

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE

TEACH ABOUT

SIN?

I do not claim to be original in my thoughts and ideas in this booklet. In fact, I believe these teachings on sin are the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Apostles. The teachings that I am presenting in this booklet are not merely teachings that have been passed down to me, as they are actually contrary to what I often heard as I was growing up. These conclusions are what I have arrived at after much searching of the Scriptures, meditating, prayer, and simply working through my thoughts logically. They are not a result of what I have heard preached, nor read from books, although I have gathered additional thoughts from books and good preaching. I must say that I have used many ideas that I have found in various books of what I was already aware of, but not able to put in words. As a matter of fact I have copied whole sections from some articles that I have found. I have not done this to steal the thoughts of others and claim them as my own, but my desire is to simply spread the Gospel truth with as much clarity as possible. If you will read this booklet with all honesty, I am convinced that you will come to understand the truth on this vital issue. You might ask how I am so certain that this is the truth about sin. I am convinced that this is truth because there is so much Biblical support for these concepts. The support for these teachings are God's eternal Word and His Holy Spirit that will bear witness with your conscience of this reasonable truth. Now neither one of these two supports will force you to believe, so if you want the truth that this booklet offers, you will need to be completely honest with yourself and God. I will not ask you to believe what is in this booklet just because I believe it and am teaching it. To do so would rob the real value of the truth that is within. You will need to logically think over each section and take it to much prayer before God. But if you are not willing to give this booklet honest consideration, then even God will not make you believe the truth that He offers to you.

There has been much confusion sowed throughout the world when it comes to the subject of sin.

Many people believe that all humans must sin continually here on earth. Many even believe that those that have received the salvation from the Lord continue to live in sin. What is the basis of this belief? Is it the Word of God that reveals this to us through the Bible and Holy Spirit, or is it what men say? Is a belief a fact just because it may be popular and well taught? Who is the real author of this belief? Is it God, or is it Satan along with his helpers? Which one gains if we believe that we must always sin here on Earth? We must lay all of our beliefs before God and have him show us the answer to those questions. We must ask God to show us whether this belief is truth or a lie.

I will occasionally include the number from Strong's Concordance [*example*] beside the translated word so that you may look up the meaning.

Let us start by taking a look at a few verses of the Bible to see what the relationship is to be between God's children and sin.

{**Matthew 1:21**} And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name **JESUS**: for he shall save his people **from their sins**. {Compare to Luke 1:74-75, John 1:29, 8:32, 34, 36, Acts 3:26, Galatians 1:4, Titus 2:14, & 1 John 3:5}

Note: Let us notice that the salvation that Jesus came into this world to provide was a salvation "from" sin. Many false teachers today, are offering a salvation to those who remain "in" sin. Obviously this is not the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ, but rather a man-made salvation that is offered by deceiving minds. We should also notice that this verse does not teach that Jesus came to save His people from the consequences of their sins. I do agree that we can receive forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ, but contrary to the popular teaching of today, this was not His priority. Shouldn't we want to take the time to thoroughly search the Scriptures on this subject of sin to get a good understanding of it?

{**Matthew 5:8**} Blessed are **the pure in heart**: for they shall see God. {Compare to Hebrews 12:14}

Note: Let us first notice that this verse is speaking of the heart, which is where the very motives from which transgressions flow. Also let us notice that this promise of seeing God is only given to the "pure" in heart. How much sin can a heart have within it and still be considered pure?

{**Matthew 5:48**} **Be** ye therefore **perfect**, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. {Compare to Luke 6:40, 8:14, John 17:23, 1 Corinthians 2:6, 2 Corinthians 7:1, 13:9, 11, Ephesians 4:12-13, Philippians 3:15, Colossians 1:28, 3:14, 4:12, 2 Timothy 3:17, Hebrews 6:1, 10:14, 12:23, 13:21, James 1:4, 2:22, 3:2, 1 Peter 5:10, 1 John 2:5, 4:12, 17-18, & Revelation 3:2}

Note: Must we accuse The Lord Jesus Christ as being a tyrant for commanding the impossible from us? Could it be that people just do not understand what kind of perfection the Lord was commanding of us? Then again, perhaps many do not want to know what He meant. I rarely use the word "perfect" while ministering truth from the Bible, although the word and its related forms are found 127 times within the KJV of the Bible. The reason I often avoid the word is because society has developed it into something different than what the translators meant it to be. They have changed it from meaning moral perfection into the idea of human perfection, such as perfect eyesight, perfect hair, perfect skin, perfect knowledge, perfect foresight, and other things that are often impossibilities. If this is what people mean when they say, "we cannot be perfect," then I agree with them. However, that is not what the majority mean when they make this statement. It just takes a short time of preaching against sin before someone will boldly proclaim that we cannot be perfect, meaning that as humans we must sin. Well this is exactly what the translators mean by the word **perfect**. The perfection of the Bible refers to someone that loves God supremely. They have repented and placed their faith in Jesus, and no longer live a life of sin, but rather one of holiness and completeness in the Lord.

{**Matthew 7:13-23**} Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: {14} Because **strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.** {15} Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. {16} Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? {17} Even so **every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.** {18} A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. {19} **Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.** {20} **Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.** {21} Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; **but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.** {22} **Many** will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? {23} And then will I profess unto them, **I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.** {Also Luke 13:24-29}

Note: Who are the "many" that will hear these sobering words? Most would like to think it is those of the false religions that don't even recognize Jesus Christ. This can't be true as this "many" do recognize Jesus Christ and even call Him Lord, yet they do not do what He says {Compare to Luke 6:46}. These "many" claim to have taught, preached, cast out devils and done many wonderful works, all in the name of Jesus Christ (*as He is the one speaking here*). Perhaps through the world's eyes this "many" seem to be great Christians and church leaders, yet these false professors of Christ will be the ones that hear "depart from me." Why must these professors of Christ hear these terrible words from the Lord? Well just a brief, honest look at these verses lets us know why. (1) They did not enter the strait gate onto the narrow way. (2) They did not heed the warning against the false prophets. (3) They are not doers of the will of the Father which is in heaven. (4) The Lord does not know them because they have not departed from iniquity {Compare to 2 Timothy 2:19}. Many may think that these gates are our final destination of Heaven or Hell. If this is true then why does there remain a way to travel before reaching either destruction or life? Perhaps the narrow pathway that leads to life is the way of holiness that the Christian must live once he has been born again and entered through the gate {Compare to Proverbs 16:17, Isaiah 35:8-9 & Hebrews 12:12-29}?

{**Matthew 10:32-33**} Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. {33} But **whosoever shall deny me** before men, **him will I also deny** before my Father which is in heaven. {Also Luke 12:8-9} & {Compare to 2 Timothy 2:12, 3:5, Titus 1:16, 2 Peter 2:1, 1 John 2:22-23, Jude 4, Revelation 2:3, 3:8}

{**Mark 1:15**} And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: **repent ye, and believe the gospel.** {Compare to Matthew 3:2, 4:17, Mark 6:12, Luke 13:3, 5, Acts 2:38, 3:19, 8:22, 17:30, 26:20, 2 Corinthians 7:10, Revelation 2:5, 16, 22, & 3:3}

Note: Without a true understanding of the nature and guilt of sin, repentance and faith, or belief in the Gospel, cease to make any real logical sense.

{**Mark 7:20-23**} And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. {21} For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

{22} Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: {23} **All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.** {Also Matthew 15:18-20} & Compare to Revelation 21:27}

{**Mark 9:43-48**} And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: {44} Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. {45} And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: {46} Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. {47} And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: {48} Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

{**Luke 9:23-24**} And he said to them all, **If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.** {24} For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but **whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.** {Also Matthew 10:38-39, 16:24-27, Mark 8:34-38, 10:21, Luke 14:27}

{**Luke 13:3 or 5**} I tell you, Nay: but, **except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.**

{**Luke 18:15-17**} And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. {16} But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. {17} Verily I say unto you, **Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.** {Also Mark 10:13-16}

{**John 3:3-7**} Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.** {4} Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? {5} Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.** {6} That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. {7} Marvel not that I said unto thee, **Ye must be born again.**

Note: What is being born again? Is it merely going to an altar, raising a hand, your start of religious activity, joining a denomination, or being water baptized? Being born again is a total new start. It is a change from living after the flesh (*selfishness*) to total consecration to the Lord through repentance and faith, while receiving the Holy Spirit as your divine guide.

{**John 5:14**} Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: **sin no more,** lest a worse thing come unto thee.

{**John 8:11**} She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: **go, and sin no more.**

{**John 8:32**} And ye shall know the truth, and **the truth shall make you free.**

{ John 8:34 } Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.**

{ John 8:36 } If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Note: What are we to be freed from with the freedom that Jesus Christ has provided? Is it the freedom to continue on in sin without having to suffer the consequences, as so many are teaching today? No! No! The freedom that Jesus Christ has provided is the freedom from committing sin. When these verses are read within their context with verse 34, the meaning is clear.

{ John 14:15 } **If ye love me, keep my commandments.**

{ John 14:21 } **He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me:** and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. *{ Compare to Matthew 7:16-20, Luke 6:43-46, & James 3:10-12, 1 John 5:2-3 }*

{ John 14:23-24 } Jesus answered and said unto him, **If a man love me, he will keep my words:** and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. **{ 24 } He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings:** and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. *{ Compare to Matthew 7:16-20, Luke 6:43-46, James 2:5, & 3:10-12 }*

Note: I find it amazing that so many will profess to love Jesus while also admitting to constantly failing Him. Obviously this is a contradiction to what the Word of God proclaims, for if we love the Lord Jesus Christ, we will obey His words of command.

{ Acts 2:38-39 } Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ **for the remission of sins**, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. **{ 39 }** For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call.

{ Acts 3:19 } **Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out,** when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

Note: Amazingly repentance is rarely mentioned today in sermons or at altars. It is even more rare to hear it taught as something other than mouth service rendered to God in order to be protected from the consequences of sin (*A totally selfish motive*). From this verse, and many others throughout the Bible, we find that true repentance is necessary to receive forgiveness of sins.

{ Acts 3:26 } Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, **sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.**

Note: This blessing from God does not even mention forgiveness, although it is also included in the atonement upon the condition of true Biblical repentance and faith. This verse only mentions the blessing of turning away from our iniquity by being in the likeness of the resurrection of Jesus through the Spirit of God to walk in newness of life *{ See Romans 6:4 }*. Because people are not seeing the exceedingly sinfulness of their sins, they do not see that being able to turn from them is any kind of blessing.

{ **Acts 5:32** } And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also **the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him**. { *Compare to Romans 8:9, 14-16, & 1 John 3:24* }

{ **Acts 26:15-18** } And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. {16} But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; {17} Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, {18} To open their eyes, and **to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith** that is in me.

Note: These verses are very clear. A sanctified life that has turned from the darkness of sin and deception will be the life that receives forgiveness and an inheritance. Unfortunately many are teaching contrary to this as they are only feeding the people what their itching ears desire.

{ **Romans 6:1-2** } What shall we say then? **Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?** {2} **God forbid**. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? { *Compare to Titus 2:11-12 & Jude 4* }

Note: How can so-called Bible believers that have this same verse within their Bible, profess to have received God's grace while they admit that they continue in sin? Contrary to the Apostle Paul's instructions, that are inspired by God, many are passing out a false grace as the receivers continue to live a life in sin.

{ **Romans 6:6** } Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that **henceforth we should not serve sin**.

{ **Romans 6:12-18** } **Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body**, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. {13} Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. {14} **For sin shall not have dominion over you:** for ye are not under the law, but under grace. {15} What then? **shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid**. {16} Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of **sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?** {17} But God be thanked, that ye **were the servants of sin**, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. {18} **Being then made free from sin**, ye became the servants of righteousness.

{ **Romans 6:20-23** } For when ye **were the servants of sin**, ye were free from righteousness. {21} What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. {22} But **now being made free from sin**, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end ever-lasting life. {23} For **the wages of sin is death**; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Note: How can any honest Bible reader read through the *sixth chapter of Romans* and proclaim that the redeemed of God will continue on in as servants to sin?

{ **Romans 8:12-14** } Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. {13} For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but **if ye through the Spirit do mortify**

the deeds of the body, ye shall live. {14} For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. {Compare to Galatians 5:16-17, 24-25, & 6:7-8}

Note: If we have to be led by the Spirit of God to be His child, then how can we think that we can remain in sin, unless we think that the Spirit leads us into sin?

{1 Corinthians 6:9-10} Know ye not that **the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?** Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, {10} Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

Note: Once while quoting this verse, someone responded that there was “none righteous, no not one,” referring to *Romans 3:10*. If that verse describes the saved, then our only conclusion as Bible believers is that “none shall inherit the Kingdom of God.” Of course when *Romans 3:10* is read with the context of surrounding verses (10-18), and understanding they were quotes from the book of Psalms, it is easy to see that this passage is describing unregenerate souls.

{1 Corinthians 15:34} **Awake to righteousness, and sin not;** for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame

{*New International Version*} Come back to your senses as you ought, and **stop sinning;** for there are some who are ignorant of God – I say this to your shame.

{2 Corinthians 5:17-18} Therefore **if** any man be **in Christ**, he is a **new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, **all things are become new.** {18} And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

{2 Corinthians 7:1} Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us **cleanse ourselves from all filthiness** of the flesh and spirit, **perfecting holiness** in the fear of God.

{2 Corinthians 10:3-6} For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: {4} (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) {5} Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought **to the obedience of Christ;** {6} And having in a readiness to **revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.**

{Galatians 1:3-5} Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, {4} Who gave himself for our sins, that he might **deliver us from this present evil world**, according to the will of God and our Father: {5} To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen

{Galatians 5:19-21} Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, {20} Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, {21} Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that **they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**

{ Galatians 5:24 } And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

{New American Standard Bible} Now **those who belong to Christ Jesus** have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

{ Galatians 6:7-9 } Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for **whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.** {8} 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.** {9} And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Note: Even with a warning against deception as clear as this, many believe that that they can continue sowing sin in their lives and still reap eternal life.

{ Ephesians 2:1-3 } And **you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;** {2} Wherein **in time past** ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of **disobedience:** {3} Among whom also we all **had our conversation in times past** in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

{ Ephesians 4:17-30 } This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, {18} Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, **because of the blindness of their heart:** {19} Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. {20} But ye have not so learned Christ; {21} If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: {22} That ye **put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;** {23} And **be renewed** in the spirit of your mind; {24} And that ye **put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.** {25}

Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. {26} Be ye angry^[3710] and **sin not:** (*{NASB}* Be angry, **yet do not sin:** *{NIV}* In your anger, **do not sin:**) let not the sun go down upon your wrath: {27} **Neither give place to the devil.** {28} Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. {29} Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. {30} And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

{ Ephesians 5:3-11 } But fornication ^[4202], and **all uncleanness** ^[167], or covetousness ^[4124], **let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;** {4} Neither filthiness ^[151], nor foolish talking ^[3473], nor jesting ^[2160] which are not convenient (fitting or proper): but rather giving of thanks. {5} for this ye know, that no whoremonger ^[4205], nor unclean person ^[169], nor covetous man ^[4123], who is an idolater ^[1496], hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. {6} Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things *(the list of sins above)* **cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.** {7} **Be not ye partakers with them.** {8} For ye were sometimes darkness, **but now** are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: {9} (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) {10} Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. {11} And have no

fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

{ **Colossians 3:5-10** } Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: {6} **For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:** {7} **In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.** {8} **But now ye also put off all these;** anger[*Strong's 3709*], wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. {9} Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; {10} And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Note: From the many verses quoted above, we can see how sin is to be a thing of the past for the true child of God.

{ **1 Thessalonians 4:7** } For God hath **not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.**

{ **2 Thessalonians 1:7-9** } And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, {8} In flaming fire taking vengeance on **them** that know not God, and **that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:** {9} **Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction** from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

{ **2 Timothy 2:19** } Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let **every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.**

Note: With this verse being so clear, it is amazing that so many continue to take Christ's' name by claiming to be a "Christian," yet they have not departed from iniquity.

{ **Titus 1:15-16** } Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. {16} **They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.**

Note: This is a very good definition of many that profess to be Christians today. The Bible calls these people reprobates because they have turned from the truth and are living their life as a counterfeit.

{ **Titus 2:11-15** } For the **grace of God that bringeth salvation** hath appeared to all men, {12} **Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;** {13} Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; {14} Who gave himself for us, that he might **redeem us from all iniquity,** and **purify** unto himself a peculiar people, **zealous of good works.** {15} These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

Note: This verse does not say that we are redeemed "in" our iniquities, but rather "from" our iniquities. Why is a so-called grace being passed out by so many, yet without the teachings that we must deny ungodliness, worldly lusts, & the need of living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world?

{ **Hebrews 2:1-3** } Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. {2} For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and **every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;** {3} **How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation;** which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

{ **Hebrews 5:9** } And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal **salvation unto all them that obey him;**

{ **Hebrews 10:26-27** } For **if we sin wilfully** after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, **there remaineth no more sacrifice** for sins, {27} But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Note: If we continue to sin, even after being given the saving knowledge of the Gospel truth in Jesus Christ, then what more can be done to turn us away from sin?

{ **Hebrews 12:14** } Follow peace with all men, and **holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:**

Note: What is this holiness that is needed to see the Lord?

{ **James 1:14-15** } But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. {15} Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and **sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.**

{ **James 1:21-22** } Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. {22} But **be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,** deceiving your own selves.

