

# The Bible Doctrine of Sin

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## I Moral Law and Moral Government

In getting a sane, simple understanding of sin we must first take up a study of moral law and moral government.

1. LAW MEANS A RULE OF ACTION established by recognized authority to enforce justice and prescribe duties and obligations to those governed. Physical law is the rule of action of the material universe whereby all things are kept perpetually in their own courses, and work in harmony according to the divine plan. Moral law is the rule of action for free moral agents to direct them in their moral action and their own creative powers according to the divine plan. It is the rule of free and intelligent action and liberty as opposed to the law of bondage and unintelligent action.

2. THE PURPOSE OF MORAL LAW. It is to reveal and declare the rule of moral action of free wills concerning the highest good of being and of the universe; and to govern the acts and intents of free wills in their relation to God and the universe. It lies in the reason and declares that which a moral agent ought to choose, will, and intend.

3. THE IMMUTABILITY OF MORAL LAW. It can never change or vary in its requirements that all free wills consecrate themselves to the same end to which God is consecrated—the highest good of the universe and all things therein. Rebellion of free wills will never change God's plan concerning the good of His creation. Because of this, moral law can never change.

4. THE OBLIGATION OF MORAL LAW. Because it governs the best good of being, it is naturally obligatory upon all. What is contrary to the good of being is plainly illegal and unwise and must be prohibited. Free moral agents must cooperate to bring about the greatest public good. They must be against that which brings misery and hardships to society. It is a mutual plan for the good of each person and of the universe as a whole, and all are obligated to keep the moral law on every occasion according to the light received.

5. THE REQUIREMENT OF MORAL GOVERNMENT. To have moral law there must be moral government to direct, guide, and control moral agents. It must include rewards for good and punishments for evil, or no society of free wills can function. There must be in every community some standard of living to which all must conform to prove themselves worthy of being part of that society. There must be some means of dealing with rebels who disturb such society. Law without penalties and rewards is no law at all. It is merely advice which free wills can freely accept or reject without fear of punishment or hope of reward. Moral government is under obligation to execute faithfully the moral law to the letter.

6. REQUIREMENT OF A MORAL GOVERNOR. Since it is necessary to have moral law and moral government to execute this law, there must also be a moral governor whose will and decisions are considered infallible by all the subjects of government. He should be authoritative, not merely advisory. He must be able to maintain the respect of his subjects by faithful and unselfish execution of his duties. He must be able to execute penalties and mete out rewards. Naturally, the one whose attributes and character best qualify him to rule and secure the highest good of all should be the one to rule. It is both his right and duty to be the one to rule. There can be no other person to

meet these requirements but God. His natural attributes, His perfect moral character, His relation to the universe as Creator, and His history of absolute justice to all, qualify Him to be the Supreme Moral Governor. As our good and His glory depend upon mutual conformity to the same end, He is under obligation to require of us to be holy and consecrated to help Him secure the highest good of being.

7. FREE MORAL AGENCY DEFINED. It consists of intellect, sensibility, and free will, and these form the foundation of moral obligation to moral government. The intellect includes reason and self-determination. The sensibility includes self-consciousness, all sensation, desire, emotion, passion, and all feeling. Free will is the power of choice concerning moral law. It is man's faculty of choosing good or evil without compulsion or necessity. It was originally created in man, and he will have it in all eternity.

8. THE BASIS OF RIGHT CHOICE. Moral obligation to always act for the best good of all is the basis of moral action. Nothing can happen in life but what is the choice of someone. It is all-important that right choices be made that will effect the greatest public and private good. Moral obligation extends to the ultimate acts of the will or the intention. The moral agent is under obligation to choose holiness as the means to the best good and happiness of being.

9. THE BASIS OF JUSTICE. Judgment based on intention is the right basis of justice under moral government. This is also the basis of justice in civil governments. If choices are made that had good intentions but did not turn out for the best, or if choices had bad intentions and turned out to be good, the one making the choice should be held responsible for the intention and would not be judged on the basis of accomplishments. The Bible

respects the intention more than the results of the outward actions (2 Cor. 8:12; Mark 7:15-23; Jas. 1:13-15; 3:9-14). All vice and virtue are considered as coming from the heart. Where the heart is right all is considered right, and where the heart is bad, all is considered bad (Matt. 7:15-21). Even sinners do some things outwardly that are required by God, but the heart is not right. The intention is generally selfish, and the acts themselves do not change the heart. Virtue consists of consecration to the same end to which God is consecrated. Vice consists of consecration to the end to which Satan is consecrated—self-gratification contrary to the moral law and the highest good of the universe.

10. THE EXTENT OF OBEDIENCE TO THE MORAL LAW. The foundation of moral obligation is the highest good of all. Since this is true, then entire consecration of free wills to secure this end must constitute obedience to moral law. Obedience must be whole and entire. One cannot choose the good of others and at the same time choose self-gratification. God cannot tolerate half-heartedness in choice and service (Rev. 3:15-16; Matt. 22:36-40). He cannot justify one who renders partial obedience according to his light. If a person is always coming short of full obedience to known duty, then there is not a moment in which he is not under the curse of a broken law (Gal. 3:10-14; Jas. 2:10; 4:17). God cannot dispense with the execution of the penalty until repentance, forgiveness, and full obedience are realized (Rom. 8:1-13; Gal. 5:16-26; Rom. 6:16-23; John 8:34; 1 John 3:8-10).

11. OF WHAT DOES DISOBEDIENCE TO THE MORAL LAW CONSIST? It consists in the choice and life of self-gratification as the end in life instead of the greatest good of the universe. It consists in the commitment of the will and the consecration of the life to serve sin and Satan and the senses instead of the moral

law of the intelligence. It seeks to be governed by the impulses and passions instead of by intelligence and reason. Self-gratification is the root of all sin. Man's selfishness is closely allied to the self-interests of Satan. The will is always free to oppose desire and lust contrary to the law, but when it does not, sin is committed. The mind knows its obligation; so when it chooses contrary to the law, it is not a choice of ignorance. It becomes a free action and brings condemnation by the law. Selfishness is always unreasonable. It is the denial of true manhood and rational nature. It is contempt of the law of God in man's reason. No sinner chooses the way of reason and common sense. He seldom consults reason for his actions. He usually obeys lust and is in stubborn rebellion against the moral law and reason. He is lustful at heart whether he can obey all lusts or not. As long as he remains so, he is condemned before God and needs regeneration to bring him to obedience to the law.

12. THE BASIS OF DEGREES OF GUILT AND VIRTUE. Both reason and revelation affirm that there are degrees of guilt and virtue; that some are more guilty or more virtuous than others; and that one may be more guilty or more virtuous at one time than at another, whether he is a saint or a sinner. All guilt and virtue are dependent on the exercise of moral obligation, and this depends upon the light and knowledge concerning moral law. Degrees of guilt and virtue are measured by the knowledge of the value of the end chosen in life. The sinner's guilt is equal to his knowledge of the value of the interests he rejects. He is held more responsible today than of old, because he knows more (Acts 17:30; Jas. 4:17). A man's guilt or virtue, then, is equal to the knowledge he has of the subject and his conformity to it (Rom. 2:12-16; John 9:41; 15:22-24; Matt. 13:11-12; Luke 12:47-48).

Selfishness is the rejection of all moral obligation, regardless of light. Sin lies in the intention, and this can be measured only by the knowledge under which the intention is formed and maintained. Thus, if a selfish person should preach the gospel, it would be for the reason that it is the most gratifying thing he could do for himself. He might even preach for the good of others and yet have as his chief motive personal benefits. Take away personal gain, financially or socially, and he would cease to preach. If the same person became a robber, it would be to the same end: not to do evil, but to gratify self.

If a sinner abstains from some evil for the sake of loved ones, his reputation, for fear of judgment or disgrace, or for any reason, it is not because he is good at heart, or because he thinks it is wicked to do that thing, but merely for selfish reasons and personal gain. So it is with every phase of life in which the heart is not right. Natural man looks for gain or advantage in everything. It is only when the sinner consecrates himself to the end of the highest good of being, that he ceases being a sinner by nature and practice, and begins to do things from an unselfish standpoint instead of for self-gratification as the end in life.

## II The Bible Definition of "Sin" and "The Old Man"

The Hebrew and Greek words translated "transgression" mean "moral," "religious and national rebellion," "revolt," "unrighteousness," "wickedness," "violation," and "breaking the law." Sin is two-fold:

### 1. The Bible Definition of Outward Sin

- (1) "Sin is transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4).
- (2) "Where no law is, there is no transgression" (Rom. 4:15).
- (3) "By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20; 7:7).
- (4) "Sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Rom. 5:13).
- (5) "Without the law sin was dead" or dormant (Rom. 7:8).

- (6) "The thought of foolishness is sin" (Prov. 24:9; 2 Cor. 10:4-5).
- (7) "Every idle word that men shall speak" is sin (Matt. 12:36-37).
- (8) "All unrighteousness is sin" (1 John 5:17).
- (9) "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23).
- (10) "If ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin" (Jas. 2:9).
- (11) "He that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas. 4:17).
- (12) All "actions" contrary to the law are sin (1 Sam. 2: 3; Jas. 1:13-15).
- (13) "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft" (1 Sam. 15:23).
- (14) Any "omission" of the law is sin (Matt. 23:23).
- (15) All "desires" and "lusts" contrary to the law, inwardly or outwardly manifested, are sin (Mark 7:19-21; Rom. 1:29-32; Gal. 5:16-21; Eph. 2:3; Col. 3:5-10; Jas. 1:13-15).

These passages describe outward acts of something far more sinister and powerful than appears on the surface, as defined in the next point.

