

## "What Happened to Sin?"

Some people don't want to hear a certain word any longer. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Well what is that word? Sin. Well stay tuned, and we'll talk about what happened.

Welcome to In Search of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will, because the word of God has the answer to the problem of sin. You won't find that answer anywhere else! Trust the word of God and study it every day. It'll bless you. Thanks for taking time with us today. We want to be a part of your life each week.

According to an Ellison Research study, thirteen percent of Americans say that there is no such thing as sin. Even many preachers won't discuss the topic of "sin." One clergyman says evangelists must never say that someone is a sinner. He believes it's a crude thing and keeps people from following Jesus. He said Jesus never called anyone a sinner.

Well, there's no doubt that Jesus demonstrated amazing patience with sinful people and He loved everyone, but to suggest that He never spoke of sin ignores Scripture. Luke 5 verses 30 to 32 says, that "The Pharisees and their scribes began grumbling at His disciples, (that is the disciples of Jesus) saying, 'Why do you eat and drink with the tax collectors and sinners?' And Jesus answered and said to them, 'It's not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick. I've not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.'"

The Lord Jesus came to earth to save sinners (1 Timothy 1 and verse 15). The fact that Jesus loved and received sinners doesn't mean that He condoned sin. No. Jesus knew sin is an enemy that separates people from God and His blessing. Sin poses a genuine threat to our lives and to our souls. Rather than ignore or deny sin, Jesus lovingly died on the cross, so people could leave their sins and lead a new and better life. If sin weren't real, Jesus wouldn't have sacrificed Himself to free people from it.

If you want to know more about what happened, we offer this material free. If you'd like a printed copy or a CD of our study and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have materials free on our website at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org).

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from 1 John 3 verses 7 to 10, and we'll consider what happened to sin.

Our reading today comes from the first letter of John, chapter 3, verses 7 to 10. "Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practice righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: that anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother." Now that's a reading from God's holy word. Let's pray together. Father help us to practice righteousness. To always love You and to love others. And may Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus name, Amen!

From the beginning, people have downplayed sin. They blame others for their sins. You remember Adam and Eve sinned against God by eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Genesis 3:8 to 13 says: "And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of

the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, 'Where are you?'

Adam said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.' God asked, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' The man said, 'The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me the fruit of the tree, and I ate.' Then the LORD God said to the woman, 'Well what is this that you have done?' The woman said, 'Well the serpent deceived me, and I ate.'"

People tend to rationalize away their sins. They want to make sin normal and okay. You've probably heard people give excuses to justify themselves or used some excuses. Maybe you've done that. I've heard people say, "Well, everyone does it"; but appealing to a large number of people doesn't determine right and wrong. You see it's the Word of God that determines right and wrong.

During the days of Noah, "The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart" (Genesis 6 verses 5 and 6). Noah, however, found favor in the eyes of the Lord; and everyone on earth except Noah and his family perished in that flood. God will punish everyone who remains in sin, even if that includes the whole world. Sin is still sin. And sin offends our righteous and holy God.

Romans chapter 2 verses 6 to 11 says that God "will render to each one according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality."

I've heard people say, "Well, God made me this way." And they're suggesting God made them where they cannot help but sin. Sin, however, isn't a characteristic; sin is a behavior. James 1:13 to 15 explains: "Let no one say when he is tempted, I am being tempted by God; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. And then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death."

Someone says about some sin they're committing, "Well, I can't see any harm in it." But right and wrong are not determined by what we think is or is not harmful. God sees things that we cannot see and He knows things that we don't know. We must trust in His judgment and realize that He makes the moral rules. Sin may warp our thinking; we may be fooled by what we want to do. God says in Isaiah 55 verses 8 to 9, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways." Well what does God say about certain sins?

We might easily be swayed by what is popular, but those people won't judge us on the last day. Some claim, "well millions of people can't be wrong!"; but millions of people can be wrong. Their desire can mislead them. 1 John 2:15 to 17 warns, "Do not love the world or the things of the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and the pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever."

Some say, "Well, we're not supposed to judge anybody." But it's impossible not to make judgments; we all make judgments. The Lord Jesus said in John 7 and verse 24, "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment." Now Jesus realized that people make unfair judgments based on human standards; and the Lord opposes that kind of judging. But this doesn't mean people must never make any moral judgment. Why that would be terribly foolish. If we cannot make moral judgments, we'd have complete chaos and ruin. Everything would be permissible.

Hebrews 5, verses 12 to 14 speaks of those who haven't grown spiritually as they should. The Bible says, "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you've come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil."

Spiritual maturity includes using God's Word, the Bible, to distinguish what is right from wrong. Many people think being an "adult" means one should read literature or view movies filled with sexually explicit behavior or foul-mouthed words. They don't realize that such things have little self-control and can enslave them to sin. Watching "adult" movies shows a person is immature and hasn't grown spiritually enough to discern good from evil. Proverbs 22 and verse 3 says, that "The prudent sees the evil and he hides himself, But the naive go on, and are punished for it." True adults don't run to evil; they avoid it.