{ **James 1:27** } **Pure religion** and undefiled before God and the Father **is this,** To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and **to keep himself unspotted from the world.**

{ **James 2:5** } Hearken, my beloved brethren, **Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love^[25] him?**

{ **James 2:17-20** } Even so **faith, if it hath not works, is dead,** being alone. {18} Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. {19} Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. {20} But wilt thou know, O vain man, that **faith without works is dead?**

Note: It is obvious that the saving faith that James writes about, is much more than a belief in the historical facts of Jesus and the Bible.

{ **1 Peter 1:2** } Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, **through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience** and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

{ 1 Peter 1:14-16 } As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the **former** lusts in your ignorance: { 15 } But as he which hath called you is holy, so **be ye holy in all manner of conversation**; { 16 } Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

{ 1 Peter 1:22-23 } Seeing ye have **purified your souls in obeying the truth** through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: { 23 } Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

{ 1 Peter 2:21-22 } For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, **leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps**: { 22 } **Who did no sin**, neither was guile found in his mouth:

Note: Why do we hear so many claims of reverence toward Jesus Christ, but so little of Him being an example set for us to follow in the same steps? The “first step” in following Jesus is to do no sin!

{ 1 Peter 4:17 } For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, **what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?**

Note: Amazingly many are led to believe that Heaven will be their end, even though they continue to live in disobedience.

{ 2 Peter 1:3-4 } According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: { 4 } **Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust**.

Note: To have true saving faith, is to place our confidence in the Lord and to trust Him to give what He has promised. The Lord has promised that we can be delivered from a life of sin by becoming partakers of His divine nature. Do you believe this?

{ 2 Peter 2:9-22 } The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: { 10 } But **chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government**. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. { 11 } Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. { 12 } But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; { 13 } And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; { 14 } Having eyes full of adultery, and **that cannot cease from sin**; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: { 15 } Which **have forsaken the right way**, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; { 16 } But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet. { 17 } These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. { 18 } For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through

much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. {19} While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. {20} **For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.** {21} For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. {22} But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

{1 **John 1:5-7**} This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and **in him is no darkness at all.** {6} **If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie,** and do not the truth: {7} But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

{1 **John 1:9**} If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us **from all unrighteousness.**

{1 **John 2:1**} My little children, these things write I unto you, **that ye sin not.** (*{NASB}* I am writing these things to you **so that you may not sin.** *{NIV}* I write this to you **so that you will not sin.**) And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

{1 **John 2:4**} **He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar,** and the truth is not in him.

Note: How many do you know that claim to know God, but yet continue to live in disobedience. The Bible calls these people liars and we know that all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone *{See Revelation 21:8}*.

{1 **John 2:6**} He that saith he abideth in him (*Jesus Christ*) ought himself also so **to walk, even as he walked.**

{1 **John 2:15**} Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. **If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**

{1 **John 2:28-29**} And now, little children, **abide in him;** that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that **every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.**

{1 **John 3:3-10**} And every man that hath this hope in him **purifieth himself, even as he (*Jesus Christ*) is pure.** {4} Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. {5} And ye know that **he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.** {6} **Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not:** whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. (*{NASB}* **No one who abides in Him sins;** no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.) {7} Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. {8} **He that committeth sin is of the devil;** for the devil

sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. {9} **Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;** for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. {10} **In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God,** neither he that loveth not his brother.

{1 John 3:9-10} {*New International Version*} **No one who is born of God will continue to sin,** because God's seed remains in him; **he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. This is how we know who the children of God are and who are the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God;** nor is anyone who does not love his brother.

{1 John 3:18} My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; **but in deed and in truth.**

{1 John 3:24} **And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him.** And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. {*Compare to Romans 8:9*}

{1 John 5:2-5} By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and **keep his commandments.** {3} **For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.** {*Compare to John 14:15, 21, 23-24*} {4} **For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world:** and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. {5} Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

{1 John 5:18} We know that **whosoever is born of God sinneth not;** ({*NASB*} We know that **no one who is born of God sin;** {*NIV*} We know that **anyone born of God does not continue to sin.**) but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

{2 John 1:6} **And this is love, that we walk after his commandments.** ({*NIV*} **And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands.**) This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, **ye should walk in it.**

{3 John 1:11} Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. **He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.**

Note: How is it possible for someone to read through these God-inspired, epistles of John and continue to believe that the man, that has been born again continues to live in sin?

{**Revelation 21:7-8**} **He that overcometh shall inherit all things;** and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. {8} But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, **shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone:** which is the second death.

{**Revelation 21:27**} **And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth,** ({*NIV*} Nothing impure will ever enter it.) neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: **but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.**

{ **Revelation 22:11-15** } He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. {12} And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. {13} I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. {14} **Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.** {15} For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

It is impossible to look at the above verses with any honesty, and not see the need of taking sin serious. If the Word of God takes sin so serious, then we should see the importance of knowing if and when sin is charged against us.

Let us first see what the Bible declares as not being sin but many often mistake as being sin.

Temptations are not sin!

{ **Matthew 4:1** } Then was **Jesus** led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be **tempted** of the devil.

{ **Luke 22:28** } Ye are they which have continued with me (*Jesus*) **in my temptations.**

{ **Hebrews 2:18** } For in that he himself (*Jesus*) hath suffered **being tempted**, he is able to soccour them that are tempted.

{ **Hebrews 4:15** } For we have not an high priest (*Jesus*) which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but **was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.**

If we respond to temptation by treating it as though it were sin or indicative of sin, then we are forced into the uncomfortable position of considering Jesus as a sinner since He too was subject to temptation. A suggestion or temptation is not in itself sinful!

You may not know this, but The Webster's Dictionary has been greatly changed from its original edition. The newer versions are often not a good place to get an understanding of Biblical words as sinful secular men have changed many of the meanings. The original 1828 edition was based upon the Bible and therefore lines up to it closely. We know the Bible is the authority and not the dictionary, but I have included definitions from the 1828 edition throughout this booklet so that you may compare it to what we find in the Bible.

1828 Noah Webster Dictionary: *Temptation*; The act of tempting; enticement to evil by arguments, by flattery, or by the offer of some real or apparent good. (2) Solicitation of the passions; enticements to evil proceeding from the prospect of pleasure or advantage. (3) The state of being tempted or enticed to evil. (4) Trial (5) That which is presented to the mind as an inducement to evil. (6) In colloquial language, an allurement to any thing indifferent, or even good.

The False Concept of Temptation being sinful.

{ James 1:14-15 } But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. {15} **Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.**

Let us take a closer look at this verse

{ James 1:14-15 } But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust^[1939] (*natural desires*), **and enticed** (*something unlawful to look appealing*). **Then when lust**^[1939] **hath conceived** (*made a willful choice to do wrong either in heart or actual action*), **it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death** (*separation from the Godhead, which is the only true source of eternal life*).

The word lust in the verse above from the King James Version is often given as the reason that man must sin. They say that this word is man's inherited sinful nature due to the curse of the first sin of Adam. This word that has been translated lust is the Greek word *epithumia*^[1939] which would have been better translated as desire, rather than lust. Other translations use the word desire in this verse, such as our God given natural desires that even Adam and Eve would have had before any sin. Nothing is sinful with these desires if we gratify them lawfully. Even the King James Version has opted to translate this same Greek word *epithumia*^[1939], as desire when it relates to the Lord Jesus Christ. *Luke 22:15* reads like this, "And he (*Jesus*) said unto them, *With desire*^[1939] *I have desired*^[1937] *to eat this passover with you before I suffer.*" If we say that the word that has been translated lust in *James 1:14* is a "sinful nature flaw" in man such as is often thought of as the "Old Man," then we must be consistent and declare that even Jesus Christ had this flaw. We know that the Lord Jesus Christ did no sin, nor did he have any "sinful nature flaw", therefore we must be consistent and declare this word as nothing more than

our God given natural desires. These natural desires are often a means of temptation that we may choose to unlawfully gratify, and thus sin, but these desires by themselves are not sinful.

Let's summarize the temptation cycle leading to sin and death.

- 1) Satan is the tempter and brings temptations against us.
- 2) The means used are our desires.
- 3) The temptation comes across our mind, as thoughts of choices that we know are unlawful.
- 3) The temptation is designed to stimulate or appeal to our God given natural desires.
- 4) Once we realize that the thoughts are of an unlawful choice according to our known will of God, we are confronted with a decision of the will. At this point we are only dealing with temptation and not sin. We can either choose to cast out these thoughts while replacing them with what we know as lawful (*See Philippians 4:7-9*), resulting in no sin, or we can choose to make the wrong choice within our heart, bringing forth the conception of sin.
- 5) Regardless of whether the choice is manifested visibly or just cherished within the heart, once the gratification of these desires is chosen by our will, against the known will of God, it gives birth to sin.
- 6) Once sin is committed, the result is spiritual death and separation from the holy Godhead, which is the only true source of eternal life.

Temptation is a universal problem. It is not confined to continents, races or economic classes. From the unregenerate heathen to the sanctified saint, all must deal with temptation from time to time. Temptation has many faces. It spans the scale from the subtle to the blatant, and seems to have an uncanny knowledge of our susceptibilities.

To be tempted isn't sin, but to yield to the temptation is sin. We cannot keep all the temptations away from our mind, but we can keep from yielding to them. Here again is where the devil is likely to trick you. He will bring temptations upon your mind and then say to you, "You are not saved or you wouldn't have such thoughts," when he is the dirty devil that put them there. As long as you keep resisting it, you're clear before God. Of course we should always avoid situations that we know will bring excess temptations upon ourselves.

Don't mistake temptation for sin. Temptation is a suggestion to gratify a desire in an illegal way or amount. Temptation is not sin. The feelings ("*Lust*" - *natural desires*) tug at the will. The mind refers to memory and moral law for knowledge of right and wrong. The will is informed and is faced with a decision. If the reason tells the will that carrying out that desire would be lawful and the will acts on this, happiness and harmony result. But if the mind gives a verdict of unlawful, the will can be caught in a struggle between the right choice, and the wrong one. There is always "pleasure" in sin of a very temporary kind (*See Hebrews 11:25 & 1 Timothy 5:6*). An honest conscience or mind (*one that has not become seared*) knows right is best. If the mind is honestly choosing the greatest good it knows, then it is not a bad choice. It may not be the wisest compared to another, but it is the wisest to the honest heart, and is therefore not sinful. This must not be confused with deliberate deceit. We must also remember

that actions of outward conduct are not always proof of a right heart (*See 1 Samuel 16:7 & John 7:24*).

Are thoughts right or wrong in themselves? Thoughts alone are neither moral (good, right) nor immoral (bad, wrong), but amoral (having no morality or deliberate rule of right and wrong in themselves). Jesus said in Mark 7:20-21, "That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, **out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts**, adulteries, fornications, murder ...". We must make a distinction between "evil thoughts" and having "thoughts of evil." Jesus could have thoughts of evil (Judas was to betray him, etc.) but Jesus did not have evil thoughts (thinking of how to do evil). The Lord Jesus Himself was given "tempting thoughts" during His dark wilderness temptation but yet He never sinned (*See Hebrews 4:15*). A thought may be a temptation to do wrong, but it is not sin until the will gives assent to the thought. It is neither the feelings nor the thoughts that make men sin. Reason tells men right or wrong (using memory and conscience), but reason does not carry out decisions. Feelings tug, the mind advises, but neither makes the final choice. Reason may say the choice is right, but has in itself no power to choose that way. Moral decision is under the exclusive control of the will, the key center of the whole character. The will's choice makes a man a sinner or saint in God's eyes.

Is sin a "thing"? Are feelings or desires, for instance, good or bad in themselves? It is our intent or purpose behind the choice to indulge in a desire for its own sake that makes it right or wrong. Desires are never wrong in themselves, but should be seen as amoral. Constitutional desires are God-given and when lawfully gratified, bring joy and fulfillment in our life, but when unlawfully gratified they not only destroy our lives but also others, all the while bringing dishonor to our Creator. The tug of desire is not sin in itself; but a natural feeling produced by stimulation and without direct control by the person. There is no sin in desiring to fulfill or gratify a God-given appetite. Sin occurs when we abuse our endowments by gratifying ourselves in an illegal manner or proportion. Thoughts should never be classified as sin. It was necessary for Jesus to have comprehensive thoughts of the devil's words in order for it to have been a legitimate temptation. This is especially critical for those who have been suffering under an unnecessary load of self-condemnation while they have been tempted, but have not yielded. When confronted with a strong desire, it is essential to ask yourself if it is possible to lawfully gratify that desire. Remember that God does not disapprove of pleasure associated with gratification, as He is our Creator and has created us as such. God does mind an unintelligent quest for pleasure in order to gratify ourselves at the expense of others and His will. When we realize that God created us to be happy and fulfilled, then we will recognize His restraints as blessings designed to promote our enjoyment of life. God's restraints are for our own good.

Our constitutional desires are the means of temptation. That committing the will to gratify a desire, any desire, is sin. Sin is the will set on the gratifying of desire to promote one's own good, ignoring all other more important good. Being in that state of commitment is sin. The will, while in that state, continues to always choose self-gratifying as its end, for its own good. It never chooses anything else, ever, until it repents. The desire for food can be lawfully gratified when it is a means of keeping healthy and strong in loving God. It cannot be wisely gratified in itself. The heart that has repented and chosen to love God supremely will always choose the greatest good at the expense of personal gratification. Thus for the sake of a proper relationship with God and others, the saint chooses only those things that promote that end, often under the prompting of desire to maintain natural strength, health, and relationships.

Let us look at how temptation, leading to sin and death was brought upon our original parents.

{ **Genesis 3:1-6** } 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? {2} And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: {3} 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. {4} And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: {5} 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. {6} 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.

Satan tempted Eve and she chose to gratify her natural God-given desires, contrary to the known will of God. The temptation was not the sin. Yielding to that temptation is what became sin. Sin, when it has been committed, is spiritual death, and separation from God.

{ **1 John 2:16** } For all that is in the world, the **lust of the flesh**, and the **lust of the eyes**, and the **pride of life**, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

Lust of the flesh: Eve saw that the tree was good for food: she desired to eat it.

Lust of the eyes: Eve saw that the tree was pleasant to the eyes.

Pride of life: Eve desired to eat of the tree to be as a god and made wise.

When Satan tempted Jesus, he attempted to conceive desires in these same three areas.

{ **Matthew 4:3-11** } And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. {4} But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. {5} Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, {6} And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. {7} Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. {8} Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; {9} And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. {10} Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. {11} Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Lust of the flesh: command that these stones be made bread.

Lust of the eyes: All these things will I give thee.

Pride of life: If thou be the Son of God.

The devil used Jesus' natural desires that He had while in the same flesh that we all have, to bring temptation upon Him. But unlike our original parents, Jesus did not yield to those desires. These temptations are not from God but are occasioned by our God given flesh. They all have a common root: Our constitutional desires. This is why Jesus lets us know in *Luke 9:23*, "*if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.*"

Now that we have shown that temptations are not sin and that all are tempted as even Jesus was, let us look at one of the great promises of the Bible that we can claim when temptations do come our way.

{1 Corinthians 10:13} There hath **no temptation** taken you **but such as is common** to man: but **God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape**, that ye may be able to bear it.

This is good news! We do not have to let temptation become sin because God has promised us a way to escape every time it comes upon us. This promise can either be a great blessing or a great source of condemnation. It can be a great blessing if you are committed to obey God, as it is a promise that you can escape temptation without it becoming sin. But it can be great source of condemnation if you love your sins rather than God and desire an excuse for yielding. But for the honest seeker let us notice that the temptation, which may be bothering you, is just a common one. Let us not focus upon the mountain of trials, despair, and difficulties, but look for the escape. If you were to stay all night in a hotel on the 12th floor and fire broke out during the night, you wouldn't be standing around talking about how hot the fire looked or how black the smoke was: you would be looking for the fire escape. Quit looking at the mountains of fear, doubt, worry, and discouragement. Look for the escape! The escape is for us to humble ourselves down in prayer and leave our burden there. We must be willing to obey God's word when it is known to us. This is our escape. Just like the good old hymn that is often sung, "Trust and Obey."

Mistakes and Accidents are not sin!

Sin is not something you may be doing unconsciously, nor should sin be pronounced when in reality there has only been an accident or mistake.

SINS vs. MISTAKES and Accidents

Many people are deceived and led to believe they must always be sinners here on Earth. The results are that they lower the standard of true Christian living to a life of every day sinning and confession, and confession and sinning. Many live this defeated life because they do not seem to discriminate between a willful transgression and involuntary actions, or in simple words, between sins and mistakes or accidents. We need to know where innocence and ignorance end and responsibility and guilt begin; what is sin and what is merely a mistake or accident. It is very important for us to know when God may see us as guilty and therefore charged with sin. If we will take an honest look at the Bible, we will be able to come to the correct understanding of this problem.

Let us look at the relationship that knowledge has with our choices, when it comes to guilt and sin according to the Bible.

{ **John 3:19-20** } And this is the condemnation, that **light** (*knowledge of truth*) is come into the world, and **men loved darkness rather than light** (*men were choosing to not hear from God and learn of the truth*), because their deeds were evil. (*a rejection to walk in the light of truth that had been given them because they loved their sins*)

{ **John 9:41** } Jesus said unto them, **If ye were blind** (*unaware of the truth*), ye should have **no sin**: but now ye say, **We see**; therefore your **sin** remaineth (*it is now imputed because they would not correct themselves*).