## 2. The Bible Definition of Inbred Sin

- (1) "The prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:1-3; 1 John 3:8; John 8:41-44). This in one statement defines "the old man" and inbred sin. It is the devil himself working in people of disobedience in contrast with "the new man," which is the Spirit and nature of God working in the sons of obedience.
- (2) Other terms used in Scripture for "the old man" as the devil working in people are: "sin" (John 1:29; 8:34; Rom. 6:4-22; 7 7-25; 8:2) "the body of sin" (Rom. 6:6); "darkness" (Acts 26:18); "the body of this death" (Rom. 7:24); "the old man" (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9); "the lusts of the flesh" (Eph. 2:3); "the lust of the flesh" (1 John 2:15-17; Gal. 5:16-21); "the lust of the eyes" (1 John 2:15-17); "the pride of life"

(1 John 2:15-17); "all ungodliness and unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:18); "the world" (1 John 2:15-17); "vile affections" (Rom. 1:26); "the lusts of the mind" (Eph. 2:3); "a reprobate mind" (Rom. 1:28); "the lusts of sin" (Rom. 6:11-12); "the motions of sins" (Rom. 7:5); "the law of sin and death" (Rom. 7:7-25; 8:2); "the carnal mind" (Rom. 8:1-13); "the works of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16-21, 24); "the flesh" (Rom. 8:1-13; Gal. 5:24); the "carnal man" (Rom. 7:14-25; 8:1-13); "the power of Satan" (Acts 26:18); "the god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:3-4); "principalities . . . powers . . . the rulers of darkness of this world . . . spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12); "the lusts of your father" the devil (John 8:44); "sin that dwelleth in me" (Rom. 7:7-25); "the course of this world" (Eph. 2:2); and "the body of the sins of the flesh" (Col. 2:11).

These statements of Scripture plainly state the fact that sin is something more than "transgression of the law" or outward sin, and something separate from man himself. Every one of these expressions proves that there is a real law of sin and death, and back of this law, executing it, a real power from a real nature and a real person who is stronger than man himself. It is the "old man," "the body of sin," and "the body of this death" that are to be destroyed, and not the body, soul, and spirit of man (Rom. 6:1-22; 8:1-13; Gal. 5:24; Col. 2:11). When this "old man" is delivered or annulled from operating in man, the body, soul, and spirit of the man as originally created are still there. Man is liberated from the devil for the first time in his life when this is done. It is the "lusts," "desires," and "motions of sin" from the devil in man's body, soul, and spirit that are destroyed, put to death; and "put off," and not any part of the created body, soul, or spirit of man. These "lusts" are plainly stated as being "of the devil" and "of the world" system, which will finally pass

away and will not then operate in man (John 8:44; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 John 2:15-17; 3:8; Rom. 6:11-22).

People call this aspect of sin inherent sin, sin principle, infection of nature, moral disease, contagious corruption, incentive to sin, depraved nature, sinful propensities, evil tendencies, manifold infirmity, the carnal nature, the flesh, the carnal mind, the presence and pollution of sin in the heart, the remains of sin, inbred sin, and many other things. These are theological terms and express the same thought of Scripture on this point, that sin is something real in man, separate from man's body, soul, and spirit, as originally created.

### **III Sin is Not Man's Body, Soul, or Spirit**

The following points prove that sin is not only "transgression of the law," but that inbred sin is the very spirit and nature of the devil working in man the lusts of Satan. It is something real and living and entirely separate from man's body, soul, and spirit as originally created of God.

1. Such statements as "takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29); "servant of sin" (John 8:34), "under sin" (Rom. 3:9); "by one man sin entered the world" (Rom. 5:12); "sin abounded" (Rom. 5:20); "sin hath reigned" (Rom. 5:12); "dead to sin" (Rom. 6:1-12); "not serve sin" (Rom. 6:6); "freed from sin" (Rom. 6:7); "let not sin therefore reign" (Rom. 6:12); "sin shall not have dominion over you" (Rom. 6:14); "servants of sin" (Rom. 6:20); "free from sin" (Rom. 6:18, 22); "wages of sin" (Rom. 6:23); "sin revived" (Rom. 7:7-11); "sold under sin" (Rom. 7:14); "sin dwells in me" (Rom. 7:17, 20); "into captivity to the law of sin" (Rom. 7:23-25); "made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2); "condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3); "deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:13); "put off" and "put away sin" (Eph. 4:22; Heb. 9:26); "striving against sin" and "wrestle against

principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12; Heb. 12:4); "against the wiles of the devil" and "his devices" (Eph. 6:11; 2 Cor. 2:11); and, "He that commits sin is of the devil" (1 John 3:8), all go to prove that "sin" is something more than man outwardly transgressing the law.

All these statements imply that sin is a slave master and a tyrant over man, making him die by forcing him to transgress the law (Rom. 7:7-25; 8:2). Sin is a real person apart from man or it could not reign, dominate, enslave, deceive, slay, be present with, control man, dwell in a man, or dictate to him in any sense. Sin is also a law (Rom. 7:23-25; 8:2).

If sin is a law, there must be someone who made the law and enforces it. There could be no law unless it was made by somebody. It would be of no value unless it could be enforced according to the purpose for which it was made. The devil made and enforces the law of sin and death by demons and spirit forces, and it can only be annulled in free moral agents by a greater law enforced by a greater power (Heb. 2:14, 15). Free wills seek the annulment of the law of sin and death by applying to the court of Heaven, according to the normal law (Rom. 8:1-13). Both laws conflict, as stated in Rom. 7:7-25, thus proving there are real persons and powers back of each law. This proves that sin is a real spirit and nature in man separate from man's own body, soul, and spirit. When man is "freed from sin," he is cut loose from the body of sin and needs no longer to be chained again to it, if he walks and lives in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16-26, Rom. 8:1-13).

The expressions "the body of sin" and "the body of this death" are no doubt an allusion to the horrible mode of punishment mentioned by ancient writers, by which the criminal condemned

to death was fastened by chains to the body of the one he murdered, and left to die by degrees in the loathsome companionship of the putrefying corpse.

2. People are spoken of as being "under sin" (Rom. 3:9; Gal. 3:22); of being "sold under sin" which made them "carnal" (Rom. 7:14); and of being "under the elements of the world" (Gal. 4:3, 9). The Greek word for "under" is *hupo* and means underneath, in place or condition, an inferior position, and implies a power higher than man, which has brought him under the control of sin. Examples of its use, such as "under authority" and "soldiers under me" (Matt. 8:9); "not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14-15); "bruise Satan under your feet" (Rom. 16:20); "I keep under my body" (1 Cor. 9:27); "under obedience" (1 Cor. 14:34); "put all enemies under his feet" (1 Cor. 15:24-28); "under tutors" (Gal. 4:2); and "under the mighty hand of God" (1 Pet. 5:6); all prove that a real power and a real person are involved in the exercise and execution of these laws and accomplishments. If people are "under sin," then there must be a real person and a power greater than man, who keeps him under sin and rules him while there. The phrase "sold under sin" implies a slave master as well as a slave, and this is what Paul experienced when he was helpless "under sin" (Rom. 7:7-25).

3. The phrase "by the law is the knowledge of sin" proves that sin was not in man at one time and therefore was not originally created in him. Sin came later, having entered the world by the malice of the devil. Sin is so closely allied to the devil that it is stated, "He who committeth sin is of the devil" (1 John 3:4-10; John 8:44; Eph. 2:1-3). Sin then is something apart from both man and the law of God.

4. Sin is "in the mortal body" but is not the mortal body, or any part of it, and this "sin" has its own lusts (Rom. 6:12, 16-17; 7:5;

John 8:44). People are commanded not to yield to these lusts, or to be the spirit and nature to whom these lusts belong; but they are to yield to God and to the lusts of His Spirit and nature (Rom. 6:16-22). This contrast proves that the sins and lusts in people are from the spirit and nature of the devil, just as new lusts and desires of a new-born soul are from the Spirit and nature of God (2 Cor. 5:17).

Both the devil and God have desires of their own, of which people become partakers when they serve one or the other (John 8:44; 1 John 3:8; 2 Pet. 1:4). If the old lusts are from Satan and the new lusts are from God, then this fact proves that sin is the spirit and nature of the devil working in sons of disobedience, and that righteousness is the Spirit and nature of God working in the sons of obedience.

5. The believer is made "dead indeed unto sin" and "freed from sin" when he becomes a new creature. But he does not become dead to, or freed from his original body, soul, and spirit. Every original part of man was created sinless, and sin could not be a part of man's own being (Rom. 5:12-21; 6:5-22; 8:1-13). Death to, and freedom from sin refer to being free from the person of the devil and his spirit that took control of man at the time of the fall.

6. Christ "died unto sin once," to "take away sin" and to "put away sin," but He did not die to do away with any part of man's bodily members, soul passions, and spirit faculties, for they themselves were originally created sinless (Rom. 6:10; John 1:29; Heb. 7:27; 9:12, 26). The whole man becomes sinless when one becomes a new creature in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17). If he stays one (and he can), he continues in a sinless life (Col. 2:6-7; 1 John 2:1-2, 29; 3:8-10; 5:1-5, 18).

The Greek word for "put away" is *atheteo*, meaning "to annul" or "to cancel sin," or to cancel the operation of the spirit of the devil in man. The word is translated "disannul" in Gal. 3:15; Heb. 7:18, and shows how and to what extent sin is "put away" in the believer. Sin and all operation of the devil are cancelled in every believer (2 Cor. 5: 17; 1 John 3: 8-10; 5:1-5, 18).

The Greek word for "take away" is *airo*, meaning to take out of the way, do away with, loose, put away, or remove. It means to do away with sin in the believer by virtue of Christ taking it in His own body on the cross, as proved by the use of this word in *God's Plan for Man*, Lesson Fourteen, Point V, 11.

7. A study of Rom. 6:1-8:13 reveals that sin is the spirit and nature of the devil working in sons of disobedience. The old relation to the devil by obedience to the law of sin and death, and the new relation to God by obedience to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, are illustrated by five main ideas:

(1) By being dead to sin and alive to God, by union with Christ in His death, burial, resurrection, and manifestation to newness of life: "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead to sin is freed from sin.... Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he lives, he lives unto God (Rom. 6:1-10).

(2) By reckoning the "old man" dead and the "new man" alive: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the

lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God, For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:11-14). How could anyone reckon himself dead to something that was not constantly present to deal with? When the believer becomes dead to sin and alive to God, he no longer lives after the flesh and in sin and under the power and dominion of Satan. He will still have to "reckon" himself dead to sin, and this proves that the "old man" or the devil, is still present to deal with. He does not have to be inside, as proved in *God's Plan for Man* Lesson Four, Point I, 4.

