

deeper

word faith life

Season 3

The Doctrine of Man

The Doctrine of Sin

The Doctrine of Salvation

Eschatology

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Episode 2 – The Doctrine of Sin

The Doctrine of Sin or Hamartiology, the study of the definition, origin and effect of sin on humanity.

How do we Define Sin?

Sin can be defined as the personal act of turning away from God and His will. It is the transgression of God's law, but more than that, it is being against God Himself, against His holiness, love and truth. Sin is the violation of God's command. It is the turning away from His expressed will, acting contrary to His will.

In the definition of sin there are two aspects to consider; deviation and rebellion:

_____ - The failure to measure up to God's will, His intention, it's a missing of the mark. We get this from the most common word in the Old Testament for sin is the Hebrew word [HATA] which means to [MISS or FAIL or to FALL SHORT]. It carries the same meaning as the most common New Testament word for sin, the Greek word [HAMARTIA] with means [MISS THE MARK or SHORT COMING]. It communicates the idea of an inherent defect, a deviation, or a going astray.

_____ - The direct opposition to God's purpose or commands. Sin is an act of defiance for the purpose of pursuing your own will and way. I will decide because I know better than God.

How did Sin Originate?

We need to state up front that God is not the originator nor the author of sin.

Deuteronomy 32:4 says, "...His works are perfect and all His ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is He."

Sin actually has no place in God's creation, He made everything good, including mankind. Sin ought not to be. Sin is directly opposite to all that is good in the character of God. Just as God necessarily and eternally delights in Himself and all that He is, so He necessarily and eternally hates sin. It contradicts His holiness and He must hate it.

Before Adam and Eve committed the first human sin at the fall, sin existed in the angelic world at the fall of Satan and the demons.

Sin entered the world when Adam and Eve were tempted by the snake and gave in to that temptation. They had a genuine free will not to sin, there was no compulsion to sin, their decision to eat the fruit was made in freedom. They chose disobedience over obedience.

Genesis 2:16,17 says, "And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from every tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it, you will certainly die.'"

Genesis 3:1-6 goes on, "Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it."

Their sin questioned three foundations:

The Basis for _____ - "What is true?" God said, "If you eat the fruit, you will die." The snake said, "You will not die." Eve decided to see whether God was



being truthful. She gave a different answer to the question, and truth becomes whatever you want it to be.

The Basis for _____ - "What is right?" God said, "Its wrong to eat the fruit." The snake said, "Its not wrong, you'll become like God." Eve trusted her own evaluation of right and wrong instead of allowing God's words to define them. The fruit was "good for food and pleasing to the eye." She gave a different answer to the question, so morality becomes whatever you want it to be.

The Basis for _____ - "Who am I?" God created Adam and Eve in His image, gave them dominion over all creation, and had a close intimate relationship with them. He affirmed them as His own, as His image bearers and His representatives. And yet they fell into the temptation to "Be like God." It's so ironic. They gave a different answer to the question, so identity becomes whatever you want it to be.

All sin is ultimately and completely irrational. There is no good reason for Adam's disobedience.

What is Inherited Sin?

How does Adam and Eve's sin affect us?

We Inherit _____ - Paul the apostle explains this inherited guilt.

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 people, because all sinned."

Paul is not talking about the actual sins we commit daily but rather the idea that God thought of us as having sinned when Adam disobeyed Him. All of humanity were represented by Adam and therefor all are guilty. We are not sinners because we sin, we sin because we are sinners.

Romans 5:19 - "For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous."

We Inherit _____ - We also inherit a sinful nature because of Adam and Eve's sin. This is often called original sin. We are born with a sinful nature, an inherited pre-disposition to sin, a self-centred bias to choose contrary to God and His will.

Galatians 5:17 - "For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other."

Having a sinful nature means that we totally lack any spiritual good before God, and we are totally unable to do any spiritual good before God. This is referred to the total depravity of man.

What is Imputed Sin?

