOUT PUNISHMENT FOR SIN
  - A. Punishment is necessary and reasonable.
    - 1. The nature of God demands a just treatment of sin. (Romans 5:13; 7:7-12)
    - 2. If God had not punished even the first sin, He would have become a liar. (Genesis 2:17)
    - 3. By not punishing sin, God would have condoned sin. (Habakkuk 1:13)
    - 4. God has revealed righteousness to us. (Psalm 119:172; 1 John 5:17)
  - B. The Bible records examples of those who sinned once and were punished.
    - 1. One sin brought punishment to Adam and Eve.
    - 2. One sin cost Uzzah his life. (2 Samuel 6:6, 7)
  - C. Guilt brings a penalty.
    - 1. The consequences of sin fall on other people. (Hosea 4:6; 1 Corinthians 15:21)
    - 2. However, each individual must accept and bear the guilt of sin. (Psalm 51:4)
    - 3. Ultimately all sin is committed against God. (Genesis 39:9)
  - D. Punishment for sin is eternal in nature.
    - 1. The "wages of sin is death," and Paul meant spiritual death. (Romans 6:23)
    - 2. This death also involves punishment. (Luke 16:19-31)
    - 3. Our word hell, when it is the translation of *Gehenna*, pictures a place of perpetual fire and suffering. (Luke 12:5)

4. It is a place where the “fire is not quenched.” (Mark 9:47, 48)

### III. PUNISHMENT FOR SIN IS A REALITY

- A. Some teach that the wicked will not suffer at all, but will be annihilated.
  - 1. They claim that the words **destroy** and **death** should be understood literally.
  - 2. However, the word eternal is applied to both life and death. (Matthew 25:46)
- B. There are others who believe in universalism, and they say all will be saved.
  - 1. They reason that a loving God could not punish anyone forever.
  - 2. The universal salvation doctrine totally ignores the justice of God. (Hebrews 12:29)
  - 3. Furthermore, their claim that it is unfair for God to punish people eternally for what happened in a few short years, misses entirely the serious nature of sin.
- C. Both of these false ideas undermine morality.
  - 1. If these ideas are correct, there is no need for a standard of right and wrong.
  - 2. Peter taught the skeptics of his day that a day of punishment is coming. (2 Peter 3:3-10)
- D. There are valuable lessons to be learned.
  - 1. God means what he says. (Genesis 2:17; 3:6, 22)
  - 2. There are no exceptions made since He is a just God. (Romans 1:18; 2:6-11)
  - 3. Each of us will give an account to God. (2 Corinthians 5:10)

### CONCLUSION

- I. ARE YOU READY FOR THE JUDGMENT DAY?
- II. NONE OF THE WICKED WILL ESCAPE THE PUNISHMENT GOD HAS PREPARED
- III. NONE OF THE RIGHTEOUS WILL FAIL TO BE REWARDED

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Describe the view held by many in our society toward punishment for wrongdoing.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Give the definition of “punishment” from both Webster and Vine. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. State some reasons why punishment for sin is necessary. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. While the \_\_\_\_\_ of sin may fall on other people, the \_\_\_\_\_ of sin belongs to the individual who sinned.
5. All sin is ultimately against \_\_\_\_\_.
6. What kind of death was Paul referring to when he spoke of the “wages of sin is death?”  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Jesus described hell as a place where the “\_\_\_\_\_ dieth not and the fire is not \_\_\_\_\_.”
8. How would we prove that both heaven and hell are eternal? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Show the doctrine of universal salvation is not true. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. State some of the lessons we need to learn about punishment of sin. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **THE WORD: SAFEGUARD AGAINST SIN**

(Psalm 19:7-14)

### **INTRODUCTION**

- I. TO AVOID SIN WE MUST BE ABLE TO DEFINE IT
  - A. Shall we allow each person to define it for himself? (Judges 21:25)
  - B. To some extent, this is what is happening in our society today.
- II. THE RESULT OF SUCH THINKING IS MORAL CHAOS
  - A. To a Muslim, polygamy is not sin, but the sexual vices of Americans are disgusting.
  - B. For many Americans, the only requirement for lawful sex is two consenting adults.
- III. GOD'S WORD IS THE ONLY CORRECT STANDARD FOR DEFINING SIN
  - A. Following a common standard is the only way any civilization can survive.
  - B. Only by following the Bible, can any nation please God. (Proverbs 14:34)