{ **John 15:22-24** } If I had not come and **spoken unto them** (*brought to their knowledge*), they had **not had sin**: but now they have no cloak for their sin. {23} He that hateth me hateth my Father also. {24} If I had not done among them the works which none other man did (*knowledge*), **they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated** both me and my Father.

Note: Jesus said that there were things in the lives of these people that He was addressing in these last few verses, that needed to change. Jesus also lets them know that sin was not charged to them when they were doing these things in true ignorance, but because he had come and revealed the truth to them and they had refused, these things were now sin. God gives us room for maturing in the knowledge of righteousness, the same as we give our children room for growth. The fact that we expect a child to take on greater responsibilities, as they become older, doesn't mean that they were disobedient before.

{ **Romans 5:13** } For until the law sin was in the world: but **sin is not imputed when there is no law** (*Absolute knowledge of God's will*).

Note: Amazingly, many proclaim that babies are born with sin already charged against them, even though there is so much evidence to prove against this false theory (*See Matthew 18:3 & 19:14*). The theory that children are created by God with sin already within and imputed against them, is a false doctrine that was conveniently installed at the time period that soon ushered in the "Dark Ages" with the Roman Catholic dictatorship. This false doctrine completely destroys the responsibility and guilt of sin that the Bible clearly proclaims. What knowledge of God's commands does a newborn have that they are rebelliously transgressing against? The Bible

clearly proclaims that God creates each individual pure and upright, but it is the individual who seeks out their very own evil ways. (See *Ecclesiastes 7:29*). There is no sin charged to children until they reach an age in their life (*age of accountability*) of knowingly and willfully choosing against known light, and even then it is Biblically clear that they are only held responsible for their own transgressions (See *Jeremiah 31-33 & Ezekiel 18:19-32*).

{ **Romans 7:9** } For I was **alive without the law** once (*not accountable, no sin was imputed without knowledge of the law*): but when the **commandment came** (*knowledge of the law*), **sin revived** (*sprang to life*), and I **died** (*spiritual separation from God, which is the only eternal life*).

{ **Romans 8:1** } There is therefore now **no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.**

Note: After we have been born again with the Spirit of God and therefore “in Christ,” we must begin our growth in grace. As we grow in the knowledge of the Lord, the Holy Spirit may reveal something that we had been previously doing that God would have us to change. If God chooses to correct us by commanding us to go a different direction, we can trust that there is no condemnation if we obey our new-found knowledge by making corrections and continue to follow the leading of the Spirit (See *Philippians 1:9, 3:14-16*).

{ **James 4:17** } Therefore **to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.**

Note: This verse makes it absolutely clear at what point sin is charged to each individual. The verse lets us know that we must have a clear knowledge of the good that we should do. This would include not only sins of omission but also sins of commission. This verse doesn't say sin is charged to the person that may honestly be unsure of the good they should do, but to he that “knoweth.” Gideon was a man of great faith yet he wanted to be sure of God's will on a particular situation, so we read where he used the fleece to be sure. I have never read where God criticized Gideon for this, as Gideon wanted to “knoweth.” But after Gideon knew that he was hearing clearly from God, and if he had chosen to disobey, he then would have been charged with sin. The Lord is not hard and difficult to follow when you love Him. {see *1 John 5:3*} The Bible lets us know that His yoke is easy and His burden light. {see *Matthew 11:30*} We do not have to walk around being fearful that we may have missed something God wanted us to do. All we need is an honest and willing heart, and God will make His will clearly known to us. The verse above is a very clear New Testament definition of sin. Sin is only charged if we choose to rebel against the “known good, will of God.”

The 1828 Noah Webster Dictionary: Accident; 1) A coming or falling; an event that has taken place **without one's foresight** or expectation; an event which proceeds from an unknown cause, or is an unusual effect of a known cause, and therefore not expected; chance; casualty; contingency. 2) That which takes place or begins to exist **without an efficient intelligent cause and without design.** **Mistake;** To take wrong; To conceive or to **understand erroneously;** To **misunderstand** or misapprehend. An error in opinion or judgement; **misconception**
Note: An accident or mistake is not done as a willful act to choose what is already known as wrong.

As we can see from these many New Testament verses, there is no such thing as "unconscious" sin. There is no sin that we know nothing at all about that God will judge us for. Some may ask the question, "if we are only responsible for what we know, then wouldn't it benefit us to avoid learning more of God's will?" Only one with a rebellious heart would make such an assumption. If we are lovers of the Lord, we will study His word, so that we may learn more of the one we love. We live in a country where Bibles are easily available. Those who avoid studying the Bible thinking they will be less responsible, reveal their rebellious heart. God holds us responsible for all the light known, and the light we could have by study, which He has clearly made available to us. NO MORE, NO LESS!

The False Concept of Sin as a Slip or accidental fall

There are a many people who convey an almost accidental picture when they describe the first sin in the Garden of Eden. The way the story is often told is as follows. We find a couple walking innocently with God and then, all of a sudden they fall into sin. This is certainly misleading. The implications of the term "the fall" are certainly less arresting than would be the case with, say, "the rebellion." We should be very careful with our wording while describing Adam and Eve's transgression. If we present the idea that it is possible to simply slip or accidentally fall into sin, we greatly change the Biblical facts and can greatly influence others on how they perceive sin. This false idea must be dispensed with all rapidity lest we find even ourselves clouded by its influence.

It is important to refresh our memories as to the difference between what transpired in the Garden and a legitimate mistake or accident. We determined earlier that if an individual's action was not willed, then the individual is not charged as being guilty of sin. Adam and Eve's sin should never be referred to as a slip or a mistake made in true ignorance. God gave ample instruction concerning what they were to do and not to do in Eden and included sanctions or consequences to support His words. We read that "*the woman being deceived was in the transgression . . .*" (See *I Tim. 2:14*). We are not dealing with a woman who in her naivete had no understanding of what she was doing, but rather we see a transgressor, one who was voluntarily deceived, breaking and violating known laws. Then, too, Adam voluntarily transgressed with his wife. I'm persuaded that it would be far more accurate and descriptive if we would refer to the incident in the Garden of Eden as "The First Rebellion."

For your encouragement, then, let us continue this discussion, by frankly admitting that mistakes are not sins, and sins are not mistakes. It is, and always has been a fact that the motive back of every choice determines its true character. Many serious and possibly grievous mistakes are made that cannot essentially be sin, because the motive which prompted the action was not of such an intent as to give it the character necessary to make it a sin, therefore it can properly be nothing other than a mistake. God, therefore, who looks not merely upon the outward appearance but is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart, will also judge His creatures accordingly; for intention is the element in all our conduct which gives it character. This fact was even established under the Old Covenant. Let us see how unintentional mistakes were dealt with in the Old Testament.

Involuntary or Unintentional Actions

While looking over the Law, we can see as early as *Exodus 21:28-36* as the Laws of Restitution are given, that knowledge, or the lack of, was necessary to determine the punishment. As we can see through *Numbers 35*, involuntary accidents required a different kind of treatment in the Law of Moses. They were provided for in the six cities of refuge. If two men were chopping wood together and the ax head of one slipped from the handle, and lighted upon his neighbor and killed him, then he could flee to one of these cities and live: lest the avenger of blood pursue the slayer and take his life, when he was not worthy of death. This was done in order, “That **innocent** blood be not shed in the land” (See *Deuteronomy 19:10*). But if it could be proven that the slayer hated his neighbor and laid in wait for him in order to smite him mortally that he die, then he was to be delivered over to the man slayer, the avenger of blood. In such a case the city of refuge would not protect the guilty party because of intentional murder. This law for the protection of involuntary accidents included in its scope all kinds of unintentional accidents that might take place in the life of any of God's people. Even to this day, this law will hold well in any court of any country where justice has right of way. Involuntary accidents according to the Law of Moses did not require an offering to make atonement.

At this point there may be those that are asking about what is called the sin of ignorance of the Old Testament. I find it absolutely amazing that if someone refers to a principle that reveals sin, using the Old Testament, people are quick to let you know that the Old Testament doesn't apply anymore. But I find it even more amazing that these same people are quick to go back to the Old Testament if they think they can find an excuse for their sin. Let us take a look at what the Bible will show us about this “sin of ignorance” in the Old Testament.

According to the Law of Moses, when a sin of ignorance was committed, the party was guilty and obliged to make atonement for his sin only as it became known to him (See *Leviticus 4:22-23 & 27-35*). Even then to be truly guilty, it must have been a chosen ignorance as all Jews were to know the law (See *Deuteronomy 6*). Even if you do not agree with this conclusion, we must all admit that sins of ignorance are no where to be found in the New Testament. Unintentional mistakes do not bring any condemnation to the soul or any moral pollution because such acts are not a matter of willful rebellion against light. Humble souls will confess to God unintentional mistakes when discovered. Ignorance in law will not excuse anyone in our civil courts because we are obligated to know them, but God will excuse such because He knows when acts are truly done ignorantly.

Let us look at how God dealt with one that was innocent in a particular action due to true ignorance. When Abraham journeyed to Gerar he proclaimed that Sarah was his sister, rather than his wife. Abimelech, the king of Gerar, thinking that Sarah was unmarried, took her to be his wife. Let us see what God did next in *Genesis 20:3-6*.

{ **Genesis 20:3-6** } But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife. {4} But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? {5} Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: **in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this.** {6} And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, **I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me:** therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.

Note: God had kept Abimelech from intimately touching Sarah, and came to him in a dream to keep him from sinning. Do we serve the same God today? Is God a respecter of persons or

would he do the same for us today? Surely he will warn us of anything we would do, or fail to do, which would cause us to be guilty of sin.

From the Booklet “Holiness and Sin”, by Gordon C. Olson

“The Old Testament uses words to describe man's sin that show overwhelmingly man's free will or voluntariness in his life of sin, and thus his great guilt. Man is a rebel against a loving God, not a subject of pity who had lost his ability of will and thus could not help sinning. Each is held accountable for his own sin.... Sin is a violation of moral light, a refusal to conform to what is known and perceived. Quite frequently we find two or three different words used in a verse or context to describe sin. This is in accord with a Hebrew idiom of repetition, wherein the same event is described in different words with slight shades of meaning for emphasis and fullness of thought, as in *Ex. 34:7 and Ps. 32:5*. The seriousness of sin is according to one's understanding of what the will of God is. The guilt of so-called sins of “ignorance” must be based on a refusal to apply one's self to learn what is readily available of the will of God. It must refer to a state of voluntary ignorance, a closing of the ears to truth because of an unwillingness to conform.”

Even though I believe that we can see that the sin of ignorance of the Old Testament is still in line with the New Testament principles, we can not honestly include this in our search of what is charged as sin today. The idea of a sin of ignorance, unintentional mistakes, and involuntary accidents, are never mentioned as sin anywhere through the pages of the New Testament. The salvation that we receive from the Lord does not make any of us infallible, and consequently all are subject to accidents and mistakes due to lack of knowledge and physical limitations. If such happenings brought guilt and condemnation and moral pollution on the soul, then none could be saved. It seems strange to us that the contenders for a sinning religion do not make any allowance for temptations, mistakes, and accidents as we have mentioned above, but are guilty of mixing them all together. They have erroneously concluded that because all may and do at times make mistakes and have accidents, all are doing so intentionally in word, thought, and deed every day. They make no difference between unintentional acts that can have no contaminating effect on the soul, and willful transgressions that pollute the soul and make it unfit to inherit the kingdom of God. So when answering the question, “when is the guilt of sin charged?” We must deal only with intentional rebellion against God's known commands both of omission (*positive*) and commission (*negative*).

Let us look at what can truly be called Sins of Omission and Sins of Commission.

Another doctrine, which teaches that man cannot live without sin, is the doctrine concerning “*sins of omission*.” This teaching declares that you may be doing everything right, yet you sin if you overlook, or forget doing something. This teaching makes the believer labor exceedingly to make sure that there is nothing that he has overlooked. In fact, this teaching declares that you can't escape overlooking something: there is always something more that you can do, so you are bound to sin. James said: “*Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin.*” Such is the sin of omission. Those that teach this false teaching have dangerously changed what the Bible proclaims the victorious Christian life is to be like. According to the Bible, we are told that God's commandments are not grievous (*See 1 John 5:3*). Jesus Himself told the Jews who were laboring to keep all the added Law, “*Come unto me, all ye that labour*

and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (See Matthew 11:28-30). As we can see, the victorious, overcoming, Christian life that is free from sin, is a joyful haven of rest in the Lord (See *Hebrews chapters 3 & 4*). A doctrine that claims it is impossible to stop sinning opens the door to all sin for the deceived professing Christian. Every sinner is commanded to repent and those who refuse to do so shall perish (See *Luke 13:1-5*). We are also commanded to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (See *Acts 16:31*), and to believe the Gospel (See *Mark 1:15*), and those who refuse to believe shall be damned (See *Mark 16:16*). Furthermore, we are commanded to love God with all the heart, soul, mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves. In addition to what we have stated, there are many other positive commands that God may reveal to us. The scripture is clear; deliberately not seeking the will of God or not doing what you know to be the will of God, is sin

By *sins of commission* we include many things in God's Word that man is forbidden to do. Those who violate God's negative commands in this manner will be separated from their Lord and the effect is spiritual death. The warning signal is thrown across the paths of those who have reached the age of accountability: “*The soul that sinneth, it shall die*”, and also, “*The wages of sin is death*”. In our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, there are both negative and positive commands. Those who refuse to obey these commands will be *likened unto the man who built his house on the sand: and when the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew, it fell and great was the fall of it*. Those who are guilty of disobedience may go on with a profession of being God's children, they may continue in religious services and may be looked upon as being ideal Christians by many people, but nevertheless, they are spiritually dead in God's sight. Unless such will humble themselves with true repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, they will lose their souls and go to hell. The way of such may seem right, but it is the way of death (See *Proverbs 14:12*).

No man, as long as he walks in the light, is condemned, but if he refuses light then condemnation is come (See *John 3:19*). “*There is no condemnation,*” says Paul, “*to them which are in Christ Jesus.*” Why no condemnation? Why no present guilt? Because there is no present transgression of God's commands while walking in the Lord. They are measuring up to their light. “*God is light and in him is no darkness at all*” (See *I John 1:15*). Where there is sin in the proper sense, there is always condemnation, but mistakes do not produce a sense of guilt, but rather a sense of regret and sorrow.

Dear soul, face the issue. “*There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*” (See *Romans 8:1*). Are you clear in your experience today? If not, get right with God. I am aware that in dealing with the delicate matter of an analysis of sins and mistakes, many dishonest souls will attempt to make the term “*mistakes*” a hiding place to cover their sins. They might deceive the writer, they might deceive their nearest friends, and even deceive their own selves, but they will never deceive God. The Word of God proclaims, “*He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained*” (See *Acts 17:31*). Thank God, for a righteous Judge. God knows the facts in the case, and nothing can be hid from His knowledge {See *Hebrews 4:13*}. He shall judge in righteousness. He will properly name sins, and rightly and justly label as mistakes the mistaken actions of those who in their integrity have measured up to the light and responsibility that providence has allotted to them.

Sin Is Not an Inherited Physical Sickness!

Sin as a sickness, this is precisely what we are currently hearing from nearly all quarters. Psychologists, criminologists, lawyers, and sociologists are singing in unison for the rehabilitation of the unfortunate, sinner. Punishment is out of the question because it is applicable only when an individual is responsible for what he does. We are living in an age when criminals seem to possess more rights than victims; an era when a tolerant lawyer will enlist the expertise of a humanitarian psychologist to prove to an unbiased and just court that to punish constitutes cruel and unusual treatment.

In a world of lenience, tolerance and rationalization of sin, will even those that profess the name of Jesus Christ fail to call sin what it is? Will we join the ranks of those who would make the sinner an unfortunate victim, rather than the wicked, guilty person that they actually are? This is exactly what we are hearing from those that defend the thief, murderer adulterer, homosexual, and the many others that continue on in what the Bible clearly proclaims as sin. Where in scripture is sin spoken of as a sickness or disease? Where there is no choice there is no accountability. However, sin is “always” by choice. This is certainly basic, elementary reasoning and only those that are seeking a sanctuary from personal responsibility and accountability could possibly take issue.

From the Book Titled, “Youth Aflame,” by Winkie Pratney

“*Sin is not PHYSICAL* – Many think they have explained the fact of sin in the human race by using a phrase we shall call “Doggie Logic.” It goes essentially like this: “A dog is not a dog because he barks; he barks because he is a dog. Thus, man is not a sinner because he sins; he sins because he is a sinner.” The assumption is, of course, that all sin flows from a pre-determined sinful nature, and it is this nature that creates sinful acts of the sinner. Just as the bark of a dog comes undeniably from the fact that he is a dog, so man's sin will flow inescapably from the fact that he is a sinner, and was born so. It sounds nice; is it true?

“There are, unfortunately, two things wrong with this logic. They are serious flaws because, once they are assumed, they actually destroy the basis of the very thing they seek to prove – that all men are guilty of, and responsible to God for, their sin. These logic flaws are - (a) A Man is not a dog. A dog's actions are right if he barks because God created dogs to express themselves naturally by barking. But God did not create men to sin! A dog's bark is natural; sin is NOT. The Bible everywhere represents sin as an alien invasion to a moral nature made in the image of God. Assuming that man sins because it is his nature to sin, also assumes that sin is natural. A dog barks because he is a dog. A man can also bark if he chooses to. Does this prove that he is a dog? No, it proves that he has chosen to do a thing he was never created to do naturally. If a man sins, it merely proves that he has so chosen to sin; and his sin will certainly be treated as unnatural in the eyes of God.