(3) By master and servant (Rom. 6:15-23). The old relation to sin and freedom from it, and the new relation to God and service to Him are illustrated in this portion of Scripture by a servant who is free to serve two masters—sin or righteousness, Satan or God. Paul speaks of the sinner upon reckoning himself dead to sin, as being made free from the old master and now serving a new master. He starts out this section of his argument by asking the question: "Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace"—that is, shall we again yield to the "old man" or the devil after we have been made free from him? The answer is, "God forbid" (Rom. 6:15). The rest of the passage is self-explanatory and will be quoted under four headings:

A. Acts of obedience indicate the master served: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Rom. 6:16). This applies to saints [followers of Jesus] as well as to sinners. If a follower of Jesus continues to yield to sin and Satan, he is again a sinner and a servant of sin and the devil as much as he was before the

new birth. This passage teaches that a servant may be dead to Satan or God, depending on the one he is not serving, but neither one is actually dead because of not being served. If man continues to yield to either the devil or God, he is the servant of the one he serves and is dead to the one he does not serve.

B. Change in acts of obedience indicates a change in masters: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, you become the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17, 18). If man changes masters from Satan to God, or from God to Satan, the change in acts of obedience indicates such a change and proves which master is being served. The one being served is the master only as long as he is served. The one not served is considered dead by the one doing the service. A person becomes dead to either by rebelling against him and beginning service to the other. No person can serve two masters at one time, but he can serve both masters one at a time (Luke 16:13; John 8:34; 1 John 3:8, 5:1-5, 10-18; Jas. 3:6-13).

C. The master served indicates the nature of obedience: "For as you have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity; even so now [since changing masters] yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, you were free from righteousness" (Rom. 6:19-20). If the "old man" or the devil is in control, and is the master, there is an ever-increasing life of iniquity unto iniquity, and a transformation in life and conduct to the likeness of the devil (John 8:44), but if God is the Master served, there is an ever-increasing life of holiness, and a change from glory to glory into the image of Christ (2 Cor. 3:18).

D. The nature of obedience indicates the wages received: "What fruit had you then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But you being made free from sin, and become the servants of God, you have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:21-23). No follower of Jesus who turns again to serve sin until death will receive the wages of righteousness, nor will any sinner receive the wages of sin who turns from sin to serve righteousness until death.

(4) By marriage (Rom. 7:1-6). Paul, in this passage, illustrates freedom from sin and the old man, and the new life of service to God by marriage relationship. He starts this argument by stating that "the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives," and continues by saying, "The woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he lives; but if her husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man" (Rom. 7:1-3).

These facts of remarriage are applied to believers thus: "Wherefore, my brethren, you also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that you should be married to another, even to Him Who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Sin is like the husband. There is no legal grounds of freedom from him until he dies. Sin was crucified with Christ that people might be free from it and be married to God (Rom. 6:6-12). When sin was alive in people, it brought forth fruit unto death; but now since it has been killed, people can be free from it and bring forth fruit unto life (Rom. 7:5-6; 1 Peter 2:24). People are free from sin at the new birth (1 John



2:29; 3:8-10; 5:1-5, 18); so the experience mentioned above must take place at that time.

(5) By Paul's own experience (Rom. 7:7-8:13). Paul in this section of Romans gives his own experience of being bound to the law of sin and death, and his deliverance from it to prove his past arguments that sin is something separate from man himself which dominates him and makes him transgress the law of God. The main points in this passage are these:

A. By the law is the knowledge of sin (Rom. 7:7).

B. Sin itself is the thing in me that is sinful, working in me all evil desires, and asserts its mastership and refuses to permit me to obey the law of God as I desire (Rom. 7:7, 8).

C. Sin itself is the thing in me that rebels against the law and makes me break it, so that the death penalty of the broken law can be carried out to kill me (Rom. 7:9).

D. The law of God was ordained to be life to me; but sin in me which had control of me before the law came, would not let me obey the law, thus cutting me off from the life that I would have gotten if I could have obeyed the law. I was forced by sin to obey it rather than the law, and this brought me the curse of the broken law (Rom. 7:10; Gal. 3:10).

E. Sin, using the commandment as an occasion to demonstrate its rightful and lawful authority over me, deceived me, and by it slayed me (Rom. 7:11). Sin would not let me keep the commandment, but turned me over to receive its penalty for breaking the law. Sin itself betrayed me by taking advantage of my ignorance and helpless state; and, instead of being a friend and helping me to obey the law, it made me break the law.

F. I conclude that the law is holy, but I am a slave to sin (Rom. 7:12).

G. Sin was more powerful in me than the law (Rom. 7:13, 14). It was just as sinful in me before the law came as afterward, only it was not imputed before the law came. That which was good was not the thing that killed me, but sin did it. The commandment merely showed-up my sin. The blame is then on sin and not on the holy law (Rom. 7:13-14).

H. Sin was more powerful than I was (Rom. 7:15-25). I consented to the holy law, but sin would not let me obey it. I never was successful in obeying the law as long as sin was in control (Rom. 7:15-20). I was not a willing slave, for inwardly I wanted to do the will of God; but sin would not let me (Rom. 7:21-23). I was a wretched creature, being killed by sin, which would not let me obey the law (Rom. 7: 24-25).

I. I was finally delivered by the law of the Spirit of life, after three days of fasting and prayer (Rom. 8:1-13; Acts 9:8-18; Gal. 5:16-26). The law of the Spirit of life in Christ is more powerful than the law of sin and death that works by the devil. And this is what made me free from sin. **Thus it is clear that sin is a fixed principle operated by Satan.** It is called the law of sin and death in man's members and works to bring man to full defeat and eternal Hell. This work is annulled in the follower of Christ by Christ (Rom. 8:1-13; Gal. 5:16-26; 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

8. Christ was made "in the likeness of sinful flesh," that is, He was made the same kind of human flesh that sin controlled (Rom. 8:3). The only difference between His flesh and that of other people was that sin, or the spirit and nature of the devil, controlled the flesh of other people but not that of Christ, for "in Him was no sin" (1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5). His flesh was not

subject to the law of sin and death. It was sinless flesh, as was that of Adam before he fell.

This further proves that sin itself is entirely separate from flesh itself, but is working like a disease in the flesh of sinful man, making him a slave to the devil. The first Adam was without sin until he fell; the last Adam was also without sin until he became sin for Adam and his race to redeem them (2 Cor. 5:14-21). The first Adam's flesh became sinful flesh when he became a slave to sin and Satan, while Christ's flesh remained sinless flesh through all temptations and was given as a sacrifice to take the place of man in paying his penalty so that sinful flesh might be made free from sin again (Rom. 6:1-22; 8:1-13).

Christ's sacrifice paid the mortgage on man and his dominion, and annulled the law of sin and death in fallen man. The law of Moses could not do this, but the law of the Spirit of life in Christ did (Rom. 8:2, 3). The law of Moses could only condemn sin in the flesh, but it could not deliver man from that sin. The temptations of Christ were not from sinful, corrupt nature from within, but from without, for if He were sinful, He could not have been an offering for sin (Matt. 4:1-11; John 14:30).

9. God was not the author of sin and death. It would be inconsistent with His divine holiness and purity to create man with sin in him.

God warned sinless man against sin and now condemns sin in every form in the human race. He would not be just in doing this if He were responsible for sin. Sin entered man from an outside source, as we shall see in Point 15, below. Sin came in by sinless creatures rebelling against God.

10. Jesus Christ would not have died to redeem man from sin if God were responsible for sin in man. This would be making God also responsible for the death of Christ. Sin, and not God, is what is responsible for the death of Christ. Satan and Adam were responsible for sin, which made it necessary for Christ to die. It is through Christ that man becomes a partaker of God's Spirit and nature, which dominate redeemed man, instead of the spirit of the devil that dominated him before redemption (Matt. 1:21; John 1:29; 3:16; Rom. 8:1-13; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 3:8).

11. The fact that death and "issues," the results of sin, have passed upon all people during the fall, and will not be in man in the new Earth, proves sin is something that has taken control of man and reigns during the fall (1 Cor. 15:21, 22, 24-28, 45-58, Rom. 5:12-21; Rev. 21). Man will not die physically, spiritually, or eternally in the new Earth; this fact proves that the penalty for sin will, by that time, be done away with. If the penalty will be done away with, then there will be no more sin, thus proving that sin itself will be done away with by that time. The whole creation will then be purged of all the evil spirit forces and human beings, who will then be eternally confined to the lake of fire (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10; Isa. 66:22-24). The law of sin and death will be annulled in the world, and "the lust thereof" will pass away (1 John 2:15-17). Everything will be restored as before the fall (Rev. 21). If death and sin will be destroyed, and natural man will continue forever, this proves that sin and death are separate from the original created man and are not parts of the body, soul, and spirit of man, but they are real powers separate from man working in him to destroy him.

12. Out of the heart comes the issues of sin of man's sinful life (Mark 7:19-21). When sin and death are destroyed and confined to Hell, these issues of sin will cease (Rev. 21). This proves that

they are not part of man's constitution, but control him during the fall.

13. People are told to "put off" the old man and to "put on" the new man" (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:5-10). The new man is in no sense the old man reformed. If the old man is the spirit and nature of the devil, it would be impossible to reform him. The new man is the body, soul, and spirit of man delivered from sin and Satan and renewed after the image of God (2 Cor. 3:18; 5:17; Gal. 6:15; Eph. 2:8-10; Col. 3:34; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:8-10). It is Christ formed in one and the individual transformed into the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 3: 27-29; 4:19; 5:24).

Sin is the old man that must be "put off," and righteousness is the new man that must be "put on." Sin comes from the spirit and nature of the devil (Eph. 2:1-3; John 8:44; 1 John 3:8), and righteousness comes from the Spirit and nature of God (Rom. 8:1-13; 13:12-14; 2 Pet. 1:4; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10-17).

The Greek word for "put off" is *apekduomai* and means to divest wholly, strip or deprive of, despoil, or make bare, and refers to getting rid of the old man entirely, as far as participation with sin and Satan is concerned. It does not mean that the devil dies, but that one gets the victory and reigns supremely over him in Christ. The word is used in Col. 2:15, of spoiling principalities and powers and triumphing over them.

The Greek word for "put on" is *enduo*, meaning "to invest with clothing," "endue" or "clothe," and refers to the righteousness one can and does put on when delivered from the slave-master, who fought his every effort to do right. The word is used in Matt. 27:31; Mark 6:9; Luke 12:22; 15:22; Rom. 13:12-14; 1 Cor. 15:33, 54; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:24; 6:11; Col. 3:10-14.

In certain places both phrases are used. They refer to something separate and apart from the man himself. In the passages quoted above, people "put on" garments, armor of light, immortality, Christ, the new man, the whole armor of God, and certain graces that are entirely separate from man himself. The old man, then, is also something apart from man, for it comes from the devil and is to be "put off." No one could "put off" any part of himself and still be left whole. Sin must be "put off" before one can "put on" Christ.