Others excuse their sins by saying, "Well, God wants me to be happy and to feel good." And this is a very popular saying, and especially of people who cheat on their spouses and want to find somebody new. They reason that their old spouse doesn't make them happy anymore, and since God wants them to be happy, they feel justified in divorcing the old and finding somebody new that is more to their liking. But the Lord Jesus said in Mark 10 verses 11 to 12 that, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she is committing adultery." God wants us to live in righteousness not sin.

People may find pleasure in sin, but it won't last. Pleasure and happiness are not the same as joy that comes from God. Joy is the product of righteousness. 1 Corinthians 1:36 says that love "does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth." God wants us to live righteously with joy, not be happy with sin.

We must understand that sin leads to spiritual death. The Bible says in Ezekiel 18 verse 4, "Behold, all souls are Mine (God is speaking here); the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. And the soul who sins will die." Again, Romans 6 verse 23 says that, "The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Now regardless of what the world thinks, God will hold people responsible for their sins.

1 Corinthians 6 verses 9 and 10 says, "Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God." Again, Revelation 21 verse 8 says, "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Sin takes place when someone transgresses God's law (1 John 3 and verse 4). You sin when you lawlessly fail to hear what God says and then you do what you want; that's offensive to God. Sin also takes place when people fail to do what is right. James 4 and verse 17 says, "So whoever knows the

right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin." When we fail to take God's teaching seriously, when we fail to follow Jesus, and when we fail to be obedient to His will, we sin against God. Sin isn't simply an attitude or a behavior; it's an offensive thing toward God. We can't say no to God and think that we have a right relationship with Him.

Sin is serious business. God didn't send Jesus to the earth to die on a cross for trivial reasons but to die for our sins. No matter how we feel about sin, God takes sin seriously. The death of Jesus that was so painful and shameful, it was not for some "inappropriate action" or for "mistake," but for evil and the iniquity of sin. And the Bible says in Galatians 1 and verse 4 that Jesus "gave Himself for our sins, (why?) that He might deliver us out of this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father."

Jesus took our sins personally. The Bible says in 1 Peter 2 verse 24 that, "He himself (that is Jesus himself) bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed." Now the last part of this verse, "By his wounds you have been healed," quotes Isaiah 53, verse 5. Isaiah says in verses 5 and 6, "But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; and we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all." Because of His love for each of us, He was willing to take the punishment that you and I deserved. We were the sinners, and He was innocent. He died in our stead, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.

God doesn't simply want to forgive you of sin. He wants you to change your life. He wants sin out of your life and righteousness in your life. Remember what we read from God's Word in 1 John 3:7 to 9, "Little children, let no one deceive you. But whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. And whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. And the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God."

God wants a loving, peaceful relationship with you. Now sin creates a barrier between people and God that ruins that relationship. The Lord cannot approve of sin. And if you have unresolved sin in your life, you can't draw close to Him in that condition. He will not accept you, but the blood of Jesus can cleanse you from that sin and it can open the way to God. So my friend, get right with God today! Don't let another day pass and remain in sin. Let's pray together. Oh Father, we're thankful that through the blood of Jesus we can have the forgiveness of our sins. Father help us to obedient to Your will in every way. Help us to leave our old sins behind and to live righteously. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus name, Amen!

The devil wants us to think sin is a harmless plaything and doesn't hurt anyone. Many believe him. They'd rather think nothing is wrong, that everything is okay. Meanwhile sin works inside our soul like a cancer. We must take sin seriously.

If we would be right with God, we must first admit that we've sinned. Romans 3 and verse 23 says that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." It's absurd to speak of forgiveness or salvation until we come to grips with our own sin. Second, if we would be right with God, we must hear what God says, and take it to heart, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Third, out of faith and love, we ought to repent of our sins. Acts 17, verses 30 and 31 say, that "The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed;

and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.” Repentance is turning from sin and turning to Christ. Romans 12 and verse 9 says that we are to abhor what is evil; and to cling to what is good. Repentance is a change of heart that leads to a change of life.

Fourth, we must be baptized. Acts 22 and verse 16, says “Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.” God washes away all our sins with the blood of Christ at the time of baptism. Baptism is an immersion in water in the name of Jesus Christ so that our sins will be forgiven (Acts 2 and verse 38). Be baptized into Christ today and begin your Christian life. Then stay faithful to the Lord all the days of your life.

We hope that today’s study about sin has stirred you to think about your soul. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy or a CD of this message, then mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now you can download these lessons or a newsletter online at our website: [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). You can also watch the Search program anytime on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, “SearchTVMinistry.” There’s also a schedule of our programs online and a map with the location of churches in your area. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now if you get a hold of us don’t worry, we’re not here to get your money. We’re here to help you get to heaven.

Please get involved with a church of Christ. And if you’re looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we’ll be happy to help you find one. Well we’ll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God’s Word with us and tell a friend. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord’s Way.