

What is Sin?

- The transgression of devine law...
- Separation from God...
- A way that seems right to man...
- Yielding to temptation...
- The Devil's work...
- An insult to God...

Sin is the Willful Transgression of Devine Law" Sin is...wilful transgression of the divine law." Webster's Dictionary We might explain willful transgression in this way: You know something is wrong, but you go ahead and deliberately do it. Sin can also be committed in another way: When you know God's will but you refuse to do it. This becomes the sin of omission. An example of this would be Jonah in the Old Testament. His sin was the sin of omission. He just left undone what God commanded him to do. In I John 3:4 we read, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." Someone might ask, "What law is he talking about?" The law of grace. The New Testament law which teaches we must be born again and live free from sin. God speaks through the voice of conscience before one does wrong and warns them not to do it. After one commits sin, He brings condemnation upon them. Therefore, there's a warning before one sins and condemnation after sin that tells one they have done wrong. The only exception to this rule would be when a person, thorough neglect, would slowly drift from God until, finally he would drift past the line of division between saint and sinner.

We have examples of this in the life of Samson and the New Testament Church at Laodicea. Sin is rated according to the amount of light we have received. Romans 4:15, "For where no law is, there is no transgression." Romans 7:9, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Paul thought he was coming along good in his old Pharisee religion, until he had an opportunity to hear the New Testament law, "Ye must be born again." Then his old religion was no good to him anymore. He had to now embrace truth or remain in a lost condition. Sin is a Separation from God Isaiah 59:1-2, "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Sin causes God to turn a deaf ear to us. Psalms 66:18, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." John 9:31, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners." Jesus spoke to the Pharisees in John 8:21 saying, "I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: Whither I go ye cannot come." Sin not only separates us from God now, but will also separate us forevermore. A man must turn from his sin and come to God, repenting, before God will hear him. Isaiah 55:7, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Ezekiel 18:20, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Romans 6:23, "The wages of sin is death." Sin is a Way that Seemeth Right Proverbs 14:12, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." It seems right for some people to join a church, but church joining will never lead to life eternal. It'll only lead to death. The moral man's life also seems right to him. He says, "I live good. I don't have any bad habits. Why should I have to be born again?" Nicodemus, in the third chapter of John, was this kind of man. He was both religious and a good moral man, but Jesus said to him, "Ye must be born again." Many religious ways may seem right to some people, but they need to keep checking them by the word of God. John 5:39, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life." The Bible is our road map, and if we study it with an open heart, God will show us the way. Sin is Yielding to Temptation To be tempted isn't sin, but to yield to the temptation is sin. We might illustrate it in this way: The birds can fly over my head. I can't keep them from that, but I can keep them from building nests in my hair. You cannot keep all the temptations away from your mind, but you can keep from yielding to them. Here again is where the devil is likely to trick you. He will put unclean things in 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 don't desire that thing in your heart, and keep resisting it, you're clear before God.

In the hour of sore temptation it might be well for you to read I 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."

First of all I want you to notice that the temptation which is bothering you is just a common one. Secondly, God has made a way to escape. Don't be looking at 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 humbling yourself down in prayer and leaving your burden there. Be willing to obey God's word. This is your escape. Sin is the Devil's Work I John 3:8, "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." He goes on to tell us in verse 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." Sin is in the heart and is more than just having bad habits or going to the wrong kind of places. Sin is also wrong attitudes and wrong feelings. We might mention only a few, such as envy, strife, hate, jealousy, resentment, unforgiveness, rebellion, and lust. In Matthew 5:28, Jesus said, "but I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Here sin is committed without a thing being said or a move being made. I John 3:15, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." Here again sin is the wrong attitude or feeling. Sin is an Insult to God Sin is the highway to hell. It's the foolish man's choice. Acts 3:19 says, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins

may be blotted out." Why not repent today and let Christ blot out your sins? Examples Samson neglected his soul to the point that he wasn't aware that he'd backslidden when he laid his head in Delilah's lap, and she had his hair cut off. He didn't know that he'd broken his covenant with God, for when Delilah awakened him he said, "I will go out as at other times before," but he "wist not that the Lord was departed from him."

He soon, however, realized that his power to resist the enemy was gone. This is one good way to know when you have sinned. When you realize that your power to resist the devil is gone. We have another example of this in the New Testament in the church at Laodicea. In Revelation 3:14-19 we read where these people thought they were rich, increased with goods, and had need of nothing, but God said, "And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

Here's a sad condition of a people that had backslidden and didn't know it. They had through deception - convinced themselves that they were rich and had need of nothing. But in reality they'd become so lukewarm that they weren't aware that they were backslidden. This type of backsliding doesn't come about overnight, but through many days, weeks, and months of just kidding yourself into believing that everything is all right.