14. People are "by nature the children of wrath" and not by choice and practice only. Certain Scriptures speak of people as being of their father the devil (John 8:44; 1 John 3:8), of being by nature children of wrath, walking according to the course of the world, and having the spirit and nature of the devil working in them (Eph. 2:1-3), of being born in sin and iniquity (Ps. 51:5), of not being able to produce sinless offspring (Job 14:4), of going astray as soon as they are born (Ps. 58:3), of having sins issuing from their hearts (Mark 7:19-21), of being wicked and deceitful in their hearts (Jer. 17:9-10), of having the lusts of sin (Rom. 6:11-12), and of having sin dwell in them (Rom. 7:5-25).

15. Both sin and death entered the world by the malice of the devil (Rom. 5:12-21; 1 John 3:8). When the first man was created he was formed sinless, but by choosing to sin he became a sinner (Gen. 3; Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Tim. 2:14). After man had sinned, Satan was the stronger of the two. Before sinning, man had power over Satan by being united with God and participating with Him; but man's sin then cut-off his divine help and his power over Satan was lost. Satan usurped man's dominion and gained control of the world and man. Adam, after the fall, was helpless to prevent this control, so yielded to Satan, sold out to him, and became an habitual sinner and a child of the devil by choice and life (John 8:44; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 John 3:8; 5:19).

Sin entered the world from an outside source. "By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin" (Rom. 5:12-21). Man was here before sin was; so there must be a vast difference between man himself and the sin that later entered. Sin is not a physical, moral, or spiritual part of man. It is not a creature created of God, but that which brings deprivation & hardship to God's creatures and separates from God. It is the wrong use of the creative powers of free wills in rebellion against the moral law. Sin is this plus the powerful domination of Satan. Satan is responsible for original sin before man. Adam is responsible for the original sin in man by yielding to Satan. Adam's sons and daughters are personally responsible for continued sin and rebellion by yielding to the same spirit and power of Satan.

The sin of Adam was of universal effect, which imposes a guilt on all humankind of all ages until the final restitution of all things and the complete annulment of sin and death in the race by the redemption of Christ. From Adam all people derive their beings (Acts 17:26). The whole race was in his loins when he sinned. He was their moral and spiritual head, the fountainhead of the race, and their sole representative, and did not act as a single person. When he fell he sinned for all. When God contracted with him, he considered him as the whole race. His progeny became a party to the covenant and blessings if obeyed, and, naturally, they were liable to the curse upon violation of it. All people virtually gave consent to what Adam did.

Upon this ground Paul gives, in Rom. 5:12-21, a parallel between Christ and Adam. On the cross, Christ was not considered and did not suffer as a private person for His own sin, but was considered by God as the head and representative of the whole race to make a new creation (2 Cor. 5:14; Rom. 5:12-21; 6:1-23; 1 Pet. 2:24). Likewise, the first Adam, in his disobedience, was

not considered as a single person, but as a public person representing the whole race.

The main points of contrast in Rom. 5:12-21 are these: Adam was head of the old creation, Christ is head of the new; Adam sinned, Christ did not; Adam by one offence made (constituted) many sinners, Christ by one act of obedience made (constituted) many righteous; Adam made many dead, Christ made many alive; Adam passed a sinful nature on to his offspring, Christ imparts a sinless nature to all who believe; Adam brought condemnation upon all, Christ gives justification to believers; Adam's sinful results are passed on to his offspring, Christ's righteousness becomes that of the believer upon surrender to God (Rom. 3:24, 25; 4:25; 5:1-21; 6:1-23; 8:1-23; 8:1-13; 1 Cor. 1:30; 6:9-11; 2 Cor. 5:17).

One is no more constituted a sinner by his personal sins than he is constituted a righteous man by his personal acts of goodness. Man's state is sinful by nature through the spirit and nature of Satan dominating Adam and his posterity, and his state as a righteous man is by the new birth and by being a partaker of the Spirit and nature of God through Christ (Heb. 6:4-6; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 5:1-4, 10-18; 1 Pet. 1:18-23). The sinful acts of a sinner come through his being a sinner by state and nature, and the righteous acts of a saved person come through his being righteous by state and nature. Both sin and righteousness are from an outside source, and operate in and through man by outside persons—God and Satan.

16. The doctrine of sinful posterity is far different from the principle of individual sin. Satan was not the natural and moral head of a race which was to come from his loins, as was the case of Adam. Satan was considered only from the standpoint of an

individual; his attributes could not have passed on to others by virtue of reproduction, but by influence over other persons.

If human beings had been created innumerable and all at one time, as were the angels, sin in man would be considered on an individual basis. It would then be that each man would be a sinner by his own sin, or be righteous by his remaining true to God. But man was made on a different basis from the angels. Only one pair of human beings was made, and all people had to come from this one man and woman.

God evidently decided to make man different than the angels, so that if he fell it should be done before he had offspring, in order that all could be classed as fallen. In that case, God could have mercy upon all (Rom. 3:9; Gal. 3:22). There would have been innumerable arguments, excuses, and demands upon God by people if they had been permitted to sin in many different ways and times, as each individual came to accountability.

If there are so many different excuses and demands today, when all people became sinners in the same way and at the same time, how much worse would it have been the other way? As it is now, God can and does deal with each person on the same basis, and all will have to acknowledge in the end that the gospel is fair and just in its demands on all alike. Now God classes all acts of disobedience as sin, and all who commit sin as sinners; and He has provided just one way of getting rid of the sin business in the race.

Man, being born a sinner, cannot come to God or be reconciled to Him except by meeting the demands of the law and paying the penalty for sin. This, man could not do and still live to enjoy the blessings of freedom from such guilt after paying the penalty. If man paid the penalty he would have to remain forever dead, and

his justification in paying the penalty would be of no value to either himself or to God. The only way out was for God, Himself, to undertake man's restoration. This He did; so now all that man has to do is to meet the conditions of reconciliation and enjoy its full benefits (John 3:16; Acts 2:38, 39; 3:19; 13:38, 39; Rom. 3:24, 25; 6:1-22; 8:1-13).

17. Jesus and the apostles clearly state that "sin" and "lusts" are "the works of the devil" and are of this world's system headed by the devil and that all will pass away (John 8:44; Rom. 8:1-13; 12:1,2; Gal. 4:8-11; 5:19-21,24; 1 John 2:15-17; 3:4-10; Jas. 4:4; 2 Pet. 2:19-22). Inbred sin is closely related to the devil and evil spirit forces. Jesus and others always recognized that sin and disease and death were the works of the devil. Both sin and diseases [issues] are directly controlled by demons under Satan. Both were taken upon Christ in His own body on the tree when the works of the devil were destroyed (1 Pet. 2:24; 1 John 3:8; Col. 2:14-17). Sin, issues, sickness, and death were worked in man by the devil (Heb. 2:14, 15; Acts 10:38; 1 John 3:8-10; Jas. 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8). Many acts of wrong on the part of people in both Testaments were directly laid upon Satan, as proved in *God's Plan for Man* Lesson Six, Points VII and X.

Inbred sin is that which is in man from birth by virtue of evil spirit forces being in possession of the fallen world and its system and of man and all his dominion. Since Satan gained control, he has had the legal right to hold every person in sin and to kill them by the law of God. Adam gave him this right when he submitted to his control. Man must now assert his rightful authority over Satan and his minions through Christ in order to be delivered from them. Satan's forces have such a deep-seated hold on people's body, soul, and spirit that it seems they are a part of our creative make up, but this is not true. They have had control of people so long that this control is all we know. By this

“programming,” we yield to certain traits which we think are perfectly natural; but in the process of sanctification, we learn they must be gotten rid of and all faculties controlled, if we are to be fully reconciled to God and to grow in grace and knowledge.

Man was originally a perfect miniature of God in every sense, and was conformed to His holiness perfectly free from anything sinful. Our renewal in holiness and original God-likeness at the new birth is simply the beginning of restoration toward that original and perfect state (Eph. 4:23, 24; Col. 3:5-10; 2 Cor. 3:18; Phil. 3:7-14; 2 Pet. 3:18). Redeemed man is more or less perfect by his proportion to and distance from the original. Compare man's original state with that of fallen man, and then compare the renewed man with the original, and we can see how much one must grow in conformity to the image of Christ.

The original man was uncorrupt, free from prejudices, highly enlightened, and perfectly exempt from all evils and lusts of sin, so that he could enjoy himself in those pleasures that were worthy of his pure nature and glorious state. The animal and sensitive natures of man were free to enjoy themselves in everything aside from the one forbidden tree. Nothing else he could have partaken of would have been sin at that time. As time went on, God might have added more restrictions and revealed more of the moral law and moral government, but at that time there was only one simple command to obey.

Man's body was *very* good. His senses were quick and lively and able to perform with vigor and delight their various operations. He enjoyed nature in all of its original purity, beauty, and harmony, revealing the goodness of the Creator. His soul and spirit, passions and faculties were in perfect union with God, and were exercised in all dignity over the Earth and all things therein. He was truly in God and God was in him, and he enjoyed the

fullness of natural, spiritual, and eternal life; and he could have remained in this state if he had obeyed one commandment.

Man, of all creatures, was capable of a law. God's will had to be known and man enlightened as to the blessings of obedience and punishment of disobedience. The law of his nature contained those moral principles concerning good and evil which were the measures of his duty to God, to the universe, and to himself and his posterity. These relationships were made clear, and his responsibility as head of the new creation and source of his own kind were fully realized. God placed within man's reasonable spirit and his sensitive soul the principle and power of obedience, and made a covenant with him on condition of obedience. He was perfectly holy, but in a changeable state. He was sinless, but on probation. He was invested with power to prevent his falling, yet lived under the possibility of it. He was complete in his being, but receptive to sinful impressions.

He was set upon by the most powerful and subtle of evil spirits, who caused him to fall and corrupt himself and his posterity and to come under the control of one stronger than he himself ever was, after the fall. Satan gained control of him, and it is this control of man by demon powers that should be understood as inbred sin.

The programmed way the “carnal mind” and the “mind of the flesh” and the “old man” or “old sinful nature” expresses itself in and through us are closely tied together. And this is what psychologists today call “the unconscious mind.”