“Then Why and How Does a Child Sin?” It is often said that one does not have to teach a child to do wrong. The explanation becomes clear if we carefully consider the development of a man. A baby enters the world as the object of its parent's fondness and unceasing care by those who guard it. In these circumstances, the natural, inherited appetites are first developed; and the child begins to express itself. The feelings develop long before the reason, and both are deeply entrenched before the spirit begins to awaken to the claims of God. Much depends at this point on the parents. If they are faithful in their duty to God, they must train their child to yield up its own way when that self-willed way will interfere with the happiness of others. The child will learn at first obedience to its parents only in a love/discipline relationship; it is here that the habit of response to authority must be ingrained in the child's soul, so that later, when God opens up the spiritual understanding, the child will surrender to Him (*1 Samuel 15:22; Proverbs 6:20-23; 10:17; 13:18; 15:5; 31-32; Ephesians 6:1; Colossians 3:20*).

“Since the feelings develop before the reason and conscience, the will begins to form the habit of obeying desire, which deepens every day. The obvious consequence is that self-indulgence becomes the habit of the child long before it can understand that this self-indulgence will interfere with the right or happiness of others. This repeated bias grows stronger each day before knowledge of right or duty could possibly have entered the mind. Finally the moment of true moral responsibility arrives. The child is now developed enough to understand wrong. (This will probably be earlier in a Christian home than in a non-Christian one.) Does the child approach this test in a perfectly neutral state? If Adam, in the maturity of his reason, with full consciousness of the morality of his actions could give in to such temptation, is there any doubt that a child will not? The moment that child chooses selfishly, it sins. From this point on (and NOT before) God holds the child responsible for its own sin. It is significant that all words of the Lord to sinners begin FROM THEIR YOUTH, and NOT from birth, as some have supposed.

“It may be objected - does not the Bible teach that man is born sinful? The answer is an unqualified *no*. A small number of verses have at times been urged to support this idea, but they will not stand up to careful scholarship, and have only been used because no better explanation of the universal sinfulness of man has been forwarded. God is very plain; He does NOT hold the child in any kind of responsibility for its parent’s sins. “What do you mean, you who use this proverb: the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge? As I live...you shall not have occasion to use this proverb in Israel. All souls are MINE: the soul that SINNETH, it shall die” (*Ezekiel 18:1-4, 20- see also the whole chapter; Jeremiah 31:30; Deuteronomy 24:16; 2 Chronicles 25:4; Psalm 94:23*).

“In speaking of the coming judgment, we are told in the Bible that God shall judge every moral being for his own sins, no mention being made of the imputation of Adam’s guilt: *Psalm 9:7-8; 96:13; Ecclesiastes 11:9; 12:14; Isaiah 3:10-11; Jeremiah 31:30; 32:17-19; Matthew 12:36-37; 16:27; Luke 12:47-48; 20:46-47; John 5:27-29; 12:48; Acts 17:30-31; Romans 2:2-11, 12, 16; 14:10-12; Galatians 6:7-8; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Timothy 5:24-25; Hebrews 9:27; 1 Peter 1:17; Jude 14-15; Revelation 2:23*. God has specifically stated He would not judge man for another’s sin. Yet, all sin in Scripture is under the judgment of God. Man cannot, therefore, inherit sin from his parents or Adam.

“Some Scriptures used to try to support this “inherited sin” idea have been pressed right out of context. In examining these, it will be important to adhere to some universally-accepted principles of Biblical interpretation. They are (1) interpret each verse or passage in the light of ALL OTHER revealed Scripture; (2) Examine each verse in the CONTEXT where it was placed, taking into account the design, purpose, authority and author of each passage; (3) Texts that can be used to prove either of two theories prove NEITHER; (4) Passages must be interpreted in a way (if they can be) by which they will not contradict each other. It is with these principles in mind that we shall examine the so-called Scriptural objections.”

There are a great number of people who assume that the battery of temptations entering their minds is the result of an “inherited sinful nature.” This is a common, but serious error. God designed human beings with many astonishing endowments. Some of these God-given attributes such as our senses and emotions enable us to feel and respond to the thoughts that enter our mind. Eve’s desire for the fruit that her mind perceived as being “*good for food and pleasant for the eyes*” was not a product of any sinful nature, unless we also claim that she too had this nature. Nor was her desire for further knowledge wrong in itself. There is no necessity of a sinful nature in order to be subject to temptation and as long as there is temptation, there must be the possibility of yielding.

Many insist on the doctrine of inherited sin because they believe without it, man may be able to live without sin ever charged against them, and therefore not having a need for Jesus Christ. This assumption has come about because of the wrong purpose of Jesus Christ being emphasized today. The main purpose of Jesus Christ was to reconcile lost humanity back to the Father. I have met people, that once I bring up the truth that we can live free from sin, quickly respond with the statement, “If we could stop sinning, what would be the need of Jesus?” They say this as if they think that if they stop sinning they will send Jesus to the unemployment line. Are we to somehow understand that Jesus is thrilled watching man sin so that He can forgive them? No, but we should understand that He is thrilled when lost humanity turns from their sins and are reconciled. Man does not need to sin to have the need of the Good Shepherd. Jesus is much more than a forgiver, but the Lord is also needed as a guide and keeper from sin. But let it be

known that although I believe that sin is a choice, I personally know of no one that has not sinned, including myself. Therefore when I came to Jesus Christ, I needed God's forgiveness, which is only granted by Him when we come in true repentance and faith.

I have not included within this booklet all the answers to the Old Testament verses that are often used to support inherited sin. Rather than focusing upon a defense of the negative, I have chosen to offer evidence of the positive. I will say that I have studied the verses that are often used to support this idea and have concluded that they actually do not support this at all. What I have attempted with this booklet, was to offer plain evidence of what sin is, and is not. But for the honest seeker that would like to further study this subject, so as to gather a greater understanding of this theory of inherited sin, here is a list of recommended books.

- 1) "An Examination of the Modern Gospel" by Ernest Patterson
- 2) "Are Men Born Sinners?" by Alfred T. Overstreet, <http://www.gospeltruth.net/bksorgsin.htm>
- 3) "Born Sinful?" by Theodore W. Elliott
- 4) [GOD'S PLAN OF REDEMPTION FOR MAN](#) by Dale Rude
- 5) "Holiness And Sin" by Gordon C. Olson
- 6) "The Cause of the Gospel" by Emerson A. Wilson / God's Acres, 675 North Cedar Street, Newark, OH 43055 – Phone: 740-345-7972 or 740-763-4202
- 7) "The Circumcision of Christ" by Emerson A. Wilson / God's Acres, 675 North Cedar Street, Newark, OH 43055 – Phone: 740-345-7972 or 740-763-4202
- 8) "The Downfall of Man" by Roger L. Decker / God's Acres, 675 North Cedar Street, Newark, OH 43055 – Phone: 740-345-7972 or 740-763-4202
- 9) "The Entrance of Sin Into the World" by Gordon C. Olson
- 10) "The God They Never Knew: The Tragedy of Religion Without Relationship" by George Otis Jr.
- 11) "Youth Aflame" by Winkie Pratney / <http://www.gospelcom.net/moh/Amazon/Amazon.htm>

One thing that I consider essential when examining this doctrine is to understand its origin of development. I have copied a few excerpts describing the history of how the theory of inherited sin developed and the resulting implications from this false doctrine.

**Edited From the Book Titled, "The God They Never Knew," by George Otis Jr.
"Sin as a Substance, False Concept 2"**

"A revolutionary concept, as far as then-young Christendom was concerned, was conceived in the mind of a budding theologian by the name of Augustine. After an immoral and unstructured past that included many years studying the philosophy of Manes, Augustine turned to the teachings of Christ under Ambrose, a leading scholar of that day.

“Most likely searching for an explanation of his former conduct and help in understanding his present shortcomings, Augustine began to formulate the doctrine of original sin and what is commonly known today as the Federal Headship Theory. Briefly, the Federal Headship Theory states that when Adam sinned he did so in proxy for the entire world. All men born thereafter entered the world replete with a sinful nature, which was and is the causative source of their sins. Thus Adam's original sin was passed on from generation to generation -- from parent to child.

“Augustine, however well intentioned he may have been, began what would become centuries of confusion and misunderstanding over the concept of sin. He taught that sin was fundamentally a physical rather than a moral problem. He even theorized that children were born in Satan's power because: They are born of the union of the sexes which cannot even accomplish its own honorable function without the incidence of shameful lust.”

“Again, it is highly probable that Augustine's tarnished past had a strong bearing on his teaching. Today we refer to this type of person as a reactionary. Although Augustine undoubtedly reacted in the right direction to begin with, his extremes would later cause him (and the church) grave problems. He went on to teach that sexual intercourse was a venial sin (unless the motive was procreation) and the act was always shameful since it was always tinged with passion. Only Christ was born pure since conception took place apart from intercourse.

“When we analyze the situation in the Garden of Eden we see that when Adam sinned he became depraved in two ways:

- 1) Morally-his soul disobeyed God
- 2) Physically-his body began to fail

“Augustine and subsequent theologians have, in their expounding of the doctrine of total depravity, failed to distinguish between these two types of failure.

“Physical (metaphysical) depravity-This gives man the aggravated occasion toward being sinful, but is not in itself sinful. In other words it is an influence to, but not a cause of sin. This depravity comes by inheritance not choice.

“Spiritual (moral) depravity-This is what we do with our situation. It involves unlawful responses to influences and suggestions. This is sin, but it is not inherited-it comes by choice, it is created.

“Men today, for the most part, acknowledge that it is sin when they make wrong choices. The snag is that they attribute these wrong choices to a 'sinful nature' which they receive physically at birth. It is a basic fact that everything in the universe is inherently matter or inherently moral. According to the theory that subsequent to Adam's fall, sin has inevitably been transmitted from parent to child, sin is evidently matter or substance-a physical factor. With this in mind, let's consider the following argument: If I have inherited this sinful nature from Adam, how is this sinful nature passed on to me? In which part of me is this sinful nature passed on? It must be passed on in the physical body somehow since moral character cannot be passed on. 'Moral' has to do with choice and a choice cannot be inherited (only the results of a choice).

“If a choice can be passed on, here is a question that must be answered: If two Christians have a baby, is their choice to be passed on to the baby? They are much closer to the baby genealogically than Adam and their characteristics would be the more dominant or stronger.

“Many have said in desperation that sin is passed on in the blood. If this were the case, it might prove interesting to isolate some sin in a test tube. We may ask, in addition, what happens to the Christian who is involved in a serious accident and receives blood given by someone who is not a Christian? If this sinful nature is present in the donor's blood, does the Christian who

receives it take on a sinful disposition again? This theory also makes evangelism much easier. All that would be required to convert a sinner would be a simple blood transfusion, using of course the blood of a Christian. One solution might be to close down our churches and open up Christian hospitals. (Incidentally, did you ever wonder why Jehovah's Witnesses don't allow blood transfusions?)

“Lewis Sperry Chafer, the founder and first president of Dallas Theological Seminary, tells us, “Men do not now fall by their first sin; they are born fallen sons of Adam.” It is only fitting that this statement should be followed by a graduate of this same school of thought commenting on the sin of Adam and Eve: “They actually had something added to them—a sin nature. And that made them sinners. Since that awful day of infamy, all men have been born with that same, sinful nature, and that is the source of our sins.”

“As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the concept of causation glares at almost every turn. We must keep in mind that which is caused cannot be free, nor can it be accountable or responsible. Here again we have man in a pitiable situation deserving sympathy rather than judgment. Isaiah Berlin, in his book *Historical Inevitability*, concludes that Determinism means the elimination of individual responsibility:

“Nobody denies that it would be stupid as well as cruel to blame me for not being taller than I am, or to regard the color of my hair or the qualities of my intellect ... as being due principally to my own free choice; these attributes are as they are through no decision of mine. If I were convinced that although choices did affect what occurred, yet they were themselves wholly determined by factors not within the individual's control, I should certainly not regard him as morally praiseworthy or blameworthy.

“How could we have stooped and acquiesced to these theological and philosophical absurdities which have crept into the Church? The Word of God is to be presented in such a way that 'every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God' (*Romans 3:19*). If I am born with an inability to obey God, then can you conceive of a better excuse for not obeying Him? If I can't obey God, then why should I be disturbed that I'm not obeying Him? Yet the Word of God declares emphatically that all men are without excuse! This indicates that all men are responsible for their own choices, which implies they are free to make their own choices.

“If I was born with an inability to do what God says, how can we justify eternal punishment with the love of God?”

“This dilemma is readily discerned by some, but the great majority try to ease the pressure and present God's justice by viewing His intention in sending Christ to let all 'off the hook' who would respond to His call. The flaw in this argument is that it destroys the aspect of grace (getting something we don't deserve) in Christ's advent by virtue of the fact that, according to this position, God was under obligation to send Christ to assure all men a 'fair shake.'”

“The Federal Headship Theory, which we have briefly discussed, is an extremely widespread doctrine, which is difficult to explain logically. The important factor, however, is whether or not the Bible will allow the representational theory of transmission of sin. Let's look.”

{ **Jeremiah 31:29-30** } In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. {30}But **every one shall die for his own iniquity**: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.

{ Ezekiel 18:1-5, 9-10, 13-14, 17-20 } The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying, {2} **What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? {3} As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.**

{4} **Behold, all souls are mine;** as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die. {5} But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right, {9} Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD. {10} If he beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood, and that doeth the like to any one of these things, {13} Hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him. {14} Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like, {17} That hath taken off his hand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live. {18} As for his father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did that which is not good among his people, lo, even he shall die in his iniquity. {19} Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live. {20} **The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.**

As we can see from the verses above, God has clearly commanded that we are not to teach the idea that sin is inherited, but rather that each individual is responsible for their own transgressions.

Even after these clear instructions from our unchanging God, we find that the theory of inherited sin is taught and accepted throughout professed Christendom. We should understand that this proverb was not a Biblical proverb, but rather one that had just become accepted among the people. Some proverbs are attributed to the Bible when in reality they have some other origin. One such proverb is, "cleanliness is next to godliness". Perhaps the proverb referred to in the eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel was from the result of a misunderstanding of one or two of the verses found in the Psalms. Even today it is evident that misinterpretation or perhaps even manipulation of a few select verses of the Old Testament, prior to Ezekiel's time are used in attempt to prove the theory of inherited sin.

Regardless where this proverb may have originated, God clearly proclaims that Israel "**shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb.**" If those who profess to be spiritual Israel find it acceptable to ignore this God given command, and reestablish this excuse, I for one would like to know why. If this false proverb were to be reestablished, we would think that the New Testament would include this teaching. However, as we search through the Gospels we do not find mention of the theory of inherited sin, unless we consider the statement by hypocritical Pharisees in *John 9:34*. This statement is obviously not a genuine support for the doctrine of inherited sin. If God would have us reestablish this proverb regarding inherited sin, then surely the Son of God would clearly teach it during His earthly ministry. However, we find that the exact opposite is the case.

In *Luke 18:15-17* we find these statements. {15} “And they brought unto him also **infants**, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. {16} But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer **little children** to come unto me, and forbid them not: **for of such is the kingdom of God**. {17} Verily I say unto you, **Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.**” This is also recorded in Mark 10:13-16. Why would Jesus proclaim that “for such is the kingdom of God” unless He recognized these infants and young children as pure and innocent? If the Lord Jesus Christ did not establish this excuse then surely we must find a very clear teaching to do so in the letters of the Apostles. Wrong! What we find is that the entire New Testament is void of any teaching to support this false proverb.

We are often told that the Apostle Paul taught inherited sin in Romans chapter five. If people would just take an honest and logical look at those verses, I believe that they could see the error in this thinking.

{**Romans 5:12**} Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so **death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:**

Note: As you will notice, this verse does not say that death passed upon all men, due to Adams sin, but rather because all (*each individual*) have sinned. All animals die physically, but they have never sinned. Therefore this death must be a spiritual death as the result of sin. My disagreement is not whether all have sinned, but rather how and when all have sinned. As we have already seen from our Bible study, sin requires knowledge and free will before it can be committed. Teachers of the inherited sin theory do away with both requirements when they say we all sinned in Adam. This verse is merely teaching that Adam’s sin resulted in spiritual death, just as every other person’s sin results in his or her spiritual death.

{**Romans 5:19**} For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

Note: This verse is merely making a comparison of Adam and Jesus Christ, and what each of them represents. Adam represents the way to sin, and Jesus Christ, the sinless One, represents the way to righteousness. Here we are faced with two choices; disobedience (*as by Adam*) and obedience (*as by Jesus Christ*). These two represent two contrasted groups, sinners and saints. Also let us notice that the word all is not used here, but rather many. We need to know whom these many are and how they qualified for inclusion in their respective group. The “many” that were made sinners followed the example of Adam, while the “many” that are made righteous follow the example of Jesus Christ. If we look at these verses as literally teaching that many men are made to be sinners without any choice of their own, then with all honesty and consistency we must teach that many are now made righteous without any choice of their own. If this is what this verse is teaching, then we must also believe the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination. We would all be wasting our time presenting the Gospel, as it would cease to do any good since hearers would have no choice. The Bible would then be reduced to only an historic book full of bogus warnings. The truth is that while Adam may have started this sin business, he was only responsible for himself. However, when we choose to sin we become a follower of Adam, a “sinner” by our own transgression. The way of Jesus Christ is available to

all, but the *many* that will be made righteous will be those who repent, place their faith in Jesus, and continue to follow Him. It is a matter of choice.