### **BODY**

- I. CONSIDER THE CONCEPT OF NATURAL LAW
  - A. This concept goes back to the eighteenth century.
    - 1. During the Enlightenment, intellectuals viewed the universe as a creation of God.
    - 2. Furthermore, they believed it was governed by predictable and natural laws of nature.
    - 3. Nineteenth century religious leaders wrote about a "natural theology" which they believed ran parallel to the natural laws of science.
    - 4. They believed that principles of right and wrong were as natural as the law of gravity.
  - B. We can learn some things from their ideas.
    - 1. Man is a rational being and God appeals to that rationality. (Psalm 19:1, 2)
    - 2. Man is without excuse for not believing in God. (Romans 1:19-29)
    - 3. However, no common standard of morality can be found apart from God's word.
    - 4. The sanctity of human life is viewed differently from one society to another.
  - C. However, there are two critical limitations to an appeal to natural law.
    - 1. Even if natural law were the rule, now revealed law judges all men. (Acts 17:30)
    - 2. Humans would eventually declare the unnatural to be natural. (Romans 1:21-32)
    - 3. This is what has happened in our day with the rise of Humanism.
- II. GOD'S REVEALED LAW ALONE CAN DEFINE SIN
  - A. Mankind cannot find the proper standard alone.
    - 1. The "way of man is not in himself." (Jeremiah 10:23)
    - 2. Paul recognized the role of the law in defining sin. (Romans 7:7)
    - 3. As the apostle John wrote, ". . . sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4)
  - B. There are three important truths derived from John's definition of sin.
    - 1. Moral relativism is wrong, and such things as fornication, adultery, and homosexuality are sinful despite their political correctness. (Galatians 5:19-21; Romans 1:26, 27)
    - 2. All sinful conduct is equally hideous, and attempts to categorize them reveal one's social prejudices. (Matthew 19:9; Romans 1:29-32; Ephesians 5:3-5; Titus 1:5-9)
    - 3. Ignorance is no excuse for disobedience, and knowledge leads one to life. (Acts 17:30; Ephesians 4:18; 1 Peter 1:14, 15)

C. Our time is especially troubling.

1. While more than ninety percent of Americans claim to believe in God, there is little evidence of it in their lives.
2. The world has distracted most people.
3. Knowledge and wisdom are there for those who want it. (John 7:17; James 1:5)

### III. THE WORD OF GOD IS OUR GUIDE TO A HIGHER LIFE

A. The word of God is not just an arbitrary legal system.

1. God's revelation guides us past the pitfalls of life.
2. The gospel of Christ convicts a person of sin. (Romans 7:24, 25)
3. Most people are comfortable with their personal idea of morality.

B. The word of God elevates us to a higher plane.

1. We use His word to avoid sin, and enjoy the benefits of righteousness. (Psalm 119:11)
2. In God's word are greater truths than science can offer. (Proverbs 2:10)
3. Therefore, we are encouraged to study. (Isaiah 34:16; John 5:39; Acts 17:11)

C. Consider these practical suggestions.

1. Read the Bible, and study the text carefully to find the meaning.
2. Get good materials that will aid in studying the Bible.
3. Talk about the Scriptures with others.
4. Do not just study to prove that you are smarter than others. (1 Corinthians 8:1)
5. Ask God for help. (James 1:5)
6. Practice what is learned. (Psalm 119:100; Philippians 3:13-16)

### IV. THE WORD OF GOD IS THE SOURCE OF TRUE CHARACTER

A. A large portion of human behavior is based on an emotional response.

1. We do not always think things out, but act out of reflex, feeling, and emotion.
2. The values that guide such actions are embedded in us.
3. While Freud called it the superego, some geneticists believe it was encoded in our genes.

