

# Biblical Topics

## Sin

*Sin* is disobedience against God. The Law of God and His Word tell us what to do and what not to do. Sin is disobedience against God's Law and Word. Every disobedience, great or small, known or unknown, thought, word, or action, is sin. The question whether or not anything is a sin, is not determined by what we or others may think about it, but whether or not it agrees with the Scriptures. It is also a sin that we are not as God wants us to be, namely holy and perfect.

- Leviticus 19:2: The LORD said to Moses, <sup>2</sup> "Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.
- Matthew 5:48: Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

In matters of right and wrong before God our conscience must be controlled by God's Word alone. Whatever a person does against his conscience is also a sin. Things which God has neither commanded nor forbidden are in themselves indifferent, and it is no sin to either to do them or not to do them. But what we do must not give offense to others especially those are weak in their faith.

- Romans 14:23: But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin.
- Romans 14:13: Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.

*The devil* brought sin into the world. The devil, created good and perfect, was not tempted by anyone else, but the first thought of sin and rebellion against God originated in him. Man was tempted by the devil (Genesis 3:1-7). Being perfect, Adam and Eve could have successfully resisted and remained righteous. By the disobedience of our first parents sin entered into the world. Through this sin misery, suffering and death came upon all men.

- 1 John 3:8: He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.
- Romans 5:12: Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.

There are *two kinds* of sin: *original* sins and *actual* sin.

*Original sin* (inherited sin) is the total corruption of our whole human nature. God had made man perfectly healthy in body and sane in mind. God had also made man perfectly pure and holy of heart. Man knew the will of God and walked in His ways. All this was changed for the worse when man fell into sin. As a drop of poison in a glass of water will poison all the water, so the first sin committed by man poisoned and corrupted his entire nature. Having started to sin, he continued to do so. Adam lied to God and

blamed Eve and even God in trying to excuse his evil deed. This total corruption of the human nature is passed on from parents to children.

- Psalm 51:5: Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.
- John 3:6: Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.
- Genesis 8:21: Every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood.
- Romans 7:18: I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.
- Ephesians 2:1: As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins.
- Romans 5:12: Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.
- Matthew 7:17: Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.

*Actual sin* is every acts against a command of God in thoughts, desires, words, or deeds. These are called “actual sins” because we act or do them. We are also guilty of real sin when we neglect to do what we ought to do.

- Matthew 15:19: For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.
- James 1:15: Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.
- James 4:17: Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.

We *find salvation* only in the Gospel, which tells us that Christ as our Substitute fulfilled the Law and suffered and died for us.

- Romans 6:23: For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- Romans 10:4: Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.
- Galatians 3:13: Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”

The above information is taken from: “Luther’s Small Catechism” annotated by Edward W. A. Koehler.