As we can see, the theory of inherited sin is not a Biblical teaching. A search of very early Church writings does not reveal any mention of this theory. So, how has this doctrine become so well accepted and taught in Christendom today? Well, as history would have us know, by the third century many were going the way of apostasy as they were departing from the simplicity of the Gospel truth. This period of time is what lead into what is known as the dark ages. During this time period a man known as Tertullian first suggested this theory of inherited sin. It must not have been well received, as we find no further mention of it until the fifth century. By the fifth century the Roman Catholic system was established.

During the fifth century a man known as Augustine of Hippo was responsible for bringing this theory of inherited sin to popularity. An examination of Augustine's past life will also help us to understand why he might have concluded such a theory. History teaches us that prior to his profession of Christianity, Augustine followed the Gnostic teachings of Manichaeism for nine years. The Manicheans were a sect that taught that the world was, of its nature, wicked and that nothing could change it. Augustine was also involved with Philosophy. He was a Platonist, or an adherent to Plato's philosophy, which included the idea that evil was inherently absent of any good, and thus evil in itself, and that good only existed in the non-material activity of mind. Mind was good, matter was evil. Also, at Augustine's time, if the Bishop of Rome ruled on a doctrine such as this, any that might oppose had their writings burned and were excommunicated. This made it most easy for Augustine's theory to be established, and opposing views to be unheard of, thus leading into the Dark Ages.

Another known fact about Augustine is that he was the first theologian to teach that the seventh chapter of Romans might be a regenerated Christian. Prior to the time of his debate with Pelagius and subsequent climb to fame, Augustine himself accepted the well-known fact that *Romans chapter seven* was referring to the unregenerate. Since it was theorized that children were born sinners, the Catholic Church seized the opportunity to address the supposed condition and make lots of money at the same time. The following statement is found in the Catholic Trent Catechism. "*Infants, unless regenerated unto God through the grace of baptism, whether their parents be Christian or infidel, are born to eternal misery and perdition.*" If a faithful Roman Catholic, or anyone for that manner, wanted the inherited sins of their newborn baby to be forgiven, he would have to come to the "Church" and be charged a sum of money by the priests to have the infant baptized. This priestly act would ensure that the child would go to heaven in case he died before he was formally "confirmed" later in life by the Catholic Church. It was said that this act by the priests would correct the infant's condition of being "born wrong." This was thought to be especially true in cases where the child died in infancy. The priests would also sprinkle the child that died at birth! This supposedly ensured that the dead child would be delivered from "eternal misery" and would gain access into heaven. This doctrine and practice still exists in the Catholic Church today as well as some protestant denominations that teach and practice "baptismal regeneration".

As much as I respect John Wesley for bringing back to light the need of holiness, apparently even he held to this theory of inherited, inbred sin. In the early days of his ministry, he wrote, "*by the sin of the first Adam we all became children of wrath. We are all born with a sinful, devilish nature.*" It was the teaching of inherited sin that led to infant baptism that is still

practiced by some protestant denominations. Many of today's Methodists still practice infant baptism, although most would reject the term "baptismal regeneration".

Throughout history there have been various reformations that brought truth, which had been lost during the dark ages, back to light. Although there have been many well respected men that have spoken out against this false doctrine of inherited sin, it still seems to be a stronghold that many are not willing to part with. Men such as Moses Stuart, Henry C. Sheldon, Albert Barnes, and the more modern A. W. Tozer have written against the use of this false excuse. Charles G. Finney, the well-known revivalist during the early and mid 19th century, spoke out strongly against this doctrine. In his Systematic Theology he writes the following statement about the theory of inherited sin. *"It is a relic of heathen philosophy, and was foisted in among the doctrines of Christianity by Augustine, as everyone may know who will take the trouble to examine for himself."* A great amount of Charles Finney's success is due to the fact that he uncovered this refuge of the sinner and pressed upon each individual his or her own responsibility to the one and only holy God. If people would just take an honest look at the history behind this doctrine, I believe they would begin to question its truthfulness as a God ordained doctrine.

The Theory of Inherited Sin Has Led to Many Excuses for Sin!

**Edited From "Provoking Thoughts"
"Not Guilty"**

There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.

Proverbs 30:12

"The writer of Proverbs is describing for us a generation that actually may exist at some point, or points, in time. We can go to the book of Revelation and read about the church of the Laodecians. This is commonly accepted as a picture of the final state of the church before Jesus comes. This church says of itself, "we are rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." They have attained to all they feel that is necessary, and feel no need to be corrected, or grow any more. They have need of NOTHING - no need of preaching, no need of wisdom and understanding, and surely no need of forgiveness, because they are not guilty of anything. Now we don't have to study history or do an intensive search for that generation - it is all around us now.

"We are living in a day when it is practically impossible to make anyone guilty of anything. Most refuse to accept the responsibility for their actions and always have an excuse or a scapegoat to blame it on. People have discovered ways to release themselves from guilt without repentance and confession. They have figured out how to feel good about themselves without facing the responsibility for their actions.

"In order to reach such a state there are some things that a person has to do to their conscience and their mind. There are different ways that people accomplish this. One is role playing. They may convince themselves that they are really a multiple personality and say to themselves that it wasn't the real ME that did THAT, it was my "old man." They may play the role of a victim and say it was only because of the influence of so-and-so that they did what they did. They will comfort themselves by believing that they would NEVER do such a thing if left to themselves. They may go back to their childhood and figure out that their mother and father are to blame for

the actions THEY are committing now, and therefore it is not THEIR fault, but they are simply a victim of their raising. Another way is to find an excuse by searching out someone, especially a preacher, who will agree with them that what they did was not wrong. We all know how easy that is to do. So they have justified themselves while they continue to live in sin and ignore the commandments of God. This is a generation that is pure IN THEIR OWN EYES, and yet is NOT WASHED FROM THEIR FILTHINESS.

“Parents are guilty of instilling this into their children. In their love and desires for their children, parents will, many times, not allow them to face the responsibility for their actions. If someone tries to correct their children at school or at church, they will immediately jump to the defense of the child. They will say things like, “Well, if he hadn’t been with that crowd,” or “if it weren’t for influence of those OTHER kids, he wouldn’t have done it.” Everyone should understand that a child will NEVER be converted to Christ unless he learns to accept the responsibility for his own sin. They think they are helping their child, but they are DESTROYING their child. Every child will one day stand before God ALONE and be judged for what he has done. It used to be that mothers would march their children back into the store and make them tell the clerk that they had stolen something and apologize and give it back. Now they say, “Well, he wouldn’t have done it if they hadn’t made it so easy, ... and if he hadn’t seen it on television and if he hadn’t been hanging around those other kids on the block, he wouldn’t have done it.” A parent that does this is not helping the child, but rather destroying him. They are helping him to justify his NEXT crime. They are setting him up for destruction in his life because he will never be able to solve any problem he has until he realizes and accepts the fact that it is HIS problem. As long as he is in the habit of looking for someone or something else to blame it on, so he can justify himself, he will always have the problem. He may be a drunkard and blame it on the state for making it so easy to buy the booze. He may smoke and get lung cancer and then blame the tobacco companies because they sold him the cigarettes.

“The teaching of the Adamic nature has really helped man to release himself from the guilt of his sin. If it is stressed to a person that he has Adam in him, and he has a sinful nature that he was born with, and that is what makes him sin, guess what he is going to realize sooner or later? He is going to say to himself, “It isn’t my fault, why, if Adam wasn’t IN me, I wouldn’t sin myself. It is this OTHER personality that was put in me that makes me sin, it isn’t ME. I’m not really responsible for my actions because Adam made me do it.” Surely, if Adam is in heaven and can get to God, he might have come before Him thousands of times and said, “Lord, I didn’t make him do that. He is blaming me, but I didn’t have a thing to do with it. “Some try to act like Flip Wilson and say, “the devil made me do it.” But that isn’t the truth either. The devil cannot make you sin, your flesh cannot make you sin, no Adamic nature can make you sin. You sin because you chose to do so of your own free will. You chose to satisfy your lusts regardless of the commands of God, or the consequences to other people. That makes YOU the sole responsible party in the matter.

“When a person goes down this road of role-playing, excuse-making, or buck-passing it will eventually sear their conscience until they feel no remorse about what they are doing, even though it is against the Word of God. You can preach to people now and deal with any certain sin, and they will sit there in the pew and nod their head and agree with you, but never acknowledge that they are guilty themselves. You can’t hardly bring people to the place any more where they will blush, be ashamed, and repent of their sin. People will sit in the pew and listen to the preacher rebuke a sin which they are committing in their life right now and you will

not see any guilt or remorse come over them. They will not confess or acknowledge their sin in any way. People will sit in the church cold and apathetic in their hearts and the preacher will rebuke them from the Word of God about it, but they will not even acknowledge that they are cold and indifferent, let alone get right about it. People in the church drift away into worldliness and open friendship with the world, which is enmity with God, and yet they never stand and confess that they have strayed and are worldly and wrong....”

The Great Escape

“Since the Garden of Eden men have been seeking a way to escape the responsibility for their sin. The first words out of Adam's mouth when confronted with his sin by God, were, “ ... the woman which THOU gavest me...” as if to blame God, because He had given him the woman. What an outrageous thing to lay to God's charge! Certainly, sin DOES make a man depraved! Man is not a sinner because he is depraved, but he is depraved because he is a sinner. That is a truth that is almost universally rejected by the human race. The common ground that all the cults and all the denominations can come together on is that man's sin is ultimately God's fault because He made us the way we are. Russelites believe it, the Catholics invented it, and most of the Baptists, Pentecostals, Methodists, Presbyterians, and every other tribe and clique clings to it dearly, and are willing to stand together against anyone who dares to challenge this most precious doctrine. According to them it isn't all the evil we have done since we were old enough to choose that makes us guilty, but the fact that we were born guilty because of what someone we never knew did 6,000 years ago. We got something from Adam all right, but it wasn't guilt for his sin. What we got from him was a lesson and an example on how to shrug responsibility for our own sin. Eve was the first human to follow Adam's example when she said, “The serpent beguiled me...” Then it was the devil's turn but the devil himself wasn't brazen enough to try to blame someone else for what he did.

“Any preacher should realize, after preaching and dealing with people for a while, that men are still busy trying to blame their sin on someone, or something besides themselves. The core of the preacher's responsibility in preaching the Gospel is to get people to be honest with God and themselves about their sin, and quit making excuses for themselves. He must bring them face to face with their sin and leave them no escape to justify themselves in their wicked lifestyle. Yet the most prominent and talked about doctrines of our modern Christianity are all designed to just the opposite end. When just about any professing Christian is confronted with something in their life that isn't right, they immediately say one of three things: “Well, I'm not perfect, just forgiven.” Or they will say, “Well, we all have that sinful nature, you know, and we are going to sin every day, no matter what, we just can't help it, and 'if you say you have no sin, you are a liar.” Then they might say, “Well, it's the old flesh, I just can't control it sometimes, but my inner man is right with God. After all, it's not what's on the outside, but what's on the inside that counts.” What it amounts to is dividing ourselves up into two or three separate parts and blaming all the evil on one part. It is like the child who invents an imaginary playmate and then blames all his mischief on this imaginary person. Oh yes, that IS the way it is. When we stand before God, we will not stand there as three persons, body, soul, and spirit - we will stand there as ONE person and we will give account of the deeds we have done in THIS body. God will NOT accept these silly excuses that we are using among ourselves to justify our sin.

“Every preacher who gives excuses to people to continue in sin is going to give an account to God, and heavy condemnation is hanging over his head for taking so lightly the matter of the

Gospel and value of men's souls. It is pure poison that makes reprobates out of those who drink it down. The question is WHY do men cling to, and defend these particular doctrines so vehemently? Years ago Christians got their dander up when it came to liquor and adultery, but now most are pretty passive about those things. If you really want to raise their blood pressure, just challenge them on their permissive, watered down version of the Gospel. Just try to corner them for their sin and make them the responsible party. You'll find out what they are willing to fight for. They are willing to fight for the right to continue in their sin and not have some "holier-than-thou" preacher bothering them about it.

"Why would a preacher of the Gospel and a representative of Christ stand in defense of sin and preach things that the people take as an excuse to sin? Without a doubt some do it to cover the sin in their own lives; some are deceived; and some are simply false prophets. There are some who are good men, who live holy lives themselves, but simply don't realize that their message is being received this way by many of the people. They can't consider the possibility that most of their church members are lost, and neither are they willing to bear the persecution that comes for standing against anything that goes against what most of the "brethren" believe, because it means that they will be ostracized and talked about, probably branded as a heretic. They would be in good company, because the prophets suffered the same thing, Jesus did, all the apostles did, and almost every man who ever stepped out and made a difference and was used by God suffered the loss of the respect of the "brethren." But God vindicated THEM and uncovered the slanders of the "brethren" for us to see who was approved by God."

**Edited From "The theological ramifications of original sin and free will"
by Harold James Rogers**

"Many accept original sin simply because they are taught it, and they don't really see how it affects their thought processes concerning the Lord God. They do not see the trickle down effect this thought has on interpretation of other scriptures. Original sin basically stated is that all men are born sinners, that is they are guilty at the time of birth. So then the reasoning follows that Gods wrath is on everyone who is born, so then Christ died as a way to deflect this wrath from those who believed, (the meaning of which in this context seems to be to give mental acceptance to the reality of his existence in history.) Then those who "believe" are seen as righteous in Gods eyes apart from their actual actions, and once they are "born again" they are forever safe from eternal damnation.

"The implication is that the real cause for sin is not in the sinner but in the way a person is made. In fact the word "sinner" is made to mean no more then the word "human". The sinner himself is not to be faulted for his sins any more then he is to be faulted for being human. No!! I ask you to reason; does not all these statements slander Gods character? Isn't that saying God is unjust first in condemning people for what they cannot help, and then in reckoning them as doing right even when they are not. Let us recognize that God is a just God. Not simply by virtue of His power, as many affirm "anything God does is just because He can do whatever He wants", but that justice is part of His character. Yet before I go any further let me go down the same path of reasoning without original sin. God has made man upright but he has gone astray by his own inventions. His wrath is on those who sin, for their own sins, which the ungodly have so ungodly committed in their ungodly lives. Jesus died to wash away our sins and gives us faith to be obedient and walk upright and holy, reconciling us from our estranged state from God that our own sins had caused. We recognize that we are only made acceptable to Him

through our faith, which leads to obedience, and by walking after the spirit and not after the flesh.

“Moral character, either good or evil can never be inherited. Each person creates and forms his own moral character out of his own free will. We have inherited the knowledge of good and evil, which in itself is not sin, as Jesus himself knowing to choose the good and refuse the evil.”

The old saying is true; “What you are is God’s gift to you, what you become is your gift to God.” God made us upright and we can please Him in all we do.

Our body of Flesh is Not Actually Sin, Nor does it force us Sin!

As we have revealed through the section regarding temptation, our flesh with its natural desires, is not the direct cause of sin. Our flesh is the means by which temptation comes upon us, but need never develop into sin. As we have also read through the section titled, “*Why Children Sin,*” we can see how we have learned to give into the desires of the flesh, well before we ever developed knowledge of God and His will. This definitely demonstrates the great need

of child training. As sin carves its moral slide, each time down becomes easier and easier. We find ourselves enslaved by these habits. Our giving over to the flesh develops into habits, which create our character. Just like any habit, the habit of giving into our fleshly desires becomes bondage.

Note: “*The Cause of the Gospel*” by Emerson A. Wilson is a good book to read to help instruct how the flesh works and why children sin.

Let us summarize this cycle of choices that lead to bondage.

1) Our thoughts present objects of choices {*See section on temptation*}.

2) Our choices become actions. **Note:** Choices ending in sin can be made without visible actions. An example would be when the will consents to allow the mind to dwell upon and the heart to treasure something unlawful. Such is the commandment against covetousness. This is also what Jesus meant in *Matthew 5:28* when He said, “*That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust [1937] after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*”

3) Our actions form into habits

4) Our habitual actions become our character.

5) Others can then perceive our character. **Note:** This is what Jesus meant in *Matthew 7: 16-20* when He said, “*Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*”

6) Our character then becomes our destiny, all resulting from the choices of our free will.

The great danger of sin is that we become slaves to appetites and desires often without taking notice of what is happening. Our character is set in our lives through habitual self-indulgence and subsequently affects everything we do. Paul mentions this bondage to the flesh that the unregenerate experiences, in the *seventh chapter of Romans*. Thus we concur that when a sinful character may be present, it originated by choice. For example, the junkie or alcoholic bound by drugs or alcohol cannot help but crave drugs or alcohol now, but the origin of the addiction began with his choices. God has never created humans to be selfish or sinful, nor did He create them to develop into selfish sinners. We should never consider selfish or sinful actions as “*just being human*” or “*just our human nature,*” as if our self-chosen character is God’s fault. Our own self-made choosing develops our character.

Note: The book, “*Walking in the Spirit – A Liberating Commentary on Romans 6, 7, and 8*” by George E. (Jed) Smock, is one of the best I have come across for understanding *Romans 7*.