To impute, means to credit something to someone's account. It's actually an accounting term. Since Adam's sin is credited to our account, its referred to as imputed sin. You didn't actually do it personally, but you're in the same boat as the rest of humanity.

What is Personal Sin?

These are the sinful acts, words and thoughts we commit on a daily basis. These cannot be blamed on Adam's first sin or on our parents. These are sins we commit ourselves. All people are sinful before God and are in desperate need of the Saviour. Are there degrees of sin? The answer is yes and no. All of us stand guilty before God whether our sins are few or many. Some sins are worse than others because they have more severe consequences in our lives, and the lives of others, and in our walk with God. All sin displeases God, but those sins done wilfully, repeatedly and knowingly, with a hardened heart are more displeasing to God than those done in ignorance.

What Happens When a Christian Sins?

Our legal standing before God remains unchanged.

Romans 8:1 - "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,"

Our salvation is not based on our own merits but is a free gift from God. Jesus death



paid for our sins past, present, and future. Even if we do sin, we keep our justification.

We are also still children of God, members of His family.

1 John 1:8-9 - "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

The fact that we have sin remaining in our lives does not mean that we lose our status as God's children, we keep our adoption.

When we sin, our fellowship with God is disrupted and our Christian life is damaged. God does not stop loving us, but He is displeased with our sin.

Ephesians 4:30 - "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

We can cause the Father to be displeased with us if we continue in disobedience to Him.

Hebrews 12 reminds us that the Lord "disciplines this He loves." 1 Peter 5 says that God "opposes the proud." We really don't want to be living our lives in this space.

The Westminster Confession of Faith says this:

"Although they can never fall from their state of justification, yet they may, by their sins, fall under God's fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of His countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance."

When we sin, our Christian life and ministry is damaged. When we stray from fellowship with Jesus because of sin, we diminish our abiding or remaining in Him and the fruitfulness of our lives and ministry is compromised.

John 15:4 - "Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me."

The best way for a Christian to avoid sin is by reading and meditating on God's Word.

Psalms 119:11 - "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."

We are also supernaturally aided by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, who teaches and leads us.

God's grace also teaches us to say no to ungodliness;

Titus 2:11-12 - "For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age."

There are two equally destructive extremes that Christians can fall into when coming to terms with their own sinfulness;

Sinless _____ - The belief that the Christian can attain a state of sinlessness in this life.

_____ - The view that because the sin is already paid for, the Christian can sin without concern or restraint.

John's first letter deals decisively with both extremes.

1 John 1:8 - "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

1 John 2:4-6 - "Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did."

What is the Unforgivable Sin?

Some people may fear that they have committed the unforgivable sin and it bothers them greatly. Jesus speaks about it in Matthew 12, Mark 3 and Luke 12. Let's have a look at Matthew's account.

Matthew 12:31,32 - "And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but



the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age, or in the age to come.”

In this context, Jesus had just cast out a demon from a blind and mute man.

The Pharisees attributed Jesus' power over evil to Him being in partnership with Beelzebul, the prince of demons. They had already seen compelling proof as to who Jesus really was, but they accused Him anyway. They were attributing God's work to the devil despite the evidence they had seen. Their problem wasn't ignorance, but intentional rejection. Their deliberate refusal to believe, even after knowing the truth, seems to be what Jesus is calling unforgivable.

Why would it be unforgivable? Their hearts were hardened to the point where no potential for repentance was possible, and therefore no forgiveness could be possible. God was present and active in Christ, and to reject Him would be to reject God and any way of being forgiven. The unforgivability does not come from a lack in God's grace, but from a determined choice to outrightly reject God's means of forgiveness.

If you are worried that you may be guilty of the unforgivable sin, that is emphatic proof that you are not guilty of it. Concern about committing it reveals the opposite attitude of what the sin actually is. Those who might be guilty of it wouldn't care because they have no remorse at the possibility of it.

Instead of worrying, rather press in to God and follow Jesus with your whole heart.

Memory Verse:

Romans 6:23

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