### **Shortcoming Continued**

“Jesus came, He took the punishment for sin on Himself showing mercy to sinners and calling them to repent (change direction and

attitude). A shortcoming continued becomes sin, which ultimately is either idolatry or rebellion against God, and is not covered by what Jesus has done.

A shortcoming discontinued becomes obedience to God's wishes, and is covered by what Jesus has done. '...You can choose sin (with death) or else obedience (with acquittal)...' (Romans 6:16)."

– *Angels on Assignment* by Roland Buck

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### **Pertinent Questions on the Doctrine of Sin**

Since we have answered the questions of what sin is, where sin is, where sin came from, when it originated, who is responsible for sin, whether a person is a sinner by nature or by personal transgression, we shall conclude our study of sin by asking and scripturally answering certain other questions necessary for an intelligent and complete understanding of the doctrine of sin in Scripture.

#### **1. In What Sense Does Sin Dwell in Man?**

It dwells in man in the sense of union with, not bodily entrance into, as explained in *God's Plan for Man*, Lesson Four, Point I, 4, who see.

#### **2. If Sin is in Man by Nature How Can He Help it?**

We cannot help being born in sin, but we can help ourselves in the matter of continuing in sin. We cannot help our being here, but we can help ourselves as to where we are going. Each person is personally and solely responsible for choosing to continue in sin and yieldedness to the devil. We are free moral agents and can turn to God and get rid of sin at any time we choose. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve" still applies to man, and each one is

serving the master of his own choice (Josh. 24:15; Judges 5:8; 10:14; Isa. 66:3,4; Mark 16:16; John 3:14-18, 36; 6:37; 7:27-29; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 13:38,39; 26:18; Rom. 6:16). God has definitely stated that He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"; so it is entirely up to us to become reconciled to God or suffer the original penalty for sin (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9).

#### **3. What are the Effects of Sin in the Human Race?**

Man was set upon by the most subtle and powerful of wicked spirits, which caused him to be depraved, polluted, and corrupt in all his nature. His understanding became darkened (Eph. 2:3; 4:18); his conscience defiled (Heb. 10:22); his will obstinate and rebellious (Isa. 28:14; Rom. 8:7); his affections carnal and sensual (Eph. 2:3; Gal. 5:16-24; Mark 7:19-21; Rom. 1:18-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-11); his thoughts evil continually (Gen. 6:5; 2 Cor. 10:4-5); his heart full of abominations (Jer. 17:9; Mark 7:19-21; Rom. 1:18-32; Gal. 5:19-21); and his life devoted to living in divers lusts (1 Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 1:29-32).

Man and all his dominion was sold under sin and became dominated by the devil (John 8:41, 44; 12:31; 14:30; Rom. 7:7-25; 1 Cor. 6:20; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 John 3:8). He became a partaker of the spirit and nature of Satan, which constituted him and all his posterity sinful by nature and children of the devil by relation, choice, and conduct (John 8:41,44; Rom. 3:9-23; 5:12-21; 7:7-25; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 John 3:8-10; Ps. 51:5). He became a "servant of sin" (John 8:34); "unrighteous" (1 Cor. 6: 9-11); blind to the truth (2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 4:18); "dead in trespasses and sin" (Eph. 2:1-9); "alienated from God" by wicked works (Col. 1:20-22); "separated" from God by his sins (Isa. 59:2); "without hope, and without God" (Eph. 2:11-13; 4:13-32; Rom. 3:9-23); lustful (Eph. 2:3); and

doomed to "death" and "eternal fire" (Rom. 6:23; Isa. 66:24; Matt. 24:41, 46; Rev. 14:9-12; 19:20; 20:10-15; 21:8; Jude 7).

#### 4. Are All Carnal Acts Sin?

The word "carnal" in Rom. 8:7, 8; Heb. 9:10 is from the Greek word *sarx* meaning flesh; the meat of an animal; the body of any living creature; and mere human nature, or the earthly nature of man. We have shown in points given above that human nature was originally created perfect and sinless, but since becoming one with Satan and partaking of his spirit and nature, it is by nature sinful and controlled by evil spirits. Christ had perfect, sinless flesh and human nature by virtue of not being under the control of sin (Rom. 8:3. See Point III, 8, above). Thus *sarx* does not necessarily mean that all flesh is sinful. It is used of the "flesh" of all creatures (1 Cor. 15:39). In Rom. 8:7, 8 it is the "mind" of the flesh that is sinful because of being controlled by sin (Eph. 2:3). In Heb. 9:10 it is used of "carnal ordinances," which are not sinful, for they were part of the law which is "holy, and just, and good, and spiritual" (Rom. 7:12,14). They are "carnal ordinances" because they were imposed upon and executed by natural people.

The word "carnal" in Rom. 7:14; 15:27; 1 Cor. 3:1-4; 9:11; 2 Cor. 10:4; Heb. 7:16 comes from the Greek word *sarkikos*, which is derived from the root word *sarx* above. Paul speaks of himself as "sold under sin," as being "carnal," because of being under the control of the animal appetites, which are controlled by Satan and spirit forces. In Rom. 15:27 and 1 Cor. 9:11, the word "carnal" means the natural things necessary to sustain life, and the idea could not include sin at all. It means natural or human without the idea of sin.

The same idea is expressed in 1 Cor. 3:1-4, where preference in preachers by "sanctified" people (1 Cor. 1:2) is called "carnal." It is perfectly natural and human and is not sinful to prefer hearing one

preacher above another unless one makes sin out of it. Such preference only becomes sin when it is carried to the point of division and strife and refusal to accept the same gospel by a less preferred man because of personal feeling or dislike. There is no "sanctified" person, regardless of how many works of grace he has had, but who has some preferences of this kind. It is natural to have such preferences, and this is why it is not spiritual. It is like eating food. It is not spiritual to eat food. Neither is it sin unless one overindulges, and, then, this continued intemperance is sin. The idea of "carnal," in 2 Cor. 10:4, is that of human weakness in contrast to divine power. The idea in Heb. 7:16 is that of natural or human lineage and birth. No sin is involved in this idea, for it is natural and sinless to have offspring according to the law. This Greek word is translated "fleshly" twice: first, of natural wisdom and knowledge contrasted with grace (2 Cor. 1: 12); second, of fleshly lusts (1 Pet. 2:11).

Thus when we use the word "carnal" we must keep in mind that sin is not always involved. Where sin is involved, that is always clear. There can be sinless carnal traits and manifestations, and then the same traits can become sinful, when they transgress the law. The following carnal traits which are seen in human lives, show the misuse of human faculties in transgressing the law. These faculties are not sinful in themselves, but become sinful when used to break the law. The continued unlawful yieldedness of human faculties to commit such things constitutes sin or "transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). The spirit and nature of the devil are working constantly to cause people to yield to the following traits of carnality:

- (1) To feel a secret pride in one's success or position in life; in his training and appearance; in his natural gifts and abilities; and in his general standing in life; to feel an important and independent spirit; stiffness, preciseness, and faultlessness; to feel an unpleasant sensation in view of another's success or



position; overanxious as to whether every thing will come out all right; and to feel bitterness over the past or over what someone has said or done.

(2) To manifest formality; deadness and dryness in spirituality; indifference to souls and the needs of others; lack of power and spiritual desires; no hunger for God; stirrings of anger; impatience; a touchy, sensitive spirit (and worst of all, to call it nervousness or holy indignation); sharp, heated flings at another; self-will; selfishness; stubbornness; an unteachable, talkative, harsh, sarcastic, unyielding, headstrong, driving, commanding, peevish, fretful, man-fearing, deceitful, proud, malignant, whispering, backbiting, surmising, hateful, boastful, spiteful, disobedient, unmerciful, devilish, and lawless spirit; a desire to attract attention to self and to say and do things that will appeal to the lust of another; a desire to dress, act, and be as much like the world as possible; love of ease and good things, even at the expense of others more needful; lustful stirrings; unholy actions; affections of lust towards another; uncleanness in thoughts and desires; unnatural and abusive acts to self and to others; a dishonest, deceitful and evasive spirit; a covering up of real faults and leaving a better impression of self than that which is strictly true; hypocrisy; false humility; exaggeration; straining the truth; unbelief; doubts; fears; lack of confidence in God; worry; constant complaining in pain, poverty, and trials; a desire to quit trying to do right; a dogged determination to deal with others regardless of the outcome to God's cause and the souls of people in eternity.

(3) To have a secret fondness of being noticed; a swelling after freedom in public work or after some success; a desire to make a fair show in the flesh and to do something big in order to call attention to self; darkness in mind and blindness in heart concerning spiritual things; a conscience deadened and hardened

that permits one to commit things which were once given up when first consecrated to God; malice and a "get even" spirit; unforgiveness; a desire for vengeance even to the damnation of one's own soul; unnatural affections; covetousness; maliciousness; emulations; variance; jealousy; envy; evil thoughts; lasciviousness; lustful eyes; blasphemy, foolishness; wrath; strife; seditions; heresies, revelings, drunkenness; a "don't care" attitude toward God and persons, toward his responsibilities in life, or when found out in some sin; a shrinking from reproach and duty; reasonings in unbelief about the truth; a disposition to resent and retaliate when crossed; a compromising attitude in order to please people instead of God; and an inferiority complex.

(4) To be past feeling; unstable in the faith; wandering from church to church always evading any responsibility for God's work in any one place; unsettled, irresponsible, shallow, and stingy; spineless in spiritual things and in the fight against the flesh, the world, and the devil; satisfied to be a dupe of Satan and take part with those who bite and devour one another and destroy the work of God; vain and light in his conversation and manner of life; a joker and a jester; partial to certain persons and classes and in individual dealings; unneighborly, unsacrificing, and unwilling to put self out for anyone else, unless it be to some personal advantage or gain, ashamed of God, Christ, the Bible, his own church and his personal standing in the gospel, or when Christianity is made light of; afraid of spiritual manifestations and of someone getting out of the Spirit and causing certain prominent people to never come back to church, thinking always of what might have been if certain things had not happened, instead of realizing that things could be much worse; unthankful and unappreciative of his lot in life; in constant fear of failure to please God, live right, and walk in the Spirit.

(5) To take an unmerciful attitude in dealing with others who have failed; to take an inferior attitude toward those of wealth or position; and to take a self-righteous holier than thou attitude toward those of a weaker or inferior position. To love human praise and supremacy and to be coaxed and humored to do things in the church and elsewhere (and at the same time feel that he is the one most capable for the job). To live in abandonment to a lesser degree of blessing than others enjoy, and to come short of God's best in life. To pick flaws and criticize when set aside and unnoticed. To find fault with everybody else and in every place. To speak of the faults and failures rather than the virtues of those more appreciated than himself. To lift self up above others, as being above their faults and failures and as having a spotless record. To throw self-respect to the four winds and live a life of selfishness and self-gratification.

