

Studying Sin Seriously

What Is Sin?

Chapter 2

Part 1



Quote: J.W. McGarvey

“I would esteem above every other gift that could be bestowed upon me as a preacher the power to adequately conceive what sin is and to adequately set it before the people.”

The Biblical Definitions of Sin

Four (4) Major Biblical Definitions of Sin

1. Violation of the conscience is a sin – **Romans 14:23**
2. Knowing to do good and not doing it is sin – **James 4:17**
3. A violation/breaking of God's Law is sin – **1st John 3:4**
4. A failure to keep God's Command is sin – **1st John 5:17**

The Biblical Definitions of Sin

Sin is a violation of the conscience – **Romans 14:19-23**

- “Faith” in this text is in direct contrast with “Doubt”, and NOT referring to the “Gospel System” (**Jude 3 / Galatians 1:23**)
- It’s referring to “Faith” in the subjective sense: (*The Individual*)
- **Consider This: Any action that doesn’t follow one’s faith is sin.**
- **Romans 14:23 (Amplified New Testament)** *But he who is uncertain [about eating a particular thing] is condemned if he eats, because he is not acting from faith. Whatever is not from faith is sin [whatever is done with doubt is sinful].*

The Biblical Definitions of Sin

Sin is a Violation of the Conscience

- We **MUST** have full persuasion of what we are doing is lawful, otherwise, to act, is to sin...
- We **MUST** believe a thing to be right, and God approves, **BEFORE** we do it. (*Not based on the crowd or other's opinion*)

Question:

Have you ever based what you will do on the “Belief” or “Opinion” of someone else? If so, who/why?

Our Conscience

- Conscience: The moral nature about us that reacts favorable or unfavorably, sanctions or disapproves, hurts or feels good, as we react to the things we think, say, or do.
- The Conscience **MUST** be Educated by the Word of God
 - Consider Paul's (Saul's) Conscience: **Acts 23:1, 24:16, 26:9**
- The Conscience is **NOT** an infallible Guide: **John 16:2**
- The Conscience **CAN** be dulled: **1st Tim. 4:1-3, Eph. 4:17-19**
- Deductions: the process of reaching a conclusion about something because of other things that you know to be true
 - Can deductions be Good & Bad? Explain your thoughts...

The Biblical Definitions of Sin

Knowing to do good, and not doing it, is sin (James 4:17)

- Sin is not only wrongdoing, but also a failure to do good. (Omission)
 - Gal. 6:10, Tit. 3:1, 1st Tim 5:10, Eph. 2:10, 1st Peter 2:12
- Consider the “Good Samaritan” – A doer of good (Luke 10:30:37)
- Jesus went about “Doing Good”: Acts 10:38
- Knowledge of right = Responsibility to do Right (Luke 12:47-48)

Question: How do we feel about the sin of “unused knowledge, the failure to do what we know is right, knowing how to live in a way that is right and then not doing it?” (I know what’s right, but...)

The Biblical Definitions of Sin

A violation/breaking of God's law is sin [\(1st John 3:4\)](#)

- **Transgression/Lawlessness** - refers to a deliberate and willful violation of a specific law or commandment.
- It emphasizes the seriousness of sin as a direct defiance and rebellion against God's established moral order.
- **Some Basic Illustrations:**
 - We are not to lie = [Ephesians 4:25](#)
 - Not to speak corruptly = [Ephesians 4:29](#)
 - Not to forsake the assembly = [Hebrews 10:25](#)

The Biblical Definitions of Sin

There is a “Law” (Romans 4:15)

- This passage confirms that there is a “law” w/ attached **penalties**
 - Without wrath/penalty, the law would be empty...
- Today’s society is no different than the OT times (Judges 17:6)
- However, God’s Law IS “**ABSOLUTE**”
 - **Let us no longer hear:** “There are no absolutes, no standards, no moral codes”, “everything is relative”, or “I do as I please”

