

#1 PODCAST #1 topic: What is SIN and ITS PENALTY (or CONSEQUENCES)?

(a) **What is sin and why does it separate us from God?**

- Sin first presents itself in the Biblical record, in Genesis 3, as **directly disobeying** a command of God (Genesis 2 God's command, Genesis 3 man disobeys)
- Sin is also presented in the attitude of a created angel, **who in pride rebelled against God**, as described in Isaiah 14:12-14...

1 Timothy 3:6 He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the **devil**.

- 1 John 3:4 Sin is "lawlessness" and 1 John 5:17 all "wrongdoing" is "in"
- James 1:14-15 ¹⁴But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.
- The Bible presents sin by way of major concepts, principally lawlessness and faithlessness, expressed in an array of images (Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be*)
 - sin is missing of a target
 - a wandering from the path
 - a straying from the fold
 - Sin is a hard heart and a stiff neck
 - Sin is blindness and deafness
 - It is both the overstepping of a line and the failure to reach it, both transgression and shortcoming
 - Sin is a beast crouching at the door.
 - In sin, people attack or evade or neglect their divine calling.
 - These and other images suggest deviance: even when it is familiar, sin is never normal. Sin is disruption of created harmony and then resistance to the divine restoration of that harmony.
 - Above all, sin disrupts and resists the vital relation to God, and it does all this disrupting and resisting in a number of intertwined ways. Sinful life, as Georgrey Bromiley observes, is a partly depressing, partly ludicrous caricature of genuine human life.
- Most importantly, **there is NO SIN in God**. His being is SINLESS, and His holy sinless character (His righteousness, His truthfulness, His faithfulness, His life...) is the very standard which our sinning violates. When we sin, we violate His character and we lose both the life His righteousness can give to us and the fellowship His person offers to us.
- In other words...when we sin, we separate ourself from the source of life itself, and start living in death

SIN is thought and ACTION which violates the character of God and transgresses the command of God.

(b) Why is blood a requirement for God to forgive sins?

- God’s word tells us that a holy, sinless God, who in righteousness is life and gives life, is also a God of justice. Thus a just Judge requires a penalty when sin (that which destroys life) is chosen. The penalty for sinning is death.
- Yet this righteous and just God provided a way (in His grace) for someone guilty of sin to be released from that penalty – the death of a substitute.
- In the Law, Leviticus 17:11, God tells us this:

The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement for the life.

- When the blood of a living animal was “shed,” or released from the body, the life of the body was taken. It was proof that the life of the substitute had been taken, and sufficiently paid the penalty for sin
- Additionally, a bloody sacrifice not only guaranteed the death of the substitute, but also vividly illustrated the true awfulness of sin. The sacrifice satisfied holy justice. It visualized that sin takes God’s life from us, and ushers our lives into death (Ephesians 2:1-3)

(c) Are there levels of sin? Is murder really the same as lying?

- First, it is important to say that all sin is serious and unacceptable to God. Jesus reminded us of this when he said, “You’ve heard it said, DO NOT COMMIT MURDER, but I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother has committed murder in his heart” (Matthew 5:21-22)
- Second, in the law, some sin carried more severe penalty than other sin. If you sinned by accidentally killing your neighbor’s animal, you had to pay restitution (replacing the animal). But if you sinned by intentionally killing another human being, you were to pay for this with your own life.
- Third, God expects that if we are in His family, and following His Son, we are not to make a practice of sinning (1 John 3:6). Anyone who is satisfied to continue in any particular sin “has neither truly seen God or knows Him.”

(d) Does God forgive people who ask for forgiveness for the same sin over and over again?

- 1 John 1:5 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If

we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

- What is sin?
- Why does it create distance between us and God?
- Why does the Bible describe us as sinners?
- Why can’t we do anything about our sin?