It must be kept in mind that the natural person has faculties that can do the things named above, and does do some of them, without being directly controlled by Satan and demon powers. However, these conditions are generally agitated by these powers. Without such agitation, many would not be guilty of such acts of selfishness and meanness. Just where to draw the line between the influence of these powers and the willful acts of man himself is not always clear. Even followers of Jesus sometimes are under the influence of Satan and are not aware of it. For example, Satan influenced Peter to try to stop Christ from going to the cross. Jesus said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men" (Matt. 16:21-24). The acts of both Peter and Satan are involved here, and it was no doubt a surprise to Peter to know that he was being used as a tool of Satan. From Peter's standpoint he was acting purely of love for Christ. It was perfectly legitimate for him to protect his best friend, and ordinarily it is God's will to protect others, but not so

in this case. To claim immunity from all satanic influence is to claim full and complete knowledge of the divine mind in every detail of life; and in this respect few, if any, are entirely free from all satanic workings and influences. As to actual sin, it is a different question, for sins are listed and defined in many passages so that every man can know at all times whether he is yielding to Satan or not.

The effect of such devilish operations are seen more or less in all unregenerated people, and, if saved people do not walk and live in the Spirit, those things will become manifested in them again also. These traits are fixed tendencies and habits in fallen man controlled by the spirit and nature of the devil. Salvation is necessary to break these habits and set people free from such bondage and operation of sin and Satan (Rom. 6:1-23; 8:1-13; 2 Cor. 5:17; 1 John 3:8-10; 5:1-5, 18).

## **5. How Does God Look upon Sin?**

God looks upon shortcoming continued in all its forms with utmost hatred and abhorrence: "The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord" (Prov. 15:9; 6:16-19; 8:13; 12:22). We are told to "abhor that which is evil" (Rom. 12:9; Ps. 97:10). God hated sin enough to give His only begotten Son to get rid of sin and Satan in the universe (John 3:16-18; 1 John 3:8), and to banish them in eternal Hell (Rev. 20:7-15; 21:8).

## **6. Can People Get Rid of Sin and Out From under its Dominion?**

Man not only can but he must get rid of sin and be out from under its dominion or be lost forever: "Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin . . . For sin shall not have dominion over you.... the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth

us from all sin" (Rom. 6:6, 14; 1 John 1:7-9). "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom. 8:1-13; Gal. 5:16-24).

### 7. – 10. **Can a Person Get Rid of Sin by Himself?**

It is impossible for man to get rid of sin by himself: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil" (Jer. 13:23). "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit" (Matt. 7:18). Man must be changed and made righteous by redemption, and this is the only way to get rid of sin (Lev. 17:11; Matt. 26:28; 1 Tim. 1:15; Heb. 9:14-28; 10:1-18; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:8-10; 5:1-5, 18).

### **To What Extent Can a Man Get Rid of Sin?**

To this extent, that every sin and carnal trait contrary to the moral law can be cleansed from the life, as we have seen in Point III, 7, above, and as we shall see in another lesson in *God's Plan for Man*.

### **Will Sin Ever Return if One is Once Rid of it?**

As we have seen, inbred sin is the spirit and nature of the devil working in children of disobedience, and we might as well ask: Will the devil ever return to tempt and enslave a person who has quit serving him? Will he let a person go without a constant struggle to regain control of him again? Does salvation kill the devil or bind him so that he will never again bother a child of God? It is folly to talk about getting any experience that will cause one to be free from all dealings with the devil. He only left Jesus "for a season," and this will be the longest he will ever leave a follower of Jesus. He will come back again and again to try to get a saved person to yield to him, even in the least, on any one point. These temptations, however, do not mean that one has "the old man" or

the devil in his life and that he is not "sanctified," as some teach. Temptation will always be the lot of the child of God, but no shortcoming need be continued and no self-condemnation need be indulged in just because of the presence of temptation (Heb. 2:18; 4:14-16; 1 Cor. 10:12-13; 1 Pet. 1:6-7; 4:12; 5:8-9; James 1:2-12; 4:7).

### **Under What Conditions Will Sin Return?**

Sin and Satan, like God and righteousness, are ever present, and the saved person will ever be tempted; but sin will never be experienced again in a believer, if he will always yield to God instead of the devil and live and walk in the Spirit, as explained in Point III, 8, above. Under conditions of a low spiritual life, by neglecting daily prayer and reading the Bible, sin will become attractive again to the believer and will be committed again, if this neglect is continued and if one continues to yield to sin again (Rom. 6:16-23; 8:1-13).

### 11. **Are People Damned Only for the Sin of Rejecting Christ?**

(1) People were originally damned for the first transgression, and if Christ had never come, they would have had to pay the same penalty for sin as they will finally pay if they reject Christ (Gen. 2:17; 3:1-19; Rom. 5:12-21).

(2) Rejection of Christ, then, is not the penalty for eating of the forbidden fruit. The sin of rejecting Him only seals their doom (John 3:16-18).

(3) The word "sins" is used many times as the basis of man's judgment and punishment (Lev. 26:1-46; Isa. 59:2; Jer. 21:14; Hosea 12:2; Amos 3:6; Rev. 2:23; 20:11-15).

(4) If people were damned only for rejecting Christ, then this would be the only sin they would have to face at the judgment; but this is not true. People will give account of every idle word and every sin (Matt. 10:41-42; 12:36, 37; 16:27; Rom. 1:29-32; 2 Cor. 11:15; Rev. 20:11-15; 22:12).

(5) Christ died to make an end of sins and cleanse from all sin, and not only for the one sin of rejecting Him (Dan. 9:24; Matt. 26:28; 1 Cor. 15:3; Gal. 1:4; Heb. 1:3; 2:17; 9:28; 2 Pet. 2:24; 3:18; 1 John 3:8; Rev. 1:5).

(6) People will receive different degrees of punishment, and if they were damned only for the one sin of rejecting Christ, degrees of punishment would be impossible (Matt. 10:15; 11:22; 12:36-38, 41; 23:14; Mark 6:11; 12:40; Luke 10:14; 11:31, 32; 20:47; Jas. 3:1; Rev. 2:23; 20:11-15; 22:12).

(7) Every transgression of the law is sin, and the penalty for any one sin is death (Gen. 2:17; Ezek. 3:7-14; 18:4-24; 33:7-20; Rom 1:32; 6:16-23; 8:12-13; Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 3:5-10; Jas. 2:10; 5:19-20; 1 John 3:4). The sin of rejecting Christ is just one sin, and it is not the only sin that will damn the soul.

(8) Not one Scripture says that people will be damned only for the sin of rejecting Christ. The one passage used to teach this is John 3:16-21, but this does not say any such thing. It only emphasizes the fact that people can escape the damnation for their sins if they will accept Christ; if they do not, then they stand condemned already. In other words, people would have been damned if Christ had not come, and since He came to save them, the sin of rejecting Him cuts them off from this salvation from their original damnation. The expression "because he hath not believed" does not say or imply that this is the only sin that will damn the soul. It merely teaches that by such rejection of Christ

people will have to be damned according to their sins, the same as if Christ had not come. It seals their doom according to their sins, and there is no other way of escape.

(9) If people were not to be damned for their sins, then they would have all been saved, and were all saved until Christ came and gave people a chance to reject Him. If they were all saved, and were not damned because of their sins before Christ, then redemption is valueless and means nothing to people. If they were not to be damned for their sins, then the hundreds of statements of people paying the penalty of death and eternal damnation because of breaking the law, because of their sins, and because of rejecting the only remedy for their sins, are all a farce. Christ died for our sins, and in no place is it stated that He died only for the one sin of rejecting Him (Gal. 1:4; Matt. 1:21; 1 Pet. 2:24). If He died to forgive only this sin, it would have been better if Christ had not come, for people would not have had any sin to damn them.

(10) Adam and Eve and the whole race in them sinned by eating of the forbidden fruit, not by rejecting a redeemer they knew nothing about (Gen. 2:17; Rom. 5:12-21). Death and eternal damnation was the lot of the whole race. Christ came to save people from this penalty. They were already sinners and under the penalty of a broken law before Christ was ever mentioned (Gen. 3:1-19).

(11) The word *because* is found 225 times in Scripture. It is the most complete and direct word for giving a reason for a thing. In many scriptures it gives the reason why people are going to be judged and damned in eternal hell. This reason is not for rejecting Christ only, but BECAUSE OF various death penalty sins committed, as is plainly stated in the following examples:

- A. Because they forsook God (1 Ki. 9:9; 11:33; 2 Ki. 22:17; 2 Chr. 7:22; 24:20; 36:25-27; Jer. 17:12).
- B. Because they sinned (1 Ki. 14:15-16; 15:30; 2 Chr. 6:24; Jer. 40:3; 44:23).
- C. Because of their transgressions (Lev. 16:16; Dt. 32:5; Josh. 7:15; 1 Sam. 24:5).
- D. Because they despised the Lord (Num. 11:20; 15:31; 2 Sam. 12:10; 1 Sam. 30:12).
- E. Because they turned away from the Lord and would not serve Him (Num. 14:43; Dt. 28:47)
- F. Because they have done evil (2 Ki. 21:15).
- G. Because they rebelled (Num. 20:24; Ps. 107:11-17).
- H. Because they would not obey God (Dt. 8:20; 28:62; 1 Ki. 20:26; 2 Ki. 18:12).
- I. Because they have forsaken the Lord (Dt. 29:25; 1 Sam. 12:10; 2 Ki. 22:17; 2 Chr 24:20-24; 28:6; Jer. 17:13; 19:4; 22:9)
- J. Because they have rejected the Lord (1 Sam 15:17-35).
- K. Because they have not kept my commandments (1 Sam. 13:13-14; 1 Ki. 11:34).
- L. Because they have cast off the law (Isa. 5:24; Amos 2:4).
- M. Because they have forgotten God (Isa. 17:10; Jer 17:13; 18:15; Ezek. 23:35)
- N. Because of their evil and wickedness (Jer 4:4; 21:12; 26:3; 32:32; 44:3; Hos. 10:15).