The Bottom Line: It is GOD whom we are to please

The Biblical Definitions of Sin

“Human Will” against “Divine Will”

- Sin is a personal refusal to be governed and circumcised by divine law (*One internally says “What do I want...”*)
- Sin involves a wrong attitude towards God’s will and way
- **We must strive to have an attitude that says:**
 - *Have thine own way Lord, Not my will, but thou will be done*
- Sin is matter of attitude toward constituted authority and law
 - *We do not break the law (for after violation, law still stands)*
 - *Rather, the “Law” breaks us...*

The Biblical Definitions of Sin

A Failure to Keep God's Command is Sin ([1st John 5:17](#))

- “Un-righteous” shows that there is a lack of the quality specified
- All of God's commandments are RIGHTEOUS ([Psalms 119:172](#))
- If we obey God's commands we are righteous (*Failure = Unrighteous*)
- How do the following commands relate to your individual life?
 - [Acts 2:38 & Acts 10:47-48](#) (Baptism)
 - [Acts 17:30](#) (Repentance)
 - [1st Corinthians 16:2](#) (Collection)
 - [Mark 16:15-16](#) (Great Commission)
 - [James 1:27](#) (Pure Religion)
 - [2nd Timothy 2:2](#) (Making Disciples)

The Biblical Definitions of Sin

The Difference Between 1st John 3:4 vs. 1st John 5:17

- 1st John 3:4 (*Positive/Active*) is a “transgression of God’s Law”
 - Flagrant breaking/violation of a command (Commission)
- 1st John 5:17 (*Negative/Passive*) is “all unrighteousness is sin”
 - Failure to obey and/or keep the commandments of God (Omission)
- Crudens Definition of sin “*Any thought word, action , omission or desire, contrary to the law of God.*” (Not just what’s done, but what’s not done)
- Consider the (3) judgements in **Matt. 25** (*Harmlessness is NOT Holiness*)
 - Ten Virgins, Bags of Gold, Sheep and Goats...

The Biblical Definitions of Sin

What Causes the Sin of Omission?

- Indifference (**Rev 2:1-7**) lack of interest, concern, or sympathy
- Spiritual Indolence (**Rev 3:14-22/Rom. 12:11/Tit. 2:14**) a state of laziness and neglect in one's spiritual practices
- Overcautiousness: being excessively or unnecessarily cautious
- Resting/Relying on the brethren – **Galatians 6:4-5**
- Grasshopper Complex – The Spies Report (**Numbers 13:26-14:5/Phil 4:13**)
- Fear of Failure – **Matthew 25:25** (wicked servant and the talent)
- Lack of Faith/Love – **Galatians 5:6/1st John 3:17-18** Faith worketh Love
- Substituting Words for Works – **Acts 11:29**

Bottom Line: We are ALL responsible and ALL needed!

The Biblical Definitions of Sin

What Will Help Us Overcome the Sin of Doing Nothing?

- We must remember the why and who we serve: 2nd Corinthians 9:12-14
- Remember the reward of even the smallest deed: Matt 10:42/Prov 11:18
- Remember success is assured in working for God (Ps 126:5,6/1st Cor.15:58)
- We must see the importance of our work (Matthew 16:26)

The Sin of Omission is fraught with Curses...

- Violates every command in the bible John 9:31
- Turning a deaf ear to God's invite - Matt 20:1-16
- Opposes every figure of the NT church - Mat. 20:1
- Ungodly/Unchristian like - John 5:17
- Spiritual growth is delayed - Acts 8:1-4
- Factions and Trouble will arise
- Sin of commission will occur - Luke 11:23-26
- Constitutes a Real Hinderance - Luke 13:7
- Individual robbed of happiness - Rev 22:3
- Render Unfit for Death & Judgement - Matt 25
- Will Cause you to miss heaven - John 15:1-8
- God's work will not be done

A Religion that does nothing, cost nothing, gives nothing, suffers nothing, is worth nothing!