

Foundation Study #8: SIN

What do the following verses say about sin?

1) **1 John 3:4**

Sin is anything (action, word, or thought) contrary to the character of God (James 4:17; 1 John 5:17). In simplest terms it is disobedience to God. It is any wrong doing. It is any word, action, or thought that is wrong. In both Testaments it carries the idea of missing the mark (and hitting a wrong mark). It is used of an archer who misses the target and by default hits a wrong area. The idea is not just to passively miss the right target but to willfully hit the wrong area. Sin isn't just not doing the right thing, it is doing the wrong thing.

2) **Romans 3:23**

Sin affects all humanity. All human beings are sinners (1 Kings 8:46; 2 Chronicles 6:36; Proverbs 20:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20). No one can say, *"I never sin."* Not one person can say they are always good. Every person does, says, and thinks things that are wrong.

3) **Romans 5:12**

Sin entered humanity through Adam. When Adam disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden his very nature became corrupt. His nature became sinful. Because all humans trace their origin to Adam, they are all corrupt in their nature as well. He passed his sin nature on to all humanity. Adam's sin was imputed to all humanity. Imputed means it was credited to the account of all humankind. All humans sin because they have a sin nature. Adam's sin is responsible for that sin nature.

4) **Psalms 51:5**

Sin is transmitted to each person at conception. Sin nature occurs at conception (Psalm 51:5). All humans are born with a sin nature (Job 14:4; 15:14; Psalm 58:3; Ephesians 2:3). Humans are born sinners, they don't become sinners. Sin nature is imputed from Adam and inherited from parents and confirmed through each person's sinfulness. Imputed sin is cancelled by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ (Romans 4:6). Inherited sin is overcome through the power of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16). Personal sins are forgiven upon confession (1 John 1:9).

5) **Jeremiah 17:9**

Sin is deadly. It fatally sickens all humans. All are incredibly spiritually "sick." Humanity is not just a little bad, but totally depraved (Isaiah 1:4-6; Mark 7:21,22; Romans 3:10-18). The human heart is "desperately sick." In medical terms the human spiritual condition is "terminal."

*"The nature to sin blinds the intellect (2 Corinthians 4:4), sickens the mind (Romans 1:28), darkens understanding (Ephesians 4:18), degrades emotions (Romans 1:21,24,26; Titus 1:15) and enslaves the will (Romans 6:20; 7:20)."*¹

*"Total depravity must always be measured against God's holiness. Relative goodness exists in some people. They can do good works, that are appreciated by others, but nothing that anyone can do will gain salvational merit or favor in the sight of God."*²

1. Charles Ryrie, Basic Theology, Moody Press, Chicago

6) **John 8:34**

Sin enslaves. Not only does sin terminally inhabit every human soul, it also exercises power over those it inhabits (Romans 3:9; 6:16; 2 Peter 2:19). The more one commits a specific sin, the more enslaved to that sin he/she becomes. Much like a thread, a sin when first committed seems weak and unable to bind. But as a single thread repeatedly wound around two fingers soon binds them together, the power of sin binds, enslaves, the sinner. The ultimate expression of the power of sin is death (Romans 6:23; 5:21).

7) **2 Corinthians 5:21**

Sin is overcome by faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Isaiah 53:11; Romans 3:25; 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:3; Galatians 3:13; Hebrews 9:28; 1 Peter 2:24). The penalty, power and eventually the very presence of sin is removed by the substitutionary, redemptive sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Adam's sin was ascribed to us in the Garden of Eden. Humanity's sin was ascribed to Christ and His righteousness was ascribed to us upon His death on the cross.

8) **Galatians 5:16**

Sin is overcome by walking in the Holy Spirit. The power of sin is weakened and overcome by allowing the Holy Spirit to occupy one's mind and guide one's actions (Romans 8:6; Ephesians 5:18).

9) **1 John 1:9**

Sin is overcome by confession. Admitting wrong doing is the first and continual practice of healthy Christians (Psalm 32:5). Confession is agreeing with God on a specific wrongful matter. Failing to admit wrong doing brings about spiritual separation and physical and relational poverty (Psalm 32:3; Proverbs 28:13).

10) **Psalms 119:11**

Sin is overcome through interaction with Scripture (Psalm 37:31; 40:8). Memorizing, dwelling upon, reading, and applying Scripture are key elements in living the victorious Christian life.

What was the most significant verse in this study to you? Explain.

2. Ibid, page 253.