

The great purpose for which Jesus Christ came to earth was to save man from sin. Unless we grasp this important fact, our whole belief in Him is vain. In the next lesson we shall study how we may receive forgiveness of sins through Christ. Before doing so, however, we need to learn something about sin and its consequences.

What is Sin?

John teaches that “sin is the transgression of the law.” (1 John 3:4)

While crime is the transgression of the law of the land and vice is the transgression of the moral standards and customs of the people, sin is the transgression of the law of God. The word literally means “to miss the mark”. Since God’s will is the mark, whenever we fail to obey it we have sinned.

Many sins are moral in nature. Some of these, such as idolatry, adultery and drunkenness, are condemned in the Bible by name. Other sins, such as gambling, are not mentioned in the Scriptures, but

are condemned by moral principles taught in God’s word. John sums up all of these works of the flesh by saying, “All unrighteousness is sin.” (1 John 5:17). Sins of omission are also condemned in the Divine Book. “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” (James 4:17) For example, Christians are to visit the sick (Matt. 25:36) but if they know of those whom they should visit and neglect to do so, they have sinned. We must not only not do the things God has forbidden, but we must also do the things He has commanded.

Still another type of sin is that of disobedience to God when no moral principle is involved. King Saul was told to “utterly destroy” the Amalekites. But he thought he knew better than God and saved some of the animals to sacrifice and spared the life of the Amalekite king. Although he violated no moral principle of which we have been informed, he still sinned because he disobeyed God. In a similar way Christians may sin today. For example, Jesus prescribed the elements to be used in the Lord’s supper as bread and fruit of the vine. Should we substitute chicken and orange juice for these we would be sinning because in changing God’s commands we would be disobeying Him.

The Bible does not teach that there are

degrees of sin. It does not condone “little white lies” while denouncing “big black lies”. It does teach, “All liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.” (Rev. 21:8) It is true that the physical consequences of some sins are worse than others. We would all rather that another would hate us than that he would kill us. But from the standpoint of the sinner hatred will cost him eternal life as quickly as murder. John says, “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.” (1 John 3:15).

The Consequences of Sin

In forbidding Adam to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil God said, “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” (Gen. 2:17)

When Adam sinned he did die, both physically and spiritually. As a result of his transgression that day, Adam died physically many years later and his posterity has been subject to physical death since that time.

Of even greater importance is the fact that Adam died spiritually the day he sinned in that he was cast out of God’s presence in the Garden. Spiritual death is separation from God as physical death



is separation of the soul from the body. We ought never to think of spiritual death as **annihilation**.

All spiritual death is the result of sin. “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. 6:23) Again, “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” (Rom. 8:13) Paul does not here refer to physical death since we all die physically anyway whether we live after the flesh or after the

Spirit. “And you he hath quickened (made alive) who were dead in trespasses and sins.” (Eph. 2:1) “And you, being dead in your sins ... hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.” (Col. 2:13) Thus, unless a man is “made alive”

spiritually in Christ while he yet lives physically, he will after physical death be separated from God eternally in spiritual death in the lake of fire and brimstone. (Rev. 21:8)

Is Sin Inherited

Do we inherit the guilt of the sins of Adam and our parents, or will we be accountable only for those sins which we personally commit? The Scriptures plainly teach that we must answer to God

for our own sins rather than those of our ancestors. “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” (Rom. 14:12) “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” (II Cor. 5:10) “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” (Rom. 3:23) Note that Paul teaches that we come short of God’s glory



through our own sins, not that we are born short through the mistakes of our forebears.

The doctrine that a baby is born with the stain of the sin of Adam and his parents upon him is known as “original sin”. It concludes that a little baby who has never personally sinned is forever condemned to hell unless that infant is baptised. Neither the expression “original sin” nor the idea it represents is found in the Bible. God’s word teaches the opposite. “The soul that sins, it shall die. **The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father**, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son.” (Ezek. 18:20) In other words, a child is not accountable for his parents’ sins.

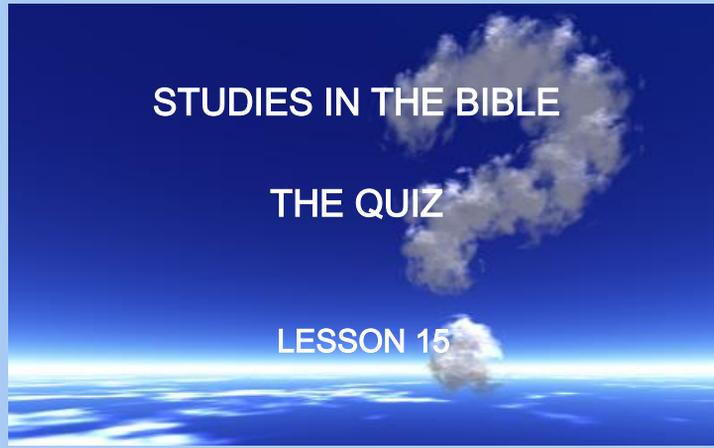
This teaching fails to consider that sin is

an act (“the transgression of the law” – I John 3:4) and therefore not an inheritable trait. It may no more be inherited than cooking a meal or driving a car since these are acts rather than characteristics.