But thank God, salvation from this bondage is possible through Jesus Christ! With a real comprehension and acceptance of the true Gospel, this bondage can be broken. The bondage to sin is broken when we together with the Lord create within ourselves a new heart {*See Ezekiel*

18:31 & 36:26}. Through repentance and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, this new heart is created. The heart that I am speaking of is not our physical heart but rather our moral spiritual heart, from which all the issues of life flow {See Proverbs 4:23}. With this new heart, we are led by divine love {See 1 Corinthians 13:1-7 & 2 Corinthians 5:14}. With this new heart we will have a complete and instantaneous change of our motives and therefore we are a new creation {See 2 Corinthians 5:17}. Our character changes from one that habitually lived after the desires of the flesh, regardless of our fellowman and God Himself (*Selfishness*), to a character of living all for the glory of God {See 1 Corinthians 10:31}. This is called becoming partakers of the divine nature {See 2 Peter 1:4}. The Bible also calls this radical change, the putting off, putting to death, or crucifying of the old man and the flesh, so that the body of sin might be destroyed {See the many verses below}. The old man was the character we had as we chose to be ruled by our flesh (*Carnally minded*), but the new man that is created through this new birth {See John 3:3-8} is led by the Spirit {See the many verses below}. When we experience this new birth, we do not get a new body without the natural desires of our flesh, as nothing physical is removed or eradicated from it. But spiritually speaking, we receive a circumcision of our old immoral stony heart as it is replaced by a new tender heart that is sensitive to the things of God {See Jeremiah 4:4, Ezekiel 11:19 & 36:26}. Even after one has been “born again of the Spirit,” we continue to have this body of flesh to deal with but we are able to and will keep it under subjection {See 1 Corinthians 9:27} as we continually present it to God as a living sacrifice {See Romans 12:1}. The life we then live in the flesh is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us {See Galatians 2:20}. If you continue to live a life of sin, don’t blame it upon your flesh and blood, as your problem is spiritual, within your heart {See Ephesians 6:1}. People need to realize that Jesus Christ Himself had a body of flesh and blood just as we do, yet proved and demonstrated a life without sin as an example for us to follow. {See 1 Peter 2:21-22}. By living a life that was continually led by the Spirit rather than by His flesh, Jesus became the author and captain of our salvation {See Hebrews 2:10 & 5:9}. Many people like to proclaim that Jesus had a different body than we have, therefore He was advantaged and could live free from sin, where we can not. This thinking is totally contrary to the scriptures {See Hebrews 2:14} and robs the Lord Jesus of all the glory of His accomplishments. The Lord Jesus Christ came into this world with the same flesh and blood, along with natural desires as we have. He proved that by not yielding to temptations and always following the Spirit, living free from sin is possible. Therefore Jesus condemned the idea that our flesh, that is often considered sinful, can not be used as an excuse to continue on in sin {See Romans 8:3}.

As you look at the many verses below, the word, “desire” can often be visualized within the places where the word flesh is used. The Royal Command of loving God first, and our fellowman as ourselves can often be visualized in place of the word Spirit, as the Holy Spirit will never lead us contrary to God’s Royal Command.

{ John 3:6-7 } That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. {7} Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

{ Romans 6:1-7 } What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? {2} God forbid. **How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?** {3} Know ye not,

that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? {4} Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so **we also should walk in newness of life.** {5} For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: {6} Knowing this, that **our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.** {7} For **he that is dead is freed from sin.**

{ Romans 6:11-18 } Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. {12} **Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.** {13} **Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God,** as those that are alive from the dead, and **your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.** {14} For **sin shall not have dominion over you:** for ye are not under the law, but under grace. {15} What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. {16} **Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?** {17} But God be thanked, that **ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart** that form of doctrine which was delivered you. {18} **Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.**

{ Romans 7:5-6 } For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto **death.** {6} But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

{ Romans 8:1-14 } There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. {2} For the law of **the Spirit** of life in Christ Jesus **hath made me free from the law of sin and death.** {3} For what the law could not do, in that it was weak **through the flesh,** God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, **condemned sin in the flesh:** {4} That the **righteousness** of the law might be **fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.** {5} For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. {6} For **to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.** {7} Because **the carnal mind is enmity against God:** for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. {8} So then **they that are in the flesh cannot please God.** {9} **But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.** Now **if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.** {10} And **if Christ be in you, the body is dead** because of sin; but **the Spirit is life** because of righteousness. {11} But **if the Spirit** of him that raised up Jesus from the dead **dwell in you,** he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also **quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit** that dwelleth in you. {12} Therefore, brethren, **we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.** {13} For **if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die:** but **if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.** {14} For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. {Compare to Galatians 5:16-17, 24-25, & 6:7-8}

{ **2 Corinthians 5:17** } Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a **new creature**: old things are passed away; **behold, all things are become new.**

{ **Galatians 2:20** } I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless **I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh** I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

{ **Galatians 3:3** } Are ye so foolish? **having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?**

{ **Galatians 5:1** } Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith **Christ hath made us free**, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

{ **Galatians 5:13-24** } For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only **use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh**, but by love serve one another. {14} For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. {15} But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. {16} This I say then, **Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.** {17} **For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other:** so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. {18} **But if ye be led of the Spirit**, ye are not under the law. {19} **Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these;** Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, {20} Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, {21} Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. {22} **But the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, {23} Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. {24} **And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.**

{24}{New American Standard Bible} Now **those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.**

Note: Verse 13 lets us know that the freedom we have been called unto, is not a freedom to be guided by the flesh, resulting in sin, but rather the freedom we have through Christ is through unselfish divine love. *Verse 16*, simply let's us know that if we yield to the leading of the Holy Spirit, we will not be yielding to the flesh, resulting in sin. *Verse 17* is often used to teach a dual nature of the justified Christian, or the impossibility of living free from sin because of the flesh we always have here on Earth. This is not what this verse is teaching at all, but rather is making a statement to the backslidden Galatians as to the reason why they are not doing, as they should. This verse is simply stating that living after the flesh is contrary to the way of the Spirit, and since the Galatians have allowed their flesh to once again entangle them into bondage, the results are that they are not doing as they ought. *Verse 18* is pointing out to them, just as Paul has stated through *Romans 8* that if they will walk in the Spirit they will be set free from the law of sin and death. *Verses 19-23* lets us know of the manifested results of either the works of the flesh or the fruit of the Spirit. *Note:* The works of the flesh are plural because they are varied depending upon the "present situation". It is whatever the flesh wants at the time. The "fruit" of the Spirit

is singular because all righteous works flow from a singular heart (*one that loves God and aims to only and always please Him*) {See Luke 11:34-36}. Verse 21 clearly states that they which continue to do these works of the flesh, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Verse 24 clears up the whole matter for those that falsely believe that a person can be justified while still having a so-called dual nature. Those that truly belong to Christ, no longer live an up and down, in and out life of yielding to the flesh and then sometimes to God's will, but rather those who are His have crucified the old man that lived in selfishness.

{ **Galatians 6:7-8** } Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. {8} 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.**

{ **Galatians 6:12-16** } As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. {13} For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. {14} But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. {15} For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but **a new creature.** {16} And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

{ **Ephesians 2:1-3** } And you hath he **quickened**, who **were** dead in trespasses and sins; {2} Wherein **in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:** {3} Among whom also **we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.**

Note: Occasionally defenders of the theory of inherited sin use the word *nature* in this verse as an attempt to prove that children are naturally born sinners with the wrath of God already upon them. But if one would take an honest look at this verse and set aside their preconceived ideas, I think they would see that Paul was teaching something very much different.

First, the ages of the children here are not given but when we read this verse within its context by including *Ephesians 5:3-6*, we are able to see what these "*children of disobedience*" were walking in and why God's wrath was upon them. No child is born disobedient and practicing the list of sins that are mentioned through *Ephesians 5:3-5*. *Ephesians 5:5* also lets us know that these children of disobedience do not "*hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God,*" which would be totally contrary to Christ's statements in *Luke 18:15-17* if these were "*infants*" and "*little*" children. With this evidence we must conclude that the "*children*" mentioned here are those that have certainly reached an age of accountability including adults. This is what the apostle John meant when he wrote, "*he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil,*" and then goes on to write, "*In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil:*" (*1 John 3:5-10*). The Lord Jesus Christ also made reference to adult children when he told the Pharisees, "*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do,*" (*John 8:44*). It should be obvious that the word "*nature*" here has nothing to do with our God-given, physical nature at birth, but rather is referring to

God's wrath. It is only natural that God's wrath is upon those who disobediently walk "*in the lusts of their flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.*"

{ **Ephesians 2:10-22** } For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. {11} Wherefore remember, **that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh**, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; {12} That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: {13} But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. {14} For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; {15} **Having abolished in his flesh the enmity**, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for **to make in himself of twain one new man**, so making peace; {16} And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: {17} And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. {18} **For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.** {19} Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; {20} And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; {21} In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: {22} In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God **through the Spirit.**

{ **Ephesians 4:17-30** } This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, **in the vanity of their mind**, {18} Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, **because of the blindness of their heart**: {19} Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. {20} But ye have not so learned Christ; {21} If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: {22} That ye **put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts**; {23} **And be renewed in the spirit of your mind**; {24} **And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.**

{ **Colossians 2:6-13** } As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, **so walk ye in him**: {7} Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. {8} Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. {9} For **in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily**. {10} And **ye are complete in him**, which is the head of all principality and power: {11} **In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ**: {12} Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. {13} And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

{ Colossians 3:3-10 } For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. {4} When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. {5} **Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth;** fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: {6} For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: {7} In the which ye also walked some time, **when ye lived in them.** {8} **But now ye also put off all these;** anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. {9} Lie not one to another, seeing that ye **have put off the old man with his deeds;** {10} **And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:**

{ Hebrews 2:14-18 } Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, **he** (Jesus Christ) **also himself likewise took part of the same;** that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; {15} And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. {16} For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. {17} Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. {18} For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

{ Hebrews 10:19-24 } Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, {20} **By a new and living way,** which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; {21} And having an high priest over the house of God; {22} Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. {23} Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) {24} And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

{ 1 Peter 1:22-23 } Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: {23} **Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible,** by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

{ 1 Peter 2:11 } Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, **abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;**

{ 1 Peter 4:1-5 } Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, **arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;** {2} **That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.** {3} For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: {4} Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: {5} Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

{ **2 Peter 1:4** } Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be **partakers**[2844] **of the divine**[2304] **nature**[5449], **having escaped**[668] (separated or departed) **the corruption that is in the world through lust**[1939].

Note: Many claim a God given, sinful nature as their excuse to live in sin. What ever character man has developed and became servants to, is no excuse. God has promised to give us what is needed to be able to separate ourselves from sin, with its corruption, and become partners with Him in a Christ-like character. The true child of God overcomes the sin of this world through faith {See 1 John 5:3-5}.

{ **2 Peter 2:9-10** } The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: {10} But **chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government.** Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

{ **1 John 4:2-3** } Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: **Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:** {3} And **every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist,** whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

{ **2 John 1:6-7** } And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, **ye should walk in it.** {7} For **many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.**

NO EXCUSES, PLEASE

A professing Christian who tried to explain away his responsibility for breaking the law received double punishment. He said to the judge, "Your Honor, as a believer in Christ I am a 'new man,' but I still have an old nature, and it was the old man' that committed the crime." The judge's reply to his plea was: "Since it was the 'old man' that broke the law, we'll sentence him to 30 days in jail. And since the 'new man' was an accomplice in the wrong, we'll give him 30 days also. I therefore sentence you to jail for 60 days!"

Before we move on to see what the Bible proclaims sin is, let us look at one last thing that sin is not.

Sin is not Unavoidable!

“Sin is not UNAVOIDABLE”

From the book titled, “Youth Aflame,” by Winkie Pratney

“One of the favorite heresies of the past, that is rapidly now becoming the favorite heresy of the present, is the lie of Antinomianism - that men cannot do what God expressly **REQUIRES** them to do; and therefore they may live how they like and still enter the Kingdom of God. In the midst of the greatest moral landslide the world has ever seen, in the midst of the most flagrant disrespect for law and order and government of any century, it is unblushingly proclaimed AS

GOSPEL truth from pulpits across the nation that man cannot keep the law of God! In our wariness of the dangers of legalism, we have forgotten the perils of antinomianism; we have forgotten that the LAW is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ (*Galatians 3:24*) and that "by the LAW is the knowledge of sin" (*Romans 3:20*). Gone is the preaching of moral responsibility that streamed from men like William Booth, George Fox, John Wesley and Charles Finney that made men weep with conviction; gone is the heartbreak of the Psalmist for the honor of God when he cried "Horror has taken hold of me, because of the wicked that forsake Thy law!" (*Psalms 119:53; 119:37*).

Many sincere men are saying, "God gave us good laws to keep," and in the next breath saying, "we are actually unable to keep them!" If this is true, then God's laws ARE NOT GOOD! No law is good that asks the impossible of its subjects. If God demands obedience to impossible laws then God is not just, for even men do not require obedience to impossible laws. If God demands such obedience under penalty of DEATH, then God is not only unfair, but monstrous! What kind of Being would pass laws upon his subjects they are unable to keep, then condemn them to death for their failure to obey. This is a blasphemy on God's character...."

"No saint in Scripture thought they were "unable" to keep God's laws. Moses didn't (*Exodus 24:3; Deuteronomy 5:1; 6:24-25; 10:12-13; 11:22; 26:16-19; 28:47; 28:58-59; 30:8; 30:11-14*). Neither did Joshua (*22:5*), Ezra (*7:23-26*), David (*Psalms 19:7; 40:8*), his psalmist friend (*Psalms 119:165-168*) or Daniel (*9:9-11*) or others! (*2 Kings 17:13,7-18, etc.*). The Lord Jesus Himself told men to obey His Father's laws, and that this was the test of being a true disciple (*Matthew 5:17-20; 19:17; John 14:15,21; 14:23-24; 15:10*). The Apostle John stresses this obedience (*1 John 2:3-6; 3:18-22*). Obeying God's love law simply means living for Him with no selfish interest; to live up to all the light you have with all the effort of will, mind and feeling necessary for the task in hand. For the Christian, obeying God and keeping His commandments are a natural part of his new life. Only the sinner finds it hard to walk in God's ways because he is trying to use the law as a means to his own end. The ultimate satisfaction of his own selfishness".

Edited from the book titled, "Must We Sin," by Howard W. Sweeten

Is it possible that a good God who hates sin has so created us, that we can resist Him, and cannot resist the devil? The Word says, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." There could be no strife unless man possessed power to resist. How unreasonable to think that God, as our Creator, should so endow us as to be capable of resisting Him, and yet unable to resist Satan. If this is our dilemma, then He who thus made us is to blame for our predicament for He has given us all the capacities we possess. Thus, creating us with power to thwart His purpose and plan, and no power to thwart the purpose and plan of Satan, we are left hopelessly at the mercy of the devil. Is it a fact that He has endowed us with volitional qualities in regard to righteousness, and denied us volitional qualities in regard to sin? In a word, has God made us all helplessly sinners, with no choice in the matter? What nonsense! The facts in the case are that neither God nor the devil can compel us to do either right or wrong, unless our free agency and right of choice be first destroyed. So long as we possess these fundamental and basic qualities in our nature, which are primarily God-given to every person, we have it absolutely in our own power to do right or wrong, to sin or not to sin, according as we will. The will is the pivot upon which all volitional action moves. I will to walk, and I walk; I will to talk, and I talk; I can be a Christian if I will meet the conditions of the Gospel, or I can be a sinner if I will; I can go to heaven if I will meet the conditions of the Gospel, or I can go to hell if I will. Our wills thus enable us to execute our choice. Hence, the scriptural injunction, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve". Both the choice and the will are here urged into action. But why urge a choice, if in reality we are servants of sin, and have no choice, but to do its bidding? "How long halt ye between two opinions?" says the prophet. "If the Lord be God, follow him; if Baal, follow him." This is strange language indeed, to address to creatures who really had no choice in the matter, and could do nothing other than to follow Baal.

Says an able writer on this subject, "God is physically omnipotent, and yet His moral influences exerted by the Spirit may be resisted. You will readily see that if the Spirit moved men by physical omnipotence, no mortal could possibly resist His influence. But now we know it to be a fact that man can resist the Holy Ghost, for the nature of moral agency implies this and the Bible asserts it. Hence, if our action is that of moral agents, our moral freedom to do or not do must remain. It cannot be set aside or in any way overruled. If God should in any way set aside our voluntary agency He would of necessity terminate at once our moral and responsible action. Force and moral agency are terms of opposite meaning. They are not co-existent.

It would be useless to assume that man had any responsibility, unless he was capable of controlling his own actions. If God should make men obey Him by force, obedience would cease to merit reward; likewise if the devil has it in his power to force men to obey him and disobey God, this disobedience could not rightly be punished, seeing the man is not responsible for his own conduct, but was made disobedient by compulsion. Can Satan compel men to serve him against their will? No! As men must serve God by choice, so they must likewise serve Satan for the same reason. All who are sinners are so by choice. **ANY MAN CAN SIN, ANY MAN MAY SIN, BUT NO MAN MUST SIN.**

We cannot conceive of God as intelligent, all wise and infinite Creator, issuing a code of laws to be obeyed by His creatures, when He knew they had neither the purpose, power nor possibility of obeying them; but were compelled, of necessity, to disregard and disobey them every day, in thought, word and deed. Most assuredly, when God issued His commandments concerning the conduct of His creatures, in His own infinite wisdom He knew they were capable of conforming

to every requirement, as well as being able to disobey and disregard them all. If sin, or virtue either, were otherwise than volitional it would cease to deserve punishment or merit reward.