4. In a moment of crisis, when reflective thought is not possible, we act in accord with our character rooted in belief and values. (Matthew 12:34, 35)

B. One's character is not given at birth, but it is formed and shaped a little at a time.

1. Sometime we accept the world's values without thinking.
2. The wedge between us and society was driven by the Spirit of truth. (John 15:18-27)
3. For the most part, we form our own character. (Colossians 3:9, 10)

C. We should come to delight in God's law.

1. This will only happen if we meditate on His law. (Psalm 1:2)
2. The Holy Spirit has revealed the truth that can change our lives. (Romans 8:1-6)
3. If we fail to build the proper character, we will be like the Pharisees who saw the Law of God as only a set of rules to be debated. (Matthew 23:25-28)

## CONCLUSION

I. WE MUST SEEK THE WISDOM THAT IS FROM ABOVE

II. WE MUST NOT RELY ON THE VALUES OF THE WORLD

III. LET US REJOICE IN WHAT IS LAWFUL AND GOOD

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What would be the result if each person were allowed to set their own standard of right and wrong? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. The Bible teaches us that “\_\_\_\_\_ exalts a nation, but \_\_\_\_\_ is a reproach to any people.”
3. Although many during the age of Enlightenment were wrong on some things, what can we learn from them? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Give the two limitations of trying to follow natural law. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What truths are derived from the fact that “. . . sin is the transgression of the law?”  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. While polls show that over 90 percent of Americans say they believe in God, what is also true of most Americans? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. List some of the things the word of God can do for us. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What are some practical things we can do to improve ourselves as children of God?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. When is our character really tested? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. List some things that help to shape our character. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## PERFECTING HOLINESS

(2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1)

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. THIS IS A CHALLENGE TO ALL CHRISTIANS

- A. To the Corinthians, it may have been a special challenge.
- B. Some of them had been fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, sodomites, thieves, covetous, drunkards, and revilers. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)
- C. Yet, there was for them a means of cleansing as there is for us today. (2 Corinthians 7:1)

#### II. THINK OF THE CHARACTER OF ONE WHO IS STRIVING FOR PERFECTION

- A. By reflecting the beauty of Jesus in his life, he is kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving. (Ephesians 4:32)
- B. He is a person of convictions, who loves God with all his heart, soul, and mind, and is willing to earnestly contend for the faith. (Matthew 22:37; Jude 3)
- C. He has reached a degree of holiness in his life, but recognizes the need to strive for an even greater degree of holiness.

#### III. WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE TRUTH ON THE MATTER OF HOLINESS

- A. It does not come by means of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as is taught by some denominations such as the Nazarene Church.
- B. Neither does it come as a result of Christ's perfection being "credited" to all members of the Lord's body.
- C. We must understand how God helps us to perfect holiness in our lives.

### BODY

#### I. GOD WORKS IN THE LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN

- A. While men's explanations of how God works in us are wrong, the fact is that he does.
  - 1. Paul said we are "His workmanship." (Ephesians 2:10)
  - 2. Paul prayed that God would grant the Ephesians to be strengthened with might, and be filled with all the fulness of God. (Ephesians 3:14-19)
  - 3. In another place, Paul said, "For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13)
  - 4. The question to be settled is concerning the means that God uses to accomplish it.
- B. First, He uses His **word**.
  - 1. God's word is at work in the lives of His people. (1 Thessalonians 2:13)
  - 2. His word provides a picture of the holiness which characterizes Jesus and His father.
- C. Second, He uses His **commands**.
  - 1. God's commands to the Israelites were not arbitrary, but were for their own good. (Deuteronomy 10:13)
  - 2. The commands of God for us today are likewise given by God for our well being. (1 Timothy 4:8)
- D. Third, he uses His **chastening**.
  - 1. God chastens us in many ways as He did Job and Paul. (2 Corinthians 12:7)
  - 2. Our trials help to make us stronger, and to be able to persevere. (Romans 5:3, 4)

E. Fourth, He uses His **protective restraints**.

1. Recall the restrictions He placed on Satan in Job's case. (Job 1:12; 2:6)
2. He restrains Satan for us in time of temptation. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

F. Fifth, He uses His **people**.

1. He has established "one another" relationships in the church, and we are to use them. (Hebrews 10:24, 25)
2. Considering, provoking, and exhorting are key words in the passage.

G. Sixth, He uses His **promises**.

1. This instrument of God is mentioned in the text. (2 Corinthians 7:1)
2. The promises referred to are those in latter verses of chapter six, and include God dwelling among us, being our God, being our Father, and allowing us to be His sons and daughters. (2 Corinthians 6:16-18)
3. Notice the conditional nature of these promises.