If babies were born sinners, Jesus would not have chosen them as examples for us to follow. “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. 18:3)

Surely Jesus is not exhorting His disciples to become like

sin-blackened children doomed to everlasting punishment. We are the “offspring of God” (Acts 17:29) and our spirits have been given by God. (Ecc. 12:7) Were the doctrine of original sin true these passages would imply that we inherit original sin from God himself which cannot be since God is perfect. What then do we inherit from our physical parents? We inherit the ability to know good and evil, and also the human weakness which in time causes us to sin. We do not inherit the guilt of Adam’s transgressions nor that of our parents. Until a child is old enough to understand the meaning of sin, he is as pure in the sight of God as the freshly fallen winter snow.



Seek and ye shall find

Circle the letter representing the correct answer:

1. Transgression of the law of God is: (a) crime; (b) vice; (c) sin. a b c
2. The wages of sin is: (a) happiness; (b) death; (c) life. a b c
3. All liars will have their part in: (a) the lake of fire and brimstone; (b) heaven; (c) purgatory. a b c
4. King Saul was told to utterly destroy the (a) Egyptians; (b) Amalekites; © Philistines. a b c
5. God told Adam and Even that in the day they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they would: (a) die; (b) have indigestion; (c) live. a b c

Write true or false before each statement:

1. The son shall bear the iniquity of the father. (Ezek. 18:20) _____
2. Everyone shall give an account of himself to God. (Rom. 14:12) _____
3. Each person will receive the things which others have done. (II Cor. 5:10) _____
4. We are the offspring of God. (Acts 17:29) _____
5. Except we be converted and become as little children we cannot enter the kingdom of God. (Matt. 18:3) _____

Place a number in the first column (as in example) to match the scriptures on the left and right.

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|--|----|---|
| “And you hath he quickened ..” | 1. | “To him it is sin.” (James 4:17) |
| “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh ..” | 2. | “But if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” (Rom. 8:13) |
| 1. “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not ..” | 3. | “And come short of the glory of God.” (Rom. 3:23). |
| “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: ..” | 4. | “Who were dead in trespasses and sins.” (Eph. 2:1). |
| “For all have sinned ..” | 5. | “Hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.” (Col. 2:13) |

Read Galatians 5:19-21, Romans 1:29-31, and Colossians 3:5-9 from the King James Version. After the following sins, list the number of times each is specifically mentioned in these three passages:

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|-------------------|-------|
| 1. Blasphemy | _____ |
| 2. Deceit | _____ |
| 3. Fornication | _____ |
| 4. Murder(s) | _____ |
| 5. Uncleaness | _____ |
| 6. Adultery | _____ |
| 7. Lasciviousness | _____ |
| 8. Strife | _____ |
| 9. Covetousness | _____ |
| 10. Drunkenness | _____ |

(If you don't know the meaning of any of these sins, look them up in the dictionary.)

LESSON 15 – ANSWERS

Seek and ye shall find

Circle the letter representing the correct answer:

1. Transgression of the law of God is: (a) crime; (b) vice; (c) sin. (c)
2. The wages of sin is: (a) happiness; (b) death; (c) life. (b)
3. All liars will have their part in: (a) the lake of fire and brimstone; (b) heaven; (c) purgatory. (a)
4. King Saul was told to utterly destroy the (a) Egyptians; (b) Amalekites; © Philistines. (b)
5. God told Adam and Even that in the day they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they would: (a) die; (b) have indigestion; (c) live. (a)

Write true or false before each statement:

1. The son shall bear the iniquity of the father. (Ezek. 18:20) False
2. Everyone shall give an account of himself to God. (Rom. 14:12) True
3. Each person will receive the things which others have done. (II Cor. 5:10) False
4. We are the offspring of God. (Acts 17:29) True
5. Except we be converted and become as little children we cannot enter the kingdom of God. (Matt. 18:3) True

Place a number in the first column (as in example) to match the scriptures on the left and right.

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| 4. | “And you hath he quickened ..” | 1. | “To him it is sin.” (James 4:17) |
| 5. | “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh ..” | 2. | “But if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” (Rom. 8:13) |
| 1. | “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not ..” | 3. | “And come short of the glory of God.” (Rom. 3:23). |
| 2. | “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: ..” | 4. | “Who were dead in trespasses and sins.” (Eph. 2:1). |
| 3. | “For all have sinned ..” | 5. | “Hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.” (Col. 2:13) |

Read Galatians 5:19-21, Romans 1:29-31, and Colossians 3:5-9 from the King James Version. After the following sins, list the number of times each is specifically mentioned in these three passages:

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Blasphemy | <u>Once</u> |
| 2. Deceit | <u>Once</u> |
| 3. Fornication | <u>Three Times</u> |
| 4. Murder(s) | <u>Twice</u> |
| 5. Uncleaness | <u>Twice</u> |
| 6. Adultery | <u>Once</u> |
| 7. Lasciviousness | <u>Once</u> |
| 8. Strife | <u>Once</u> |
| 9. Covetousness | <u>Twice</u> |
| 10. Drunkenness | <u>Once</u> |