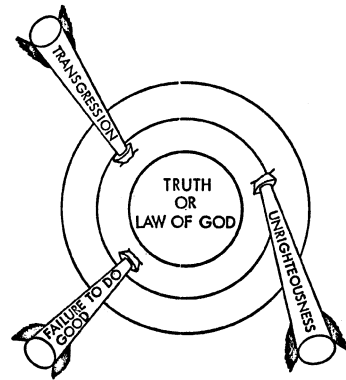


of this is to say children are born all bad. This means they are born “utterly indisposed, disabled and made opposite to all good and wholly inclined to all evil” (**Westminster Confession of Faith**, Chapter 6, article 4), supposedly because they inherit the guilt of Adam’s sin and a fallen nature as the result of Adam’s sin (article 3). If we inherit Adam’s guilt because we are

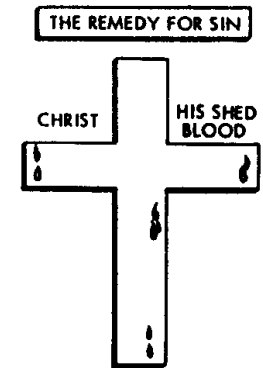
his descendants, why do we not also inherit Noah’s righteousness, since he also is our forefather? God’s word says, “The son shall not bear the guilt of the father” (Ezekiel 18:20). Jesus taught that we must be “converted and become as little children” in order to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 18:1-4). No, children are not guilty of sin. They are pure and innocent. But, all who are responsible before God for their actions, words, and thoughts “have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:9, 23). Are you old enough, sane enough, and intelligent enough to be responsible for what you do? Then you have sinned (1 John 1:8-10).

Since you have sinned, what is the result? What are sin’s consequences? Death is the universal result of sin (Genesis 2:15-17). “Death” is the result of separation (James 2:26). When the spirit is



separated from the body, the body dies. Physical death is a consequence of the sin of Adam and Eve that even innocent babes may suffer, since we are all separated from the tree of life (Genesis 3:22-24). But this is not the death of Genesis 2:15-17, for that death happened the very day Adam sinned, yet he lived physically at least 800 years after he sinned (Genesis 5:4-5). Spiritual death is the

result of the soul being separated from God (Isaiah 59:1-2). Adam died spiritually the very day he sinned. Also, as results of Adam and Eve’s sin, the curses were pronounced upon the serpent, the woman, and the man (Genesis 3:14-19). But the most important consequence of sin to remember is that all those who remain in its guilt will spend eternity “in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” (Revelation 21:8)



Surely you wish to escape this awful fate! But how? It is true that the “wages (just reward) of sin is death” (Romans 6:23), but the very same verse also declares, “the gift (that which is freely given) of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” God, in His wondrous love and grace provided us an escape from sin’s consequences. Jesus Christ is the sacrificial Lamb offered to satisfy the law’s demand of death for our sins (John 1:29). It is His blood, shed on the cross, which will remove the guilt of our sins (Matthew 26:28).

But how can you contact this blood? The blood of Jesus depicts His violent death for us (Romans 5:9-10). When you by faith are baptized into Christ, you are baptized into His death (Romans 6:3-4), His blood, and you are freed from the guilt of sin.

Are you a responsible person? If so, you have sinned. Thus you have eternal spiritual death as your just reward. Will you not come to Christ so that God might freely bestow upon you eternal life?

Sin’s Consequences

Death

- ☛ Physical
- ☛ Spiritual

Curses

- ☛ Serpent
- ☛ Woman
- ☛ Man

Questions for Review

I. True/False

1. ____ Sin is an important Bible subject.
2. ____ We do not need to have authority from the Lord for what we do.
3. ____ It is a sin to fail to do what God demands.

Bible Correspondence Course

Lesson Five

Sin

When a horrible crime has been committed, some bleeding heart is always heard to say, “We can’t blame him. He was abused as a child. His was just ‘anti-social behavior.’” The poor victim is left high and dry from the flood-tide of sympathy. As the result of such confused thinking, the Bible concept of sin, along with personal responsibility and guilt, has been almost forgotten.

Sin is a subject of vital importance in the Bible. From Genesis 3:14-17, where the curses for sin are first pronounced, to Revelation 22:3, where John envisions the lifting of the curses in the new Jerusalem, human sin, its tragic consequences, and God's eternal plan for the relief from those results are the subjects of constant biblical consideration.

Certainly, then, it is important that you know what the Bible teaches about sin. What does sin mean to you if you are not a Christian?

What is “sin”? The word “sin” is a translation of the Greek term “*hamartia*,” which means “a failing to hit the mark.” Thus, if an archer shot his arrow toward the target but missed, whether the arrow went beyond, fell short, or swerved aside, he would have sinned. Thus, James identifies one who “wanders from the truth” as “a sinner.” (James 5:19-20) The apostle John offers an inspired definition of “sin.” He declares, “sin is lawlessness.” (1 John 3:4) Thus, when one practices that which is in violation of God’s law, he is guilty of sin. If he practices that which is unauthorized, he sins by going beyond (2 John 9). If he practices, speaks, or even thinks that which is forbidden, thus practicing “unrighteousness” (“*adikia*”: “a deed violating law and justice”), he sins by swerving aside (1 John 5:17: cf. Galatians 5:19-21). If he fails to do that which God demands, he sins by falling short (James 4:17).

Who, then, is guilty of such lawlessness? Some people say infants are born “inherently totally depraved.” A simple way to think

4. _____ Babies are born in sin.
5. _____ Children do not inherit the guilt of their parents’ sins.
6. _____ A responsible person is old enough, sane enough, and intelligent enough to understand right and wrong.
7. _____ All responsible people have sinned.
8. _____ Adam and Eve died physically the day they first sinned.
9. _____ Physical death is a consequence of the sin of Adam and Eve that even innocent babes may suffer.
10. _____ We also die spiritually because of the original sin.
11. _____ Spiritual death is the result of the soul being separated from God.
12. _____ Jesus’ blood, shed on the cross, will remove the guilt of our sins.
13. _____ Salvation is something we earn.
14. _____ We receive the benefits of the blood of Christ through baptism.

II. Matching

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. _____ Sin | A. the result of separation |
| 2. _____ Unrighteousness | B. born all bad |
| 3. _____ Inherently Totally Depraved | C. that which is freely given |
| 4. _____ Death | D. a failing to hit the mark, lawlessness |
| 5. _____ Wages | E. a deed violating law and justice |
| 6. _____ Gift | F. just reward |