

What is sin?

You and I may have our own opinions as to what constitutes sin and what doesn't. In fact most people including most Christians have an incredibly narrow view of sin that is limited to some of the vilest, outward and grievous sins like murder, rape, bank robbery and the like. The reason for this restricted definition of sin is obvious, it is to exclude anything I might be doing, or not doing, or how I might be living, from being categorized as sin. But the truth is our opinions mean nothing, there is only one view of sin that matters, that is God's. If I won't recognize His definition of sin – to which His provisions for deliverance from sin relate – then is it not likely that I will both live and die in my sins and suffer an eternal consequence? Wouldn't it be wiser and safer to examine God's view of sin? Let's:

What does the word sin itself mean – To miss God's portion, both here and hereafter:

According to Strong's Concordance the Greek word translated "sin" is "hamartano" and means: "To miss the mark and so not share in the prize". And my portion of the prize that sin causes me to miss? Union with God now, in this life; and union with God hereafter.

What is it that God says is sin? (1) Anything which I do or say that is not righteous, is sin:

1 John 5:17 **All unrighteousness is sin...**

1Cor 15:34 **Awake to righteousness, and do not sin...**

What exactly does it mean to always do what is righteous, and to therefore not sin?

John 5:30 (Jesus) **My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me**. (If I do God's will it is always righteous)

(2) All disobedience to God, is sin – and unbelief is counted as disobedience:

Rom 6:16 **...You are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin with death, or of obedience (to God) with righteousness.**

1 Sam 15:23 **For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft , And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry...**

Heb 3:18-19 **And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His (God's) rest, but to those who did not obey? So we see they could not enter in because of unbelief**. (All fear or worry is unbelief, and thus disobedience)

(3) Any transgressing or breaking of God's Law, is sin:

1 John 3:4 **Whoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law (KJV) ...by transgression or neglect — being unrestrained and unregulated by His (God's) commands and His will (AMP)**

And what is the law? It began with the Ten Commandments. What's the first commandment? Ex 20:3 "**You shall have no other gods before Me**". Do we obey it? Idolatry is valuing or loving (idolizing) anything or anyone more than God; and breaks the

first commandment. It could be an addiction, a job, a hobby, a sport, a lover, or a fantasy. Some may object here and say this doesn't apply to us because we're not under law but under grace (Rom 6:14). Really? It's only "**If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law**" (Gal 5:18). Since most Christians don't live in the Spirit they're still under the law.

(4) To not do good, when I know I should, is sin:

James 4:17 ...**To him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.**

What is good? Whatever is righteous; What's that? God's will; (see category (1) above)

(5) Anything I'm not doing in faith, that is, sincerely believing I'm being led by God, is sin:

Rom 14:23 ...**For whatever does not originate and proceed from faith is sin;**
AMP **whatever is done without a conviction of its approval by God is sinful.**

Heb 3:12 **Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;**

(6) Some specific examples of sin that reflect parts of the preceding five categories of sin:

Unforgiveness: Matt 6:15 **But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins** (and now must be judged eternally for them). NLT

Strife and envy: Jam 3:16 **For where envying** (of what others have) **and strife** (quarrelling) **are, there is confusion and every evil work.**

Love of money: 1 Tim 6:10 **For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil...**

Unapproved desire: Jam 1:14-15 **Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires** (thoughts); **when desire has conceived** (a decision to act) **it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown** (and acted on), **brings forth death** (to God).

What are some of the terrible and potentially eternal consequences of sin?

I die to God: Isa 59:2 **But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you...**(not alive to Him)

Rom 6:23 **For the wages of sin is death...**(spiritual – to God)

My heart hardens: Heb 3:13 ...**Lest any of you be hardened** (of heart) **through the deceitfulness of sin.** (making me not want to get right with God)

I'm a slave to the sin: John 8:34 **Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin".**

Powerless to not continue to serve that sin whenever it wants me to indulge it. Until, being willing to forsake it, I turn to God in humility to free me from it.

Under whose authority does our sin put us; and where did sin originally come from?

1 John 3:8 **He who sins is of the devil** (and "of" means "belongs to" - TEV Bible), **for the devil has sinned from the beginning...**(am I headed to the place he's going?)

God's provision for delivering me from: (1) The death penalty for my past sins:
(2) The death producing power of my sin nature:

Repentance: 1 John 1:9 **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** (Lest I abuse this)

Prov 28:13 **He that covers his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesses and forsakes them shall have mercy.** KJV

Ps 32:3-6 There was a time when I wouldn't admit what a sinner I was. But my dishonesty made me miserable and filled my days with frustration. All day and all night Your hand was heavy on me...until I finally admitted all my sins to You and stopped trying to hide them. I said to myself, "I will confess them to the Lord." And You forgave me! All my guilt is gone.

Now I say that each believer should confess his sins to God when he is aware of them, while there is time to be forgiven. Judgment will not touch him if he does. TLB

What is the only basis on which a righteous God who must judge my sins, can forgive me?

2 Cor 5:21 **For He (God) made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him** (don't you love Him?)

Crucified with Christ:

My sinful human nature or flesh will always drag my will back into sin until I believe that Christ died to sinful flesh, and, when I'm in Him I share in His death to my sinful nature.

Rom 6:6-7 **Knowing this** (believing this), **that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin.**

Living in Christ: 1 John 3:5-6 **And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins and in Him there is no sin. Whoever lives in Him does not sin...**

John 11:26 **Whoever lives and (actively) believes in Me shall never die.**
Do you believe this? (Because sin no longer has dominion over him).

You and I can only be made free from sin by Jesus, by His word and by His spirit, if we:

- Admit our captivity to sin and want to be made free – we can't be if we won't.
- We believe that God can make us permanently free – we will never believe, if we've bought into the false teaching that it's impossible to ever stop sinning.
- We know, in our hearts, the truth of God's words promising freedom from sin.

Sin originates with a desire; a thought; kill the thought with God's word, the sin dies un-born.

2 Co 10:4-5 **The weapons we fight with...have divine power to take thoughts captive:**

If we let God free us from sin, God can use us to free others from sin! So they won't die!

James 5:20 **Let him know that he who turns a sinner (in its context, this is a Christian) from the error of his way will save a soul from death (to God, eternally) **and cover a multitude of sins** (only those free from sin can be used to free others).**