

**Title** The Doctrine of Sin  
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The Bible is clear of what sin is, and provision is made for it to be taken care of. Merle said last night, two words are in your mind. One is *Amen* and the other *Ouch*. You may express *ouch* verbally if you care to, when we look into this subject and realize it is *ouch*. Most particularly when we look at the greatness and glory of God and try to compare ourselves to the exceeding greatness and glory of God, we realize there is something in us--a problem that causes us to say "*ouch*." This morning a third word might possibly be *Whoops!* What is sin? God determines that. Several verses say that if you know good and do it not, it is sin. Sin is everything that is in contrast to God's greatness and holiness. Anything that is separate and outside the realm of His glory, holiness or character--that is sin. What is His holy character? Everything that is true of God. We reach out to try to comprehend the greatness of God—we find ourselves coming a little short of Who He is, but it is of prime importance that we have a right concept of Who He is. Let's review the Creation, placing ourselves in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve had that intimate relationship. Thinking of Who God is--He is self-existent. Isaiah enlarges who He is so that the people can repent of their sin. Isaiah 43:10, "You are my witnesses..." God is self-existent: And for me to grasp that--that He always was--somehow, I find myself coming short of comprehending that. He always was. He does not really need any of us. He does not need us to fulfill His purposes, He is complete in Himself. [Reads text about all God is.] He will destroy all wickedness in the lake of fire. The Bible says not only what it is, but who is going to be there: the beast, false prophet, and the devil, but it does not stop there: all those whose name is not in the book of life. Try to comprehend all of God's glory and holiness. In Exodus 15:11 [reads verse.], we begin to get the concept of the greatness of God. We also begin to realize that there's a problem, even though man was created in the image of God--in His likeness. Isaiah 40 raises this question: Who am I going to compare God to? After reaching out, he asks what he can compare Him to, saying the nations are like small dust. Insignificant. Man was created in Him image. It establishes relationships. Understanding likeness to be some similarity of character. He loved mankind. He can be compassionate, benevolent--God created man with such character qualities. Man was put in the garden as a creature of choice. The tempter then came. God created Adam and Eve in spirit, soul, and body. The tempter, in Genesis 3, is brief but far reaching. The tempter in verse 5 said, [reads verse.] A question: Did the tempter tempt the body, the soul, or the spirit? He tempted them to reason and reasoning is in the mind. The mind is part of our soul. The temptation was to reason, and they did. When they employed reason, they disobeyed and

transgressed. Romans 5:2 mentions *transgression* and they lost the intimate relationship, separated from God's presence. What died when they ate thereof? Their body did not die. The temptation was in the soul (and in place of obedient faith, reasoning and disobeying) they lost the spirit relationship with God. They lost that sonship. In the Old Testament, we have a few times where God is addressed as *Father* and *Creator*, but not as Father/Child relationship. The seed of sin grew in depth. In Romans 7, we read that the seed of sin is in our flesh. They sought to hide from God when they heard His voice. In Genesis 5 when Adam was 130 years old, he had a son called Seth. He begat the son in his likeness and image. It was now in the image of fallen Adam and not the perfection of God. There's a problem now. Man is disoriented. God hates sin and He will not tolerate it, though He is loving, compassionate, and forgiving. But because of His exceeding Holy character, He must execute wrath upon sin. We must give it the same terms as God does. Some of the terms we use in relation to sin, do not measure up—like shortcomings--but God calls it iniquity or transgression. Man in his condition today is fallen; he is still capable but never all-knowing. He retains love, but not perfect love like God's. He can choose, but is subject to wrong. He can forgive, but not absolve. He can make promises, but we're subject to failure. There's something wrong; there's a problem. To leave a clean moral life through self-will, but we are subject to temptation. It's true of the unredeemed, but is it true of us as well? We're subject to it.

When Adam and Eve were tempted by reason, it was in the mind. One could understand the warfare that was raging in Adam and Eve's mind (to think it through); that warfare continues in our minds today. Even though we have renewed minds--unless you're different than what I am, and don't find that battle, that struggle? Ah, yes, we're living in victory, have the glory of the cross, been transformed, yet there's still that thing in each of us whether you like it or not--and whether it causes you to hide your face from God. At times we feel like running away from it. I believe that our enemy uses that tactic, that approach, probably as forcefully as he did to Adam and Eve--getting the mind to reason rather than yield to faith in God. Capture a man's thoughts, and you control him. If in the temptation, they did not yield to reason, Satan could not capture them. But he did, and the battle continued. Their minds reasoned that the fruit of the forbidden tree looked harmless. Imagine that! The forbidden fruit may have looked similar to the other fruit, looked harmless, perhaps even helpful in their needs. Can we make application in our time? James 1 says, "Every man is tempted..." (Can't blame it on someone else!) drawn away and enticed. When lust conceived, it births sin. Sin is universal. We are told that adequately in Scripture, especially in Romans. Romans is written to Christians; those who are believers. Interesting enough, the word *sin* is in the book of Romans 55 times. It's mostly (except seven times in the noun form) in the verb form. In chapter three, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." It's making reference to all regardless of our ethnic background or where we identify/belong with. Chapter three: those verses leading up to 23 are not a pleasant descriptions of what is relative to all. Sin is a ruling power. You go to Romans 5:21, it says sin has reigned unto death. It affects our thinking. In Romans 1:19-21 [reads verses.] That's sin, that seed of sin. It pervades our members. In Romans 6, it is there. *Sin* is read the most often in Romans six, yet we look at this chapter as a victory chapter. We have something we are working with. Verse 14 says, I am carnal. Romans 7:14, and following verses, are present tense. Sin abounds. Romans 5:20, it abounds. Chapter four goes through the lengthy exhortation how we are justified by faith, not of works, lest we boast. In chapter five, because we are justified, we have access by faith to grace. We glory in tribulations. Even Adam and Eve reasoned it would be better to take of that