We are not machines to be manipulated at the pleasure of another. No sensible man can charge God with his sin and folly, nor can he shift the responsibility for his unholy deeds entirely upon the devil, for it is not in his power to make us sin against our wills any more than it is possible for God to make us righteous against our wills. Satan may entice us, tempt us, persecute us; but he can never compel us to sin; in fact, we are told, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." And God further says, "There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not Suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will, with the temptation, also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (*I Cor. 10:13*).

"How can two 'walk together,'" asks the prophet, "except they be agreed?" What two? God and you. How agreed? In moral character. God says in His book, "Be ye holy." Why? "For I am holy." Bear in mind, reader, if you walk with God, you must walk where God walks. God has no intention, whatever, of leaving His path of holiness, to come down and walk with you in sin. He will not surrender His character to be in harmony with you, but if you would walk with Him, you must make your life correspond with His divine requirements. Hence, he says, "Like as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of living" (*R.V.*). Why? So that God and you may be agreed and walk together in harmony. God never walks with sinners, that is, so as to be in harmony and sweet fellowship with them, for He is angry with the wicked every day. To say that we must sin, therefore, means either that God is reconciled to us in our sins, or else He is never reconciled to us at all. Is it possible that an infinite, intelligent God has issued a code of laws and governmental principles that His creatures cannot possibly observe and obey? If so, then we who disregard and disobey them are not responsible; but God himself is directly responsible for all our failures and sins, in that He has put the standard so high as to be utterly impossible for us to reach it. He has issued laws that we cannot keep. What nonsense! The very fact that sin brings condemnation proves conclusively that it is volitional and could have been avoided. No one is ever under condemnation for failing to do the impossible; only that which is within the realm of possibility can produce condemnation. Hence, every sinner is under condemnation, because sin is volitional and not compulsory."

What then is sin according to the Bible?

1 John 3:4

King James Version Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: **for sin is the transgression of the law.**

**Let us look at few other literal and popular versions
and see how they have opted to translate this verse.**

Young's Literal Translation Every one who is doing the sin, the lawlessness also he doth do, and the **sin is the lawlessness.**

New American Standard Bible Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and **sin is lawlessness.**

Amplified Bible Every one who commits (practices) sin is guilty of lawlessness; for [that is what] sin is, lawlessness [the breaking, violating of God's law by transgression or neglect; being unrestrained and unregulated by His commands and His will].

New King James Version Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.

New International Version Everyone who sins breaks the law; **in fact, sin is lawlessness.**

New Century Version The person who sins breaks God's law. **Yes, sin is living against God's law.**

God's New Covenant/Heinz W. Cassirer - A New Testament Translation Whoever commits a sin is at the same time a lawbreaker. **In fact sin is nothing else than a breaking of the law.**

Contemporary English Version Everyone who sins breaks God's law, **because sin is the same as breaking God's law.**

New Living Translation Those who sin are opposed to the law of God, **for all sin opposes the law of God..**

Living Bible But those who keep on sinning **are against God, for every sin is done against the will of God.**

The Message All who indulge in a sinful life are dangerously lawless, for **sin is a major disruption of God's order.**

Note: For those who want to say that Christians are not under any law, need to realize that these descriptions of sin are given in the New Testament for the New Covenant Christian. The New Covenant certainly did not do away with man's obligation to the moral law. The Christian has been set free from the law of sin and death but yet live by the law of the Spirit of life in

Christ Jesus {*See Romans 8:2*}. By walking after the Spirit rather than the flesh, the Christian fulfills the righteousness of the law {*See Romans 8:4*}. The love of God is shed abroad in the heart of Christians by the Holy Ghost, which is given to them {*See Romans 5:5*}. By being motivated by *agape* love, the Christian not only keeps God's commandments but also finds them non-grievous {*See 1 John 5:3*}.

The Apostle John defines sin, which is the theme of our discussion as being a transgression of God's law. Therefore, to say that we must always sin here on Earth, is to say we must transgress His law. Surely no one would insist that you must be a breaker of God's commandments every day. But this is EXACTLY what many are insisting on. They are not even deceptive about it. They say we MUST transgress God's laws every single day! Any individual who is a citizen of any nation of the world, and who goes around constantly and blatantly bragging that he breaks the laws of his country every day, in thought, word and deed would soon find himself ostracized from decent, respectable, law abiding citizens. They would be looked upon by others as a law breaker, an outlaw, an anarchist against the government and a menace to the best interests of his country. Such an unruly individual, undoubtedly, ought to be in jail or in the penitentiary for the good of the general public. Did you ever hear people complaining, and in great distress over the fact that they were citizens of a certain commonwealth, and just could not keep from breaking the laws of their government? Can you imagine someone like this claiming that they had to break them daily in thought, word, and deed? No! No!! No! !! Such people cannot be found anywhere in the world; any man who breaks the laws of his country either hangs his head in shame or keeps the matter under cover as much as possible; such an individual is never seen going around bragging about it. For such conduct, for such foolish talk, for such inconsistency, for such public acknowledgment of disregard for law and government, for such blatant bragging of anarchy, yet they claim this even against God's kingdom and government, and lo, here they are in great numbers. "Just can't help sinning every day." What is sin? "A transgression of God's laws." Therefore they are telling us, "We just can't keep from breaking God's laws every day." Yet God says plainly His laws are not grievous (*See 1 John 5:3*). Be it said to our shame, if it is true, that we can be better citizens of an Earthly commonwealth than we can of a divine kingdom. If you can be an honorable, upright, law-abiding citizen of the United States, why can you not, when born again and made a citizen of the kingdom of God, be law abiding? Why must you, upon becoming a child of God, begin by disregarding discipline and law and becoming an anarchist and rebel? Reader, if you are knowingly transgressing God's law every day, do not any longer deceive yourself, as you are not a Christian, but a sinner, **for "Whoever is born of God doth not commit sin"** (*See 1 John 3:9*). But **"Whoever committeth sin transgresseth the law, for sin is a transgression of the law"** (*See 1 John 3:4*).

Romans 14:23

King James Version And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for **whatsoever is not of faith is sin.**

Amplified Bible The man who has doubts - misgivings, an uneasy conscience - about eating, and then eats, stands condemned before God, because he is not true to his convictions and does not act from faith. For whatever does not originate and proceed from faith is sin - that is, whatever is done without a conviction of its approval by God is sinful.

Note: In *Galatians 5:6* it tells us that faith worketh by love. The law of God's Kingdom is love. The two great commandments of the law are; *love the Lord thy God with all thy heart..., and thy*

neighbor as thy self. Jesus said that all the law and prophets hang on these two sayings {See *Matthew 22:40*}. To keep “the whole law” we must live by the motive of love. Everything we do is to be ultimately motivated by love to God. *1 Corinthians 10:31* reads as such, “*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*” If we do anything that we believe may be against the will of God, we sin. Therefore our conscience is corrupted. We are condemned. That is why Paul tells the “stronger brethren” that it is good not to do that which might make the weaker brother “stumble”, “be offended” or “be made weak” {See *Romans 14:21*}. The reason eating is sinful for one that “doubteth” is because his eating is not done from a motive of love to God. It cannot be while there are doubts in his mind regarding its lawfulness. *1 John 3 20-21* read as such, “*For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. {21} Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. 22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.*”

Once again, even Webster’s Dictionary agrees with what we have found throughout the Bible.

1828 Noah Webster Dictionary: Sin; The *voluntary* departure of a *moral agent* from a *known* rule of rectitude or duty, prescribed by God; any *voluntary* transgression of the divine law, or violation of a divine command; a wicked act; iniquity. Sin is either a positive act in which a *known* divine law is violated, or it is the *voluntary* neglect of *known* duty *clearly implied* in such command; To depart *voluntarily* from the path of duty prescribed by God to man; to violate the divine law in any particular, by actual transgression or by the neglect or non-observance of its injunctions; to violate any *known* rule or duty.

Let us now look at the definitions of sin and relating words, according to “Strong’s Dictionary.”

The following section was taken from the booklet titled, “Holiness and Sin,” written by Gordon C. Olson

Old Testament words describing sin

(1) Words with a root meaning to miss, to err from the mark, to miss or wander from the path of rectitude prescribed for man by a loving Creator. The idea is applied to archers, whose great skill enables them not to miss their mark (*Judges 20:16*), and to those who stumble on the way to a goal, or make a false step because of haste (*Prov. 19:2*).

a) **To sin (*khaw-taw'*, 2398):** *Gen. 20:6, 9; 39:9; Ex. 20:30-34; Num. 15:27 (27-31); Deut. 20:18 (16-18, see 9:3-5); 1 Sam. 2:25; Job 5:24; Prov. 8:36 (32-36); Ezek. 18:4, 20, 24.*

b) **Sin (*khat-tawth'*, 2403):** *Gen. 18:20-21; 50:17; Ex. 32:30-34; Ps. 32:5; Prov. 14:34; Isa. 6:7; Ezek. 3:20; 18:24; 33:14-16; Dan. 9:20-21; Zech. 13:1.*

(2) Words with a root meaning to bend, to curve, to twist, to distort, to make crooked. Five nouns are derived from the basic verb.

a) **To act perversely (*aw-vaw'*, 5753):** To act contrary, do wickedly, do wrong: *Esther 1:16; Dan. 9:5.*

b) Perversion (*aw-vone'*, 5771): Crookedness, perversity, depravity, iniquity; the perversion of the divine law; guilt contracted by sinning (*Gen. 15:16; 32:5*). It is the character of the action that is emphasized (*Ps. 32:5; Gen. 4:13; 44:16; Ex. 34:7, 9; Num. 14:34; 1 Chron. 21:8; 32:5; 51:2, 9; Isa. 6:7; 53:6; 59:2; Jer. 31:30, 34; Ezek. 3:18-20; 18:17-20, 30, Hosea 4:8; Micah 7:18*).

(3) Related words with a basic meaning to break away from anyone, to revolt, to rebel, to break away from just authority, to break a covenant (as Moab breaking away from Israel, *2 Kings 1:1; 3:5-7*; and Edom from Judah, *2 Kings 8:20, 22*); "an expression which probably means properly a breach with God, and hence apostasy or rebellion against God-design and set purpose are always involved."

a) To transgress (*paw-shah'*, 6586): *Isa. 1:2 (2-4); 46:8; 66:24; Jer. 2:29 (28-30); 3:13 (12-15); Ezek. 2:3; 18:31; 20:38 (35-38); Hosea 7:13; 8:1*;

b) Transgression (*peh'-shah*, 6588) A rebellion, a revolt, a defection (or conscious breach of allegiance or duty, a desertion), a trespass, an apostasy, a stronger word than **2403**. While **2403** includes sins of negligence and weakness, design and set purpose are always implied in **6588**. *Job 34:37* may be regarded as the chief passage ("he adds to his sins rebellion"): *Gen. 31:36; 50:17; Lev. 16:15-16, 21; Ps. 32:1; 51:1, 3; Isa. 43:25; 44:22, 53:8; 58:1; Ezek. 18:28, 30-31*.

(4) The verb, to be wicked (*raw-shah'*, 7561) properly means to make a noise or tumult. The main idea appears to be a strong excitement. Compare *Job 3:17* and *Isa. 57:20*. "If the veil becomes a habitual feature of the disposition and of actions, it is *raw-shah'*." Thus the word denotes a state of impiety, to be unrighteous: *1 Kings 8:47 (47-50); Job 3:17; Ps. 18:21; Isa. 57:20; Dan. 9:15*; other words also appear from this root.

(5) Words with a root meaning of covering over, to cover up, thus the idea of secrecy or treachery, falsehood or faithlessness, a turning aside from openness before God.

a) To act treacherously (*maw-al'*, 4603): *Deut. 32:51* (of Moses, **4784** used in *Num. 27:14*); *Joshua 7:1; 1 Chron. 5:25; 10:13; 2 Chron. 12:2 (1-3); Neh. 1:8*.

b) Treachery (*mah'-al*, 4604): *Job 21:24*.

(6) Words with a primitive root to be or to make bitter, to stroke or stripe, especially to lash with a whip, to pass a razor over the skin (word razor derived from); to resist, to continue against, striking and contending with both hands, to repulse anyone; to stroke or strike anyone's mouth, that is, to refuse to hear his words, to treat him with contempt; thus to be contumacious (perverse in resisting authority, stubbornly disobedient), to be rebellious, to grievously provoke, to be contentious.

a) To be rebellious (*maw-raw'*, 4784): *Num. 20:23-24* (Aaron's rebellion); *27:12-14* (Moses' rebellion, Moses used the same word to Israel, *20:10*); *Deut. 21:18-21; 1 Sam. 12:13-15; Ps. 5:10; 78:8*.

b) Rebellion or rebellious (*mer-ee'*, 4805): *Num. 17:10; Deut. 31:27; 1 Sam. 15:23; Neh. 9:17; Prov. 17:11; Isa. 30:9; Ezek. 2:3,5*.

(7) Words from a primitive root to rebel, to be rebellious, thus to be stubbornly disobedient.

a) To rebel (*maw-rad'*, 4775): *Joshua 22:15-16; 2 Kings 18:7 (1, 3, 5-7); Job 24:13; Ezek. 2:3 (1-5; Dan 9:9-10*.

b) Rebellion (*mer-ad'*, 4776): *Ezra 4:19*.

c) Rebellion (*meh-red*, 4777): *Joshua 22:22 (21-24)*.

d) Rebellious (*maw-rawd'*, 4779): *Ezra 4:12, 15*.

(8) **Iniquity or wickedness (vanity) (*aw'-ven*, 205):** From a root meaning to pant, thus to exert one's self (usually in vain), to come to naught or nothingness, a negation. The idea of nothing is

applied (1) to vanity, hence, falsehood and wickedness; (2) to lightness and easiness; (3) to living at ease, riches, wealth; (4) to ease, ability of doing anything; and (5) to be deficient in strength or exhausted. Evil is in itself empty and worthless. Among the usages are:

a) Emptiness or vanity, as characterizing sin and false worship: *Isa. 41:29; Zech. 10:2; 1 Sam. 15:23* (of the vanity of idols); *Isa. 66:3* (of idols themselves); *Hosea 4:15; 10:5*.

b) Vanity words, falsehood, fraud: *Ps. 36:4; Prov. 17:4*.

c) Wickedness or iniquity: *Num. 23:21; Job 34:8, 22; Prov. 11:7; Isa. 1:13*.

(9) Words with a root meaning to spoil, with the idea of breaking in pieces or crushing with a loud noise or with a crash (*Job 34:24; Ps. 2:9; Isa. 24:19*); thus figuratively to make or to be good for nothing, that is, bad (physically, socially, or morally).

a) **To be evil, to have an evil disposition (raw-ah', 7489)**: *Ex. 5:23; Num. 20:15; Joshua 24:15; 1 Sam. 12:25; 1 Chron. 21:17; Ps. 22:16-17; 37:1, 8-9; Prov. 24:18* (displease or be evil in His eyes), *19; Isa. 1:16; 41:23; Jer. 4:14, 18; 7:24; 8:6; Ezek. 11:2*.

Who can review these penetrating descriptions of sin in the Old Testament and say that sin is a small thing, committed through a weakness or inability of the will? Every type of word is used to present its voluntary viciousness. In the above order of words we have a progression of wickedness. Sin is (1) to miss or err from the mark, to wander from the path of rectitude planned for man; (2) to act perversely, or to twist and distort moral character; (3) to transgress or break away from just authority, to be contrary; (4) to be wicked or impious; (5) to act treacherously or deceitfully; (6) to be rebellious (to make or tend to make God bitter); (7) to be stubbornly disobedient; (8) to live worthlessly or without any worthy purpose; and (9) to be evil (to spoil or dash to pieces the moral worth that God intended).

The New Testament carries forth the same idea of the wickedness and inexcusableness of sin presented in the Old Testament, by the use of many Greek words with different shades of meaning. The various words will be represented by transliterations into the English, with reference numbers to Strong's Concordance for identification. Words derived from the same root or from the same basic verb will be grouped together, as follows:

New Testament words describing sin

(1) Words with a root meaning to miss, to miss the mark, thus to miss the road, to fail of doing what one intended to do, to err, to do or go wrong, to miss or wander from the path of uprightness and honor, thus to sin.

a) **To sin (hamart'ano, 264)**: *Luke 15:18-19, 21; 17:3-4; Rom. 2:12; 3:23; 5:12; 6:14-15; 1 Cor. 15:34; Heb. 10:26; 1 John 1:10; 2:1; 3:6, 9; 5:18*.

b) **A sin (ham'artema, 265)**: An evil deed, an error, an offense: *Mark 3:28; Rom. 3:25*.

c) **Sin (hamart'ia 266)**: A failing to hit the mark, an error, a failure to accomplish something which we intended to accomplish, or which is good and useful, a misdirection of our faculties: *Mat. 1:21; Luke 24:46-47; John 1:29; 8:21, 24, 34, 36, 46; 16:8-9; Acts 13:38-39; Rom. 3:9; 6:1, 2, 6, 11, 20; 1 Tim. 5:24; Heb. 3:13; 11:25; 12:1, 4; James 1:15; 4:17; 5:20; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:2; 3:4-5; 5:17*.

d) **A sinner (hamartol'os, 268)**: Devoted to sin: *Matt. 9:13; 11:19; Luke 18:13; Rom. 5:8; 1 Tim. 1:15; James 5:20; 1 Pet. 4:18*.