- O. Because of their abominations (Jer. 44:22; Ezek. 5:9; 44:7).
- P. Because they have cast off their first faith (1 Tim. 5:12).
- Q. Because they repented not (Matt. 11:20).
- R. Because of their unbelief (Rom. 11:20; Heb 4:6).
- S. Because they are lukewarm (Rev. 3:16-17).

If God said the above sins are the reasons why people are damned, then it is pure fallacy to teach that we are damned only for the one sin of rejecting Christ.

(12) The word *if* as used 1,522 times in scripture also proves that personal sins are going to be the reason people will be damned, and not only for the one sin of rejecting Christ. Note the following:

- A. IF you will not hearken . . . will not keep my commandments . . . IF you will despise, abhor, and break my covenant (Lev. 26:14).
- B. I set before you a blessing and a curse: a blessing if you obey . . . a curse IF you will not obey the commandments, but turn aside out of the way (Dt. 11:26-28)
- C. IF you will still do wickedly (1 Sam. 12:14-15, 25; 2 Sam. 7:14).
- D. IF you refuse, and rebel (Isa. 1:19-20).
- E. IF you will not obey (Jer. 7:5; 12:17; 17:24; Zech. 3:7).
- F. IF you live after the flesh you shall die (Rom. 8:12-13).
- G. IF they abide not still in unbelief (Rom. 11:15-24).

- H. IF any man defile the temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19-20).
- I. IF I build again the things I once destroyed (Gal. 2:16).
- J. IF we deny Him, He also will deny us (2 Tim 2:11-13, 21).
- K. IF we neglect so great salvation (Heb. 2:1-4).
- L. IF we hold fast our confidence unto the end (Heb. 3:6, 12-14).
- M. IF they fall away . . .IF we sin willfully (Heb. 6:4-9; 10:26-29).
- N. IF any man draw back unto perdition (Heb. 10:38-39).
- O. IF any do err from the truth (Jas. 5:19-20).
- P. IF you do these things you will never fall, but IF you do not do these things you will fall (2 Pet. 1:4-10).
- Q. IF you are again entangled in pollutions of the world (2 Pet. 2:19-22).
- R. IF any man love the world (1 Jn. 2:15-17; Jas. 4:4).
- S. IF any man take away from the words of this prophecy (Rev. 22:18-19).
- T. IF you do at all forget the Lord (Dt. 8:19-20; 28:20-22; 30:17-18).

Many other statements in the Bible confirm the truth that God hates sin and will damn every person for continued sin and rebellion. Man will give account of every sin and the more sins there are the greater damnation there will be in all eternity (Matt 11:22, 24; 23:14, 15, 33; Rom. 2:12-16; Rev. 20:11-15).

## 12. How Many Sins Does it Take to Damn the Soul?

One shortcoming continued is sufficient to damn a soul. One sin cut the whole race off from God: "By one man sin entered into the world.... by one man's offense death reigned. ... by the offense of one, judgment came upon all people to condemnation.... by one man's disobedience many were made [constituted] sinners" (Rom. 5:12-21; Gen. 2:17; 3:1-19). One shortcoming continued, whether committed before or after a person is saved, will have the same effect that the one original sin had. "When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity . . . All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned . . . in the sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die .... for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die" (Ezek. 18:24-26). Again "The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression.... for the iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for item (Ezek. 33:12-20).

One sin cursed the whole race (Rom. 5:12-21); Cain (Gen. 4:8-13; 1 John 3:12); Pharaoh and Egypt (Ex. 3:2; Rom. 9:15-23); Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:1-7); Achan (Josh. 7); Gehazi (2 Ki. 5:20-27); Judas (Acts 1:25); Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11); and many others (1 Tim. 1:19, 20; 2:14; 5:11, 12, 15, 20; 6:10; 2 Tim. 2:18, 26; 4:10; Heb. 4:11; 1 Cor. 10:1-18; Jas. 2:10; etc.).

One sin caused angels to be sent to Hell (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6, 7).

God revealed that one sin could cut people off from Him. This is His own law and He cannot be just and truthful if He does not enforce it (Gen. 2:17; Ezek. 3:18-21; 18:4, 13, 18, 20, 24, 26; 33:9, 12, 13, 18; John 8:34; Rom. 6:23; 8:12-13; Gal. 6:7, 8; Jas. 2:10; 1 John 3:8). Many times God promised to "cut off" any man that committed certain sins (Gen. 17:14; Ex. 9:15; 12:15, 19; 30:23, 38; 31:14; Lev. 7:20-21, 25, 27; 17:4-14; 18:29; 19:8; 20:3-18; 22:3; 23:29; Num. 9:13; 15:30, 31; 19:13, 20; Ezek. 14:8; Mal. 2:12;

Rom. 11:22, 24). The phrase "cut off" means destroyed in death and "cut off from my presence" (Lev. 22:3; Ps. 109:13-15; Zec. 13:8; Matt. 24:51; Luke 12:46; Rom. 11:22-24).

Shortcoming continued is as much sin one time as it is another. It is as much sin to the saved as to the unsaved. It is the continued sin itself that is sin, and the time it is committed does not make it unrighteousness at one time and righteousness at another, or sin to one and not to another. Any continued transgression of the law is sin, whether before or after one is saved, and the penalty for the broken law must be enforced without exception, as well after salvation as before. To reason that continued sin is not sin when committed by saints (followers of Jesus), or if committed after salvation, is poor reasoning, and the very devil himself would blush at being accused of such utter lack of intelligence.

Whenever one continues in sin he must, for the time being, cease to be holy. He must stand condemned and must incur the full penalty of the law that the one sin of Adam incurred, or God would be a respecter of persons and a party to selfishness and sin. If He broke the law which He and all free wills are obligated to keep, He would be a sinner. If man does not incur the penalty, then the law is abrogated and he has no rule of duty; consequently, he cannot be either holy or sinful. The penalty cannot be abrogated unless the law itself is abrogated, for precept without penalty is no law. It is only counsel or advice. If God's law is merely advice, then there are no sinners to be saved, there is no need of a Savior, and the whole plan of the Bible is a sham.

We conclude that man is damned for continued breaking the law of God and for continued his own sins, and that the continued shortcoming of rejecting Jesus is merely the last sin that seals the doom of man for his own sins and for original sin.

### **13. Can a Saved Person Commit Sin?**

A saved person not only can commit sin as well as a sinner, if he chooses to do so, but the Bible gives many examples of saved people who have committed sin, as we shall see in *God's Plan for Man*, Lesson Thirty-five. A saved man, as we have already seen, never loses his free moral agency. Hundreds of Scriptures warn man who has been saved from sin, not to sin, as we also shall see. If he does sin, he has an advocate with the Father and can be forgiven again. He must be forgiven again or remain a sinner and be lost like all other sinners (1 John 2:1, 2; James 5:19-20; Rom. 6:14-23; 8:12-13; Gal. 5:19-21; 6:7-8; Ezek. 18:4; Heb. 3:6, 12-14; 6:4-6; 10:26-29, 38-39).

### **14. Can a Person be Saved from Sin or Born Again More Than Once?**

This question is like having to answer whether a man once lost in the woods was really lost, or having been found, could ever be lost again; or, still, having been lost again, could he ever be found again? Or, if a man was ever saved from drowning in a lake, could it be possible that he could again fall into the lake and drown? Such questions as these are answered by common sense, as well as the Bible. Anyone knows it is possible that any thing can be lost and found many times.

The whole trouble with certain teachers is that they think being "born again" is the same in every sense as a physical birth, and much false teaching is based upon this assumption. The new birth is a moral change, not a physical one. It is a change of heart, will, motives, desires, life, and conduct, but not of organism. The very moment a man decides to turn to God, and truly repents and believes the gospel, this moral change takes place (Mark 1:15; 2 Cor. 5:17; 7:9, 10; Rom. 1:16; 3:24, 25; 10:9, 10; Jas. 1:18-25; 1 Pet. 1:18-23; 1 John 5). The very moment the same man decides to

transgress, and lust has conceived, it brings forth sin; and when sin continues, and then is finished, it brings forth death and a moral fall again (Jas. 1:13-15; 5:19-20; Rom. 6:11-23; 8:1-13; John 8:34; 2 Pet. 2:19-22; Heb. 10:26-39). One then ceases to be a child of God and is again a child of the devil (John 8:34, 44; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 John 3:8-10; Rom. 6:14-22).

In the theoretical sense it is just as easy to be unborn as to be "born again," because one is a moral fall and the other is a moral restoration. It is simply a reversal of the same process. Man has always been the failing party, and there is no reflection on God or failure of His plan if man fails of the grace of God (Gal. 5:4; Heb. 12:14-15). As long as this is possible, man can and will fail under grace as under law, if he does not keep spiritual and wholly yielded and obedient to God (Rom. 6:11-22; 8:1-13). In fact, it is God's plan that whoever turns from sin will be restored morally, and whoever of his own will goes back into sin, will have a mortal fall and be lost, if he continues in sin until death. God cannot deal with man contrary to His own plan and still be just and true to His own word.

This moral change, in being unborn and "born again," does not change people's constitution in any sense. The bodily members, soul passions, and spirit faculties are there just as they are after every change. They are merely brought under bondage to the spirit and nature of the devil by the moral fall when one is unborn, and they are brought back into freedom from sin and Satan and under the control of the Spirit and nature of God by the moral restoration when one is "born again." This is all that takes place in either case. It can happen as many times as a man chooses and yields to either the devil or God to serve one or the other. Every time a moral restoration by the new birth is necessary, it can happen if a man will turn back to serve God. Every time a man is morally restored, he is under the possibility of a moral fall, as were Adam and Eve to

begin with. God's plan is that man should be morally restored only once (Rom. 6:6-10), but if any man sins he has an advocate with the Father to be restored again (1 John 2:1, 2). To prove that people can be lost in sin, found again, and go through the same process many times, we submit the following facts in Scripture:

(1) All people were at one time safe in Adam and had eternal life, and never would have died if they had not sinned in Adam (Rom. 5:12-21). If Adam had lived free from sin, he would not have died (Gen. 2:17). If people ever regain this original position in God, they will have to be saved from the sins that separated them from God (Isa. 59:2; Matt. 1:21; John 3:16; Eph. 2:1-9). If people started out in such a sinless state and were restored once, then, if it ever becomes necessary, they can be restored again and again. Otherwise there would be no point in the gospel, which provides forgiveness of sins as often as it is needful (1 John 1:9; 2:1, 2; Matt. 18:21-35).