fruit. They lost their relationship with God. In our time it is urgent to exercise obedient faith; and yes, God put reason in our minds, but when that takes precedence, we are in for the same fall of Adam and Eve. Romans 5:8-12 says God gave us His love, and then tells what really happened. It is the comparison of being in Adam versus being in Christ. In chapter six, it tells about being the old man, of being in Adam. It is the same thing when he says, "the old man." In chapter five, this is what happened in Adam, but this much more in Christ. When we do the comparison and retain the Adamic man, then we miss justification by faith. Let's look in chapter five: it says, by one man sin entered the world. All have sinned, and death reigned. [Reads Romans 14-21.] It sounds like a defeat, but it is the victory that is highlighted. We have four aspects of sin,: three results (judgment, condemnation, death). Spiritual death for Adam and Eve and their descendents and physical death as well. Unless we have that blessed opportunity: that in these bodies we can still await redemption.

Iniquities--what are iniquities and transgressions? *Iniquity* is limited obedience to the known Word of God. I set my limitations of obedience. We may draw a vertical line and God's holiness is on that line. I come as far as I think is okay and limit my obedience. When I say I'll come so close, but I think I'll be alright (even minor disobedience) that's iniquity. Iniquities and transgressions are often in the same context in the Bible. Saul died for his transgressions. Christ died for our iniquities and transgressions. God says in the Ten Commandments that He will visit the iniquities upon the third and fourth generation of those that hate Me. How can that be taken care of, changed? Eli had one in his family he did not restrain. God told Eli he will visit that iniquity, paying for it dearly. Psalm 78: an interesting Scripture showing how God will visit iniquity to third and fourth generations, yet here this can be changed [Reads verses]. The point is-- to turn to the Word of God and make it known. Self-righteousness is an obstacle to having the righteousness with God that is acceptable. Romans highlights that self-righteousness, particularly directed to the Jewish people. Chapter 10:3, 14:23 [reads verses]. We are told in Romans 3:5 [reads verses], and chapter six yielding is emphasized. That's what overcomes the problem of sin--not letting that in us have dominion, not reasoning when that forbidden thing is offered, instead of that obedient faith to what God's word tells us. The Pharisee and the publican: the Pharisee was the one who was self-righteous and despised others. We must take heed and not be overcome with this. James 4:17 [reads verse.] Romans 1:21 [reads verse.] Let us ask ourselves: Are we glorifying Him as God, lifting Him as high, in the congregations God has asked us to minister to? Is He being seen? Moses and Aaron when told to speak to the rock, Moses took the rod of God and he struck the rock--and what happened? Yeah, the people's needs were supplied! But it cost Moses and Aaron their right to the land of Canaan. What happened? They were not fully obedient. Are we lifting God high as we minister? As we move among the people and interact is our blessed Lord Jesus being lifted up? What are they seeing in us that make people think about God? Our relationship as we walk with the Lord. We see the glory of God as we reflect His image, even though we have that seed of sin. The glory of God is reflected in God, as we nurture and enhance our concept of who God is. A quotation from A.W. Tozer [reads text, that our idea of God should correspond to who God is, our creeds are of little consequence]. We are not able to fully comprehend the totality of God's being. Be diligent to expand our concept of God, His glory and holiness.

In conclusion: 1. Our concept of God and what it does, 2. failure on our part to give Him His rightful place in our lives, and in the life of the congregations--these may be a cause of

murmurings and discontentment among us. Let me take it an inch further--possibly, even cause divisions, the failure to have the concept of God nurtured in our minds and in the life of the congregation. Sin's final result is eternal death. Reading, in conclusion, from 1 Corinthians 15--that last enemy to be destroyed is death. Sin causes death. Eternal death is for those who do not come by faith and accepting the righteousness in Christ Jesus. Perhaps we are tempted by our background, that self-righteousness. If that's all we have when we face judgment... Let me conclude here, behold, I show you a mystery, that we shall not all sleep... [reads verses.]