(2) Words conveying the idea of falling away, a fall beside or near something, a stumbling beside, a false step, a blunder (derived from *para*, beside, and *pipto*, to fall, to fall down)

a) To fall away (*parap'ipto*, 3895): To deviate from the right path, to turn aside, wander: Only in *Heb. 6:6* (a climactic action).

b) A trespass (*par'aptoma*, 3900): A falling aside or away from right, truth, duty, a lapse or deviation from truth and uprightness, an error, a sin, a misdeed, a fault arising from ignorance or inadvertence: *Matt. 6:14-15; 18:35; Rom. 4:25; Gal. 6:1; Eph. 1:7; 2:1; Col. 2:13; James 5:16.*

(3) Words conveying the more serious idea of stepping by the side of, of going past or passing over without touching a thing (derived from *para*, beside, and *baino*, to step out, to walk, to go). The words are active and positive in their import.

a) To transgress (*paraba''ino*, 3845): To violate, overstep, always in a moral sense: *Matt. 15:2-3; Acts 1:25; 2 John 9.*

b) Transgression (*par'abasis*, 3847): A deviation, an overstepping, an extravagance, a digression; hence a deviation from the law of God, a going across that law, a violation of law, a deliberate departure from the way of truth and righteousness: *Rom. 2:23-25; 4:15; 5:14; Gal. 3:19; 1 Tim. 2:14; Heb. 2:2 (1-4).*

c) A transgressor (*parab'ates*, 3848): A breaker or a violator of the law, a lawbreaker: *Rom. 2:25-27; Gal. 2:18; James 2:9, 11.*

(4) Words involving the word law with a prefixed negative, thus the condition of one without law (either because ignorant of it or because violating it).

a) Lawless (*'anomos*, 459): Destitute of law, the divine order historically revealed in the Old Testament, so used of the Gentiles, *1 Cor. 9:21*. It is generally used in the sense of departing from the law, a violation of law, lawless, wicked: *Luke 22:37; Acts 2:23; 2 Thess. 2:8; 1 Tim. 1:9; 2 Pet. 2:8.*

b) Lawlessness (*anom'ia*, 458): A want of conformity to the law, contempt and violation of law, iniquity, wickedness: *Matt. 7:23 (21-23); 13:41 (37-42); 23:28 (27-28); 24:12; Rom. 4:7; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:14; 2 Thess. 2:7; Titus 2:14; Heb. 1:9; 8:12 (10-12); 10:17 (16-17); 1 John 3:4.*

(5) Words involving the word just or righteous with a negative, thus a refusal to do what is right.

a) To do wrong (*adek'eo*, 91): To be unjust or unrighteous, to wrong someone, to do hurt, to act unjustly or wickedly: *Matt. 20:13; Acts 7:24-27; Col. 3:25; Rev. 22:11.*

b) Unjust (*'adikos*, 94): Unrighteous, descriptive of one who violates or has violated justice: *Matt. 5:45; Luke 16:10-11; Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Pet. 3:18; 2 Pet. 2:9.*

c) Unrighteousness (*adik'ia*, 93): Injustice, wrong: *Luke 13:27 (24-27); John 7:18; Acts 1:18; 8:23 (20-24); Rom. 1:18, 29; 2:8 (6-11); 6:13; 1 Cor. 13:6; 2 Thess. 2:10-12; 2 Tim. 2:19; James 3:6; 1 John 1:9; 5:17.*

(6) Words involving the word godly, pious, reverent, or worship, with a negative.

a) To be ungodly (*aseb'eo*, 764): To act impiously, to be destitute of reverential awe towards God: *2 Pet. 2:6 (4-9); Jude 15 (14-15).*

b) Ungodly (*asebe'es*, 765): Impious, destitute of reverential awe toward God, despising God: *Rom. 4:5; 5:6; 1 Tim. 1:9; 1 Pet. 4:18; 2 Pet. 2:5; 3:7; Jude 4, 15.*

c) Ungodliness (*as'ebia*, 763): Impiety, want of reverence towards God: *Rom 1:18; 11:26; 2 Tim. 2:16; Titus 2:12; Jude 15, 18.*

(7) Words designating evil, bad, of a bad nature or condition.

a) Evil (*poner'os*, 4190): Bad, wicked, in an ethical sense; also used of labors, annoyances, hardships, toils, perils.

(a) Evil in general: *Matt. 5:11; 7:17-18; 9:4; 15:19; Mark 7:22, 23; John 3:19; 7:7; Rom. 12:9; Col. 1:21; 2 Thess. 5:22; Heb. 3:12; 10:22; 2 John 11.*

(b) Evil persons: *Matt. 5:45; 12:34-35, 39, 45; 13:49; 25:26; Luke 6:35; Gal. 1:4; 2 Thess. 3:2; 2 Tim. 3:13.*

(c) Satan and evil angels: *Matt. 13:19, 38; Luke 7:21; Eph. 6:16; 1 John 2:13-14; 3:12; 5:18-19.*

b) Wickedness (*poner'ia*, 4189): Depravity, iniquity, badness, evil disposition of mind: *Matt. 22:18; Mark 7:22; Luke 11:39; Acts 3:20; Rom. 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:8; Eph. 6:12.*

From these many New Testament descriptions we learn that sin is (1) to miss or err from the mark, to wander from the path of rightness and honor planned for man, a misdirection of our faculties; (2) to trespass, fall beside, or deviate from the right path of life, to stumble; (3) to transgress or step by the side of the prescribed path, and overstepping or departure from the way of truth; (4) to be lawless, or to refuse to conform to divine law revealed to increase man's understanding of the right way; (5) to do wrong, to be unjust or unrighteous, or refuse to do what is right; (6) to be ungodly or to act impiously, without reverential awe toward God; and (7) to be evil, wicked, or depraved in mind and heart.

From this extended study of the words used in the Bible to describe sin, we look in vain for any proof that sin is anything else than a wrong action. There is always the idea of locomotion or voluntary activity, not a static or inactive something back of the will, received by heredity, which exercises a causation over the will.

All sin can be resolved into a wrong ultimate choice to seek our own happiness supremely, which involves our whole personality and is persisted in without virtuous interruptions from the dawn of moral accountability.

From the Book Titled, "The God They Never Knew," by George Otis Jr.

It is most enlightening to look at the various scriptural words used to describe sin. When the root words are analyzed in the original biblical languages (Greek-N.T.; Hebrew-O.T.), the overwhelming evidence is that man is a rebel choosing to violate known requisites. Here is a sampling:

- * To act perversely, to twist and distort
- * To be stubbornly disobedient
- * To refuse to serve God
- * To act treacherously or deceitfully
- * To be rebellious
- * To be lawless, to refuse to conform
- * To be obstinate or incompilant
- * To deviate from the right
- * To be ungodly, to act impiously
- * To be unjust, to refuse to do right.

Does the Word of God describe sin as a weakness? It is always described as a rebellion. There are many Christians who derive a certain amount of satisfaction from their sin. Their conscience, of course, refuses to grant peace when they are living in this abnormal condition. The solution to this situation has been a gross rationalization of their conduct and adherence to the soothing concept that they are unable to obey God! This is but a calculated act of treachery and deceit in the continuing insurrection against God's standard and authority.

From the book titled, “Words From The Word,” by J. Harold Greenlee

On the two forms of the word used for sin, *harmartema*[265] is a form which suggests a thing done, an act performed - in other words, a sin committed. This word, however, is not often used in the New Testament. The word almost always used, *harmartia*[266], is a form which commonly suggests not a thing, an act committed, but rather sin as “sinfulness,” a quality. Indeed, it is this word which is used in passages where no act of sin is referred to at all - *Romans 6:2*, “...we who have died to sin[266]...,” *Romans 7:8*, “...apart from the law sin[266] is dead,” and a host of others. In other words, the Greek language, including the New Testament, in its words for sin seems to recognize what many Christians seem not to understand - namely, that sin is an evil condition of the heart...

Before we make our final conclusion of what we have found throughout the Bible about sin, let us

look at what a few other authorities have concluded about this vital issue.

From the book titled, “Youth Aflame,” by Winkie Pratney

“**WHAT then, IS sin?** Sin is not primarily the THINGS you DO. It is a state of will. It is a CHOICE of a wrong ultimate end in life. It is intent of purpose wrongly and selfishly directed. It is denying God’s right to be God in your life. His Holy anger flames out against sin because it destroys all that is beautiful and good in life. Man living in slavery to sin is a hollow mockery of the holy being once made in God’s likeness and image. Yet we see Man from his first selfish choice forge an unbroken chain of deceit, pride, lust and rottenness.

“Without God in His rightful place as Center and Director of the heart, nothing a man can do will spare him from the righteous wrath of the King of Kings. All his actions, deeds and works are made for selfishness. Aware of his defiance of God’s right, but choosing to be ruled by desire, a sinner lives supremely to please only and ultimately himself. Every heartbeat of the life he borrows from God, he flaunts his rebellion in the face of ever-increasing guilt and coming judgment.

“When men choose wrong, following Adam’s example, they become guilty of the second kind of depravity; MORAL depravity. All sin is moral depravity – “missing the mark” in the ultimate choice of life. The Bible pointedly testifies of man’s free choice in his life of sin, using a variety of words that show explicitly man’s guilt and total moral depravity. No definition of man ‘s moral depravity that tends to remove personal and individual blame or responsibility from each sinner is a definition inspired by the Holy Spirit of God. ALL the Bible words used for sin show that man is a REBEL, not a subject of pity who has lost his ability of will to do right.

“Who can study the penetrating pictures of sin in the Scriptures and make sin something small! From the very least expression (to “err, stray from the mark or path planned for man”) to the strongest term (“utter evil, wickedness of the mind and heart”) all sin is WRONG CHOICE (Numbers 15:27; Ezekiel 3:18; 2 Kings 8:20,22; 1 Kings 8:47-50; 1 Chronicles 5:25; 1 Samuel 12:13-15; Joshua 22:16; Isaiah 66:3; Jeremiah 7:24; Romans 6:14-15; Hebrews 6:6; Galatians 6:1; Matthew 15:2; Acts 1:25; 1 Timothy 1:9; Romans 6:19; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; 2 Timothy 2:19; 1 Peter 4: 18; Titus 2:12; Matthew 7:17,18; Hebrews 3:12).

“From this study of Bible words describing sin, we look in vain for evidence that sin is anything else than a wrong choice. There is always the idea of movement, voluntary action, never a static or inactive something behind the will, received by heredity, that CAUSES the will to act in sin. The Word of God protects itself from theological speculation like this; sin is a CHOICE.”

“Scripture reveals that NO sinner seeks God. His selfishness has made him run from the call of God just like Adam did long ago: *Genesis 6:5; 2 Chronicles 12:14; Psalm 10:4; 53:2 119:115; Ecclesiastes 8:11; Isaiah 9:13; 31:1; 59:4; 64:7; 65:1; Matthew 23:37; John 5:40; 6:26; Romans 2:4; 3:11.* For this reason, he cannot be saved unless God invests great efforts in him to turn him back to righteousness.”

From Charles G. Finney’s 1851 Systematic Theology

It is admitted on all hands, that selfishness is sin. Comparatively few seem to understand that selfishness is the whole of sin, and that every form of sin may be resolved into selfishness, just as every form of virtue may be resolved into benevolence. It is not my purpose now to show that selfishness is the whole of sin. It is sufficient for the present to take the admission, that selfishness is sin. But what is selfishness? It is the choice of self-gratification as an end. It is the preference of our own gratification to the highest good of universal being. Self-gratification is the supreme end of selfishness. This choice is sinful. That is, the moral quality of this selfish choice is sin. Therefore, disobedience to the moral law must essentially consist in selfishness, and in selfishness alone. Let it be remembered, then, that sin is a unit, and always and necessarily consists in selfish ultimate intention, and in nothing else. This intention is sin; and thus we see that every phase of sin resolves itself into selfishness. If we love any being better than ourselves, we of course deny ourselves when our own interests come in competition with his. Love is good-will. If I will good to others more than to myself, it is absurd to say that I shall not deny myself when my own inclinations conflict with their good. Now the love required by the law of God, we have repeatedly seen to be good will, or willing the highest good of being for its own sake, or as an end.

From the book titled, “The God They Never Knew,” by George Otis Jr.

Gordon Olson has given what I consider to be one of the finest definitions of sin: Sin is an unintelligent abuse of God-given endowments of personality.”

The conclusion that is quite obvious after this thorough, Biblical study of sin, is this:

Sin must be the willful transgression of the known will of God. The violator willfully chooses to make his self-gratification of greater importance than God’s will, when they transgress or

neglect the known will of God. It is choosing to not be constrained by God through their conscience. It is making himself or herself as a god by choosing to neglect the rightful lordship of God. It is choosing to follow after their own desires of the flesh and mind. This is done as their supreme end, all without respect of God and their fellow man. If it feels good and brings temporary happiness, then the sinner will often do it, regardless of how it may hurt other people and mostly God. The sinner lives in this selfish heart condition “*making themselves as gods unto themselves.*”

It is unlikely for man to live without mistakes and misjudgments, due to the fact that we do not have all knowledge. But once knowledge of the will of God is known, it then must be lived up to or it becomes sin. {See James 4:17}. For man to choose to be ignorant to the will of God will never stand with God as an excuse for sin!

I find it amazing, that many think that it is humble to declare that they sin every day, while they think it is prideful to declare that you live a victorious, holy life, that is free from sin. These people should ask themselves these questions. Who is to be blamed for sin in my life? Is it God’s fault that I do not have the victory? Does the Lord not have the power to give me deliverance, or does the devil have more power {see Psalm 62:11, Matthew 28:18, & 1 John 4:4}? Does God not care and love His creation enough, to make victory available to us? {See John 3:16} Is the reason I am not getting the victory over sin because I have no true saving faith in the Lord? If we have true saving faith, we will have repented, humbled, and submitted ourselves to the will of God, and have this victorious life through Him {Philippians 4:13}.

In the case of the individual who has chosen to live a life of selfishness, no decision or activity subordinate to this wrong motive of heart may be considered other than “filthy rags.” No matter how “good” our deeds may seem on a human level, as long as our supreme purpose in life remains unchanged “all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags” (See Isaiah 64:6). Note that these are works, “plural”, that are done without “singleness of heart (*eye*)” {See Matthew 6:21-24}... like the “works of the flesh” compared to the “fruit of the Spirit” that we commented on earlier. The true Christian has “righteousness” SINGULAR. The counterfeit have “righteousnesses” PLURAL.

Sin is a choice to promote our happiness supremely in an unintelligent supposition that this is of paramount importance. This state of sin and rebellion persists until exposed in an encounter with the law of God.

For the honest seeker that has been given contradicting verses to defend for sin and would like to understand these verses better, I offer the following books. Before diving into these books, let me make it clear that I am not closely acquainted with any of the writers and might not agree with some of the contents within, yet have found them to be useful in explaining these verses.

1) “A Religious Controversy” by Chas. A. Orr / <http://www.faithpublishing.com/> - Phone: 1-800-767-1479 / Faith Publishing House, 920 W. Mansur Ave., Guthrie, Oklahoma 73044

2) “Conflicting Concepts of Holiness” by W. T. Purkiser / Beacon Hill Press

3) “Exactly What Are Savior Taught About Sin” by M. L. Dye / <http://www.gospeltruth.net/Exactly/exactly.htm>

4) “Go And Sin No More” by Alton Danks / <http://www.wolmin.com/>

- 5) "Grieve not the Spirit" by George E. (Jed) Smock / The Campus Ministry U.S.A., 922 West Village Drive, Newark, OH. 43055
- 6) "Misunderstood Texts" by Asa Mahan / <http://www.wesleyanbooks.com/bookclub.htm> – Phone: 1-800-772-6657 / Schmul Publishing Company, PO Box 716, Salem, Ohio 44460
- 7) "Must We Sin" by D. S. Warner / <http://www.faithpublishing.com/> - Phone: 1-800-767-1479 / Faith Publishing House, 920 W. Mansur Ave., Guthrie, Oklahoma 73044
- 8) "Must We Sin" by Howard W. Sweeten
- 9) "Refuting Popular Pseudo-Biblical Excuses For Sin" by J. Patrick Johnston
- 10) "Sinning Christians?" by Jeanne Trovato
- 11) "Sinning Saints?" by Howard W. Sweeten / <http://www.wesleyanbooks.com/bookclub.htm> – Phone: 1-800-772-6657 / Schmul Publishing Company, PO Box 716, Salem, Ohio 44460
- 12) "That Ye Sin Not – Studies in First John" by Nelson G. Mink
- 13) "The Believers Conditional Security" by Daniel D. Corner / <http://come.to/the.gospel> – Evangelical Outreach, P.O. Box 265, Washington, PA 15301-0265 / Phone: 724-632-3210
- 14) "The Fallacy of the Sinning Christian" by Malcolm L. Lavender – <http://www.crisispub.com/> -
- 15) "Walking in the Spirit" by George E. (Jed) Smock / The Campus Ministry U.S.A., 922 West Village Drive, Newark, OH. 43055
- 16) "Wrested Scriptures Made Plain" by W. E. Shepherd
- 17) Useful Web Sites – <http://www.gospeltruth.net/> - <http://www.cris.com/~fires/> - <http://www.stopsinching.net/> - <http://www.cris.com/~fires/otherarts.htm> – <http://www.obeygod.com/> - <http://www.reformationpublishers.com/> -

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