(2) Peter was once converted, sanctified, and justified, as proved in *God's Plan for Man*, Lesson Eighteen, Point IX. After this, Jesus foretold of backsliding and the need of conversion again: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen the brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death [in other words, I am converted and will stay true to thee]. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me" (Luke 22:31-34).

Denying Christ and committing sin constitutes backsliding and makes one a sinner. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" applies to Peter as it does to everyone since. He cursed and swore and therefore had a moral fall and needed conversion, as



well as anyone else who would do this (Mark 14:66-72). He went out immediately and repented and was converted again, fulfilling the prophecy of Jesus of his backsliding and conversion. Thus he was converted twice after meeting Jesus.

(3) James taught a conversion again after one had backslidden: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he that converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." What could be more clear than this, that when saved people continue to commit sin they are sinners again and have to be saved from sin and death again, or experience eternal "death"? (James 5:19-20).

(4) Paul taught that people can be reconverted and that people can be born again more than once: "Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graphed in: for God is able to graph them in again" (Rom. 11:18-24). This passage teaches that people now saved can be lost, and people who were once saved and partaking of the root and fatness of the olive tree, but were broken off because of unbelief, can be saved and restored to their own place "again" if they abide not still in unbelief. This would make twice they are saved. If it can happen twice, it can happen as many times as is necessary.

(5) In 2 Tim. 2:25, 26, Paul speaks of the possibility of people "who concerning the truth have erred" and who "overthrow the faith of some" (2 Tim. 2:18), that they could come back to "repentance and acknowledging of the truth; and that they may

recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who were taken captive by him at his will." What would this recovery be but reconversion and a new birth again? It is exactly a restoration from a moral fall as when they were first born again.

(6) In the book of Galatians, Paul taught a rebirth: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you" (Gal. 4:19). These believers had been saved and born again once before this, but they had been removed from Christ and the gospel: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel .... ye are fallen from grace (Gal. 1:6-9; 5:4). If they were removed from Christ and grace, then they were no longer in Christ and grace. If they were removed from the gospel and grace, they were no longer in either. They were "bewitched" from obeying "the truth." Paul asked them, having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Gal. 3:1-5).

When Paul spoke of the flesh he referred to the sins of the flesh, as in Gal. 5:19-21. He added that "they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." They were going back to idolatry again, and he was afraid his labor had been in vain (Gal. 3:8-11). He told them to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, and stated that they were "fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:1-7). He plainly told them that "once in grace always in grace" was not true in their case.

He told those who had not fallen how to restore those who had fallen: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault [Greek, sin], ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1). This proves that saved people can sin and must be restored to be saved. He warned that those who had not sinned should take heed lest they also sin. If a man who has sinned needs restoration, then

he needs the new birth as much as any other sinner, and must have again the moral change that comes with the new birth, or be lost like any other sinner (Gal. 5:19-21). Paul continued by telling the Galatians that what a person sowed he would reap. This applies to the believer as well as the sinner. How often a person sows, that often he will reap (Gal. 6:7, 8). A person might as well argue, Once sowed always sowed, and no reaping is necessary, or Once reaped always reaped, and no sowing again is possible, as to argue Once in grace always in grace. Such line of reasoning is illogical and foolish, and nothing is to be gained except deceiving oneself if one wants to sin and still believe he is saved.

(7) In Romans, Paul teaches that people become dead to sin or dead to righteousness when they serve the one or the other. (See Point III, 7, above.) As often as people change masters they become dead to one or the other, thus proving they can have a spiritual quickening as many times as is necessary. It is God's will that people die only once to sin (Rom. 6:5-10), but if they go back into sin, the same process will have to be repeated (1 John 2:1, 2; James 5:19-20; Gal. 4:19; 6:1; Rev. 3:5).

(8) In Ephesians, Paul teaches that people are dead in sins when living in them, and salvation quickens them and makes them alive unto God. If ever people go back into continued sinning, they are dead in sins again and need the same quickening as before (Eph. 2:1-9). The same is taught in Col. 2:11-13.

(9) In Hebrews, Paul teaches that people should go on to perfection instead of having to be renewed in repentance (Heb. 6:1). If renewal is necessary, he teaches that the foundation of repentance should be laid again. This shows that people can be renewed from "dead works" to "faith toward God" more than once. Only apostates cannot be "renewed" to repentance (Heb. 6:4-9; 10:26-29; 2 Peter 2:20-21).

(10) Jesus Himself taught a reconversion and a rebirth more than once, for this He required of backsliders in the early Church: "Thou has left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works; or else I will ... remove thy candlestick" (Rev. 2:4, 5). What were their first Works? Did they not have to be converted and born again? Or were they always saved? He required the same repentance of all churches that fell (Rev. 2:16, 21-26; 3:3, 15, 16). If He would remove a whole church if it would not repent, He certainly would do this to individuals.

(11) Jesus taught His disciples to forgive people 490 times, if need be (Matt. 18:21-35; Luke 17:1-5). Would He expect something of people that God would not do? As many times as a man sins against another, that many times he is a sinner against that man, and the same process has to be gone through before the sin can be forgiven. So it is with man and God. One sin continued, as we have seen, will cut a person off from God, and the person continuing the sin must go through the process of repentance and a moral change each time before he is forgiven and restored to full fellowship with God.

(12) In Luke 15, Jesus taught about a "lost sheep," a "lost coin," and a "prodigal son." Each started out in the right relationship to the owners and the father, and each was received back again when found. It would be stupid to argue that the "sheep" or the "coin" or the "boy" could not be lost again and again, and be found again and again. It would be equally foolish to argue that the sheep never was a sheep, or the coin never was a coin, or the boy never was a boy if they became lost and were never found again. Many prodigals never have returned home and many sheep and coins have been lost forever. It would be worse still to argue that the boy never was at home to begin with, or that he never was a son if he ever was lost, or that the sheep was never a sheep

or the coin never was a coin if they were lost forever. This is what some argue concerning saved people, saying, "If a person is finally lost, or if he backslides, he was not saved or a son of God to begin with."

We all know that the process of seeking and finding a sheep, a coin, or a boy ever so many times would be the same in all instances. The joy of the owner and father upon finding either of these would always be the same, if he were a normal human being. So with a person, if he is saved and goes back into continued sin a dozen times, he must go the same way back to God; and unless he has committed the unpardonable sin, he will be forgiven and renewed by God to life each time. If the new birth is needful the first time, it will be needful every time a man goes back into continued sin and becomes a sinner. It is a moral change, as we have seen; so one can be unborn by moral fall as much as he can be "born again" by a moral restoration by God. How many times the new birth or the moral restoration is needful, that many times the same process will work to fully restore a fallen man. The same process in a moral restoration will work many times, just like any process of restoration in any realm.

(13) David certainly did his first works again after he backslid, and he was renewed again (Ps. 51:1-14). David wanted the same joy and spirit renewed in him that he had before; so it is Biblical and right for backsliders to ask and expect the same blessings they had before, and not to be satisfied and quit seeking God until these blessings are again experienced.

(14) There is nothing in nature but what can be revived, restored, recast, refinished, rebuilt, reanimated, refashioned and remade by the proper and expert makers and creators. Especially is this true of the Great Creator. To say that He cannot restore to life or to a

moral and righteous state again and again, if needful, is to limit Him to a lower plane than natural man, who can restore and refinish and remake anything that he has one time made.

(15) God taught that He would make Israel anew again if they would repent (Jer. 18:1-10). See also Isa. 1:16-18; Jer. 3:13-15; 4:1-4; Hosea 6:1-3; 10:12-13; 2 Chron. 7:14.

### 15. What are the Death Penalty Sins?

As in civil governments, there are penalties for all breaking of God's law. Some civil penalties amount to no more than a fine of a few dollars while others amount to the death penalty. In (God's government the penalties range from the loss of reward for failure to give a cup of cold water (Matt. 10:40-42), to the eternal death penalty—torment in eternal hell (Isa. 66:24; Matt. 25:41, 46; Mk. 9:43-49; Rev. 14:9-11; 20:11-15; 21:8; 22:15).

Many of the death penalty sins are recorded in a number of the lists of sins (Ezek. 18:4-24; Mk. 7:19-21, Rom. 1:29-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 4:17-32; 5:1-20; Col. 3:5-10). In both testaments God has warned against these sins; and hundreds of times He has both cursed and damned people for committing them, as shown in *God's Plan for Man*, Lesson Thirty-Five under "What God Vows to do to Backsliders."

—*God's Plan for Man* by Finis Jennings Dake  
[www.gotchoices.net/dake](http://www.gotchoices.net/dake)

## The 'Sin-disease' and Denial

God is not obsessed with sin (1 John 2:1). And yet it is a profound, decisive matter (Gal. 6:7-8). It is vital to realize that *sin, like disease, has a predictable onset and outcome* (James 1:14-15). In his remarkable books, *Hope in the Fast Lane* and *A Hunger for Healing*, J. Keith Miller describes in detail the pathology of what he has appropriately named “the Sin-disease.”

“I realized that this disease can disrupt our everyday lives and relationships and *never be seen to even be connected to sin*. And I saw that this Sin-disease may well be the matrix for all compulsive, manipulative, and controlling behavior. In an instant of clarity I saw that what we have always called sin just might be the source, the breeding ground, of all other issues and for the irrational destructive and addictive behaviors that are destroying our lives and institutions across the world” (*J. Keith Miller*).

And please also note that *denial* is indeed the primary characteristic of sin (see also Gen. 3:12-13; 2 Cor. 11:14,15; Rom. 1:18-22; 2:1, 21-23; 7:11; Heb. 3:13; 1 Jn. 1:8; Mt. 23:24-28; Mk. 6:4-5; Lk. 6:41-42; 19:42; Jn. 9:41; 11:47-53; Jas. 3:14; Tit. 1:16; Rev. 3:1,17). The Pharisees are pictured in the New Testament as religious people who saw themselves as respectable and righteous. And yet Jesus pointed repeatedly to their repressed sins and the danger of not facing themselves (Lk. 11:39-40).

Understand more about how our issues develop and how to apply God’s Word and access the freedom from emotional, mental, physical, relational, and financial issues that Jesus has already paid for in-full with this Bible study: *Victorious Living as You Have Never Been Taught*. A sample chapter is available for your download free of charge at [www.gotchoices.net/discover/sample.pdf](http://www.gotchoices.net/discover/sample.pdf)