## II. CHRISTIANS MUST SUBMIT TO GOD

A. The fact that God works within His people cannot be denied.

1. However, let no one make the mistake of believing that Christians are passive in this process.
2. The very expression "perfecting holiness" implies action on the part of Christians.
3. Albert Barnes, in commenting on 2 Corinthians 7:1, wrote, "Paul was not afraid to bring into view the agency of Christians themselves in the work of salvation. He, therefore, says, 'Let us purify ourselves,' as if Christians had much to do; as if their own agency was to be employed; and as if their purifying was dependent on their own effort . . . He who expects to be made pure without any effort of his own, will never become pure; and whoever becomes holy will become so in consequence of strenuous efforts to resist the evils of his own heart, and to become like God." (Pages 163, 164)
4. No athlete is made perfect unless he takes part in the process.
5. Similarly, Christians must apply the instructions in His word.

B. First, one must rid himself of complacency.

1. Complacency is a hindrance to perfecting anything.
2. We must not be content with where we are as a child of God. (Hebrews 6:1)

C. Second, one must separate himself from the world and every false way.

1. We have nothing in common with them from a spiritual standpoint. (2 Corinthians 6:14-16)
2. We must not allow ourselves to become entangled with something which will lead us astray. (Ephesians 5:11; 2 Timothy 2:4)

D. Third, one must cleanse himself from all filthiness of the flesh.

1. Filthiness of the flesh would be such outward sins as adultery, fornication, drunkenness, and homosexuality. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)
2. Filthiness of the spirit would be sins of the heart where the outward sins begin. (Matthew 5:28; 1 John 3:15)
3. No growth in holiness can take place as long as these sins prevail. (1 Peter 2:1, 2)
4. Many problems in the church today are caused because of such sins.
5. Such sins are present at times long after a division is complete.

- E. Fourth, one must pursue higher and higher levels of holiness.
  - 1. True holiness does not come by simply ridding oneself of immoral conduct, or by setting up for oneself a code of conduct as the Pharisees did.
  - 2. Holiness comes from loving God, meditating on His word, worshiping Him both in and out of the assemblies, etc.
  - 3. We must bring “every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”  
(2 Corinthians 10:5)
- F. Fifth, one must do these things in the fear of God.
  - 1. Our attitude must be like the title of the song, “Have Thine Own Way, Lord.”
  - 2. God and only God should be the focus of our lives. (Matthew 6:33)
- G. Sixth, all of these things must be done continuously.
  - 1. The word “cleanse” used in 2 Corinthians 7:2 is a verb form which involves an action which began at some point in time and is continuous from that point.
  - 2. Sometimes we are too busy perfecting our careers, our appearance, our golf swing, our houses and lawns, but not holiness.

### III. CHRISTIANS ARE CLEANSED BY THE BLOOD

- A. Perfecting holiness can only occur because we have the blood of Jesus to cleanse us.
  - 1. This cleansing is not limited to what takes place at baptism. (Acts 22:16)
  - 2. This is an ongoing process. (Ephesians 5:25-27)
- B. However, we must remember that this cleansing is conditional on man’s part.
  - 1. It is only for those who are striving to be holy. (1 Peter 1:15, 16)
  - 2. The cleansing which comes to such people is based on a willingness to repent and confess sin. (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9)

### I. SELF-EXAMINATION IS IN ORDER FOR CHRISTIANS FROM TIME TO TIME

### II. COMPLACENCY MUST BE LAID ASIDE

### III. PERFECTING HOLINESS IS AN ONGOING TASK

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Some denominations, such as the Nazarene Church, teaches that holiness comes by means of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Name some of the sins which the Corinthians had been involved in before their conversion.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Give some passages which teach that God works in the lives of Christians. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Explain how God uses commands to help his people to perfect their holiness.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How does the chastening of the Lord help us to perfect holiness? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What Old Testament character is an example of how God uses protective restraints to enable one to perfect his holiness. \_\_\_\_\_
7. List some things which Christians must do to enable holiness to be perfected in them.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Filthiness of the flesh would include such sins as \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
9. What is the significance of the tense of the word translated “cleanse” in 2 Corinthians 7:2?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What conditions must be met in order for a child of God to be forgiven of sin?  
\_\_\_\_\_