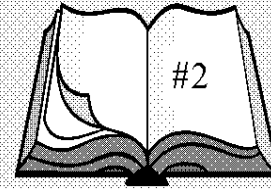


# BIBLETALK

## A Correspondence Study

### Sin And The Cross



In the first lesson, we noted the authority of God's word. There are three lessons we need to remember from that study.

- 1. The Bible is the inspired word of God.** *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).*
- 2. The Bible is understandable.** *"Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:17).*
- 3. We are under the New Testament today.** *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek" (Romans 1:16).*

#### The Sin Problem

##### Summary of Lesson 2

In this study, we want to emphasize the lost nature of man because of sin and God's remedy for sin, the cross of His Son.

The entire Bible is one continuous story of alienation from God and salvation. From the time of Adam and Eve's first sin in the Garden of Eden, man was lost and in need

of a Savior. Immediately following the account of the first sin is the first promise of the Savior (*Genesis 3:15*). The Old Testament represents the unfolding of God's eternal plan for the redemption of a lost mankind. In the gospel accounts, we read of the coming of the Messiah in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. The book of Acts tells us of the establishment of the church and its spread into all the world. The epistles teach people how to live after they become Christians so that they might be saved.

Of all of the many problems that people in the world face daily, the greatest problem of all is the problem of sin. The Bible teaches that everyone who has reached a point of accountability before God is guilty of sin.

*"As it is written: 'There is none righteous, no, not one'" (Romans 3:10).* This means that no one (with the exception of Jesus Christ) lives his entire life separate from sin. There is not even one person who is wholly righteous, sinlessly perfect, having never done any wrong.

*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).* Each and every person who has ever lived and reached a point of maturity where he has the ability to distinguish right from wrong, has at sometime chosen to do wrong. Sin is a conscious choice of mature people to disobey God's will.

### **Big and Little Sins**

We have a tendency to categorize sin into two major types – big and little. The “big sins” would include things like murder, adultery, rape, etc. Some “small sins” would be lying, disobeying parents, pride, anger and similar things.

The Bible makes no such distinction. Sin is sin in the sight of God. One can be lost for the sin of lying as well as for the sin of murder. “The wages of sin is death.” Sin, any sin. Period.

It is true that there may be more serious consequences in this life of some sins. Obviously, a lie can be more easily corrected than murder. But we must understand that both are sins in the eyes of the Lord. There is no such thing as a “little sin” to God.

Sin is defined in the Bible as a violation of God’s word. *“Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4).* Sin is a transgression of God’s will as revealed in the Scriptures.

According to the Bible, it is also sinful to fail to do right. *“Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin” (James 4:17).*

Sin, therefore, can be defined as either doing wrong or failing to do right.

### **Some Specific Sins**

There are many things that are considered sin in the word of God. Consider these lists of sinful things.

*“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away” (2 Timothy 3:1-5).*

Other similar lists can be found in *Mark 7:21-23, Galatians 5:19-21, Colossians 3:5-9, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10.*

### **The Consequences of Sin**

Adam and Eve were warned that, if they ate of the forbidden fruit, *“you shall surely die” (Genesis 2:17).* The death referred to had both a physical and a spiritual application. The aging and dying process began at this time. Of even more serious consequence is the spiritual meaning of the word, death. The result of sin, left unforgiven in a person’s life, is eternal separation from God.

*“Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear” (Isaiah 59:1-2).*

*“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23). See also James 1:13-15.*

Anyone who is lost will be lost because of his own personal sin.

### **The Grace of God**

There is no human answer to the problem of

sin. No person can devise his own solution to the problem of sin. Some people have the idea that, if they do more good things than they have done bad things, then the Lord will give them a home in heaven. But no amount of “good works” can make up for even one sin.

*“For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Lord, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” (Titus 3:3-7).*

*“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death” (Proverbs 14:12).* No one is clever enough to invent a plan for his own salvation.

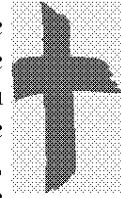
Anyone who is saved will be saved by the grace of God.

Grace, by definition, is an undeserved gift from God. It is an executive pardon from the death sentence. Because the Bible teaches that all have sinned and that the wages of sin is death, it follows that all would receive that spiritual death, if not forgiven.

### **The Cross of Christ**

It is only through God’s amazing grace as

seen in the cross of Jesus that we can have a hope of eternal life. The cross is God’s solution for the sin problem. It is the place where Christ, the innocent Son of God, took upon Himself the sins of the whole world and shed His blood. He died that we might live.



*“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace” (Ephesians 1:7).*

*“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you – unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that*

### **What about “Inherited” Sin?**

Sin is not something that a person inherits from his parents. Sin is something that an individual DOES personally.

*“The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself” (Ezekiel 18:20).*

*“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap” (Galatians 6:7).*

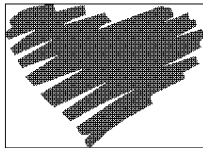
Each person will be judged by God based on how he chooses to live his life, not what he received at birth from his parents.

*He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).*

In the cross, God's demand for justice was met. God is fair (just) only if all sin is punished. There are two alternatives. Either each person can pay his own penalty for sin (which means no one would be saved) OR someone else must pay for everybody's sins (which gives everyone the chance to be saved). In God's plan for human redemption, Jesus paid the price for all other people.

*"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).*

We can also see God's love in the death of His Son for our sins. *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).*



We should never again doubt God's deep and abiding love for each one of us. If He cared enough to sacrifice His Son on the cross, how could we ever believe that He doesn't love us?

We should, then, obey God out of a natural response to the love He has shown us, out of our own gratitude and love. Obedience does not merit or earn salvation. All the good works in the world will not restore a relationship with God once our sins have separated us from Him. But He does expect us to obey Him.

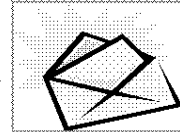


## Conclusion

The bad news is that we all deserve to be separated from God throughout all eternity as a consequence of our sins.

The good news is that the mercy of God has been shown to us in the death of His Son on the cross for our sins. Through this sacrifice, we can have the hope of living eternally in heaven with the Lord.

Please return the review questions, and the next lesson in the series of four will be forwarded to you.



All scripture references are taken from the New King James Version, copyright 1979, 1980, 1982, by Thomas H. Nelson, Inc. of Nashville, TN. Used by permission.

Expressway Church of Christ  
4437 S. 6th St.  
Louisville, KY 40214  
502-366-0884

Sunday Worship:  
9 AM & 6 PM  
Sunday Bible Study:  
10:15 AM  
Wednesday Bible Study:  
7:30 PM  
[www.bibletalk.org](http://www.bibletalk.org)

