

SIN

Purpose: While all seekers can be saved by grace, there is no grace if we perceive no sin. Of course, all have sinned (Romans 3:23); therefore, we all desperately need the grace of God (Romans 6:23). Thus, the aim of this study is to help seekers see themselves as our Holy God sees them: utterly sinful and separated from our God. This realization brings about a desire for both forgiveness and repentance.

Luke 7:36-50

Q: Is it important that we really take time to talk about our sin? Why? (Because the more aware we are of our sin...the more grateful we are for the grace of God through Jesus' sacrifice. Conversely, the less you are aware of your sinful indebtedness, the smaller your gratitude and the less you love God.) Explain passage of scripture...

Q: Is your attitude toward your sin more like Simon's attitude or more like the sinful woman's attitude? (As you pursue being a disciple of Jesus yourself, your attitude needs to be like that of the sinful woman and not the Pharisee).

Q: Why is having an attitude like that of the sinful women important? (This sinful woman went to extreme and vulnerable measures to show that she truly wanted a relationship with Jesus and needed his forgiveness for her many sins. Like her, the more you recognize and acknowledge how sinful you are, and how sinfully indebted you are to God, the more you will be grateful for His forgiveness.)

Romans 3:23; 6:23

Q: Who has sinned? (Everyone.)

Q: What do we deserve when we sin? (Death.)

Mark 7:21-22

Q: Where does our sin come from? (Sins come from within...so we cannot blame externals.)

Q: What things, people, or externals have you blamed or used as an excuse for past sins? (Despite genetics, parenting, peer pressures, and socio economic conditions, sin comes from within our own hearts and makes us unclean. We are responsible for our own sin. We need to take ownership for our sin!)

Galatians 5:19-21

Q: Do you think sinful acts are obvious?

Q: How can sin, which starts internally, become obvious?

*Refer to definitions and talk about these sins specifically.

Q: What will we not inherit if we are obviously living a sinful life?

Other useful passages: Ephesians 5:3-7, Revelation 21:8, Romans 1:21-32, 2 Timothy 3:2-5, 1 Peter 4:4, Colossians 3:8

Q: In light of this and the other passages of scriptures we have just studied, how big is your sinful debt?

Q: Are you like Simon (meaning a very good person in your own mind and in the eyes of the world) or are you more like the sinful woman (meaning do you have lots of sin that needs to be forgiven)?

Isaiah 59:1-2

Q: What does sin do to our relationship with God? (Our sin causes a separation between us and God.) [Illustration: A wall of sin.] This study is not just about a list of sins, but instead about the depth of your separation from God.

Q: Are you ready to do what it takes to tear down your wall of sin and separation?

1 John 1:5-10

Q: Can we have fellowship with God if we live in the darkness? (No.)

Q: What happens if we walk in the light? (*"We have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus purifies us from all sin..."*)

Q: Can we be purified by the blood of Jesus if we do not walk in the light? (No.)

Q: What can we do to break down our wall of sin and walk in the light? (Acknowledge and confess our sin.)

James 5:16

Q: Why should we confess our sins "to each other" and not just to God? (Prayer/Healing.)

Challenge: In order to help us to see the amount of our sinful debt to God, let's take some time before our next study to write a list of all our sins. Consider the most recent time you committed a sin; consider the first time; consider your attitude towards God each time you've indulged in sin. When we get together for our next study we will have a brief time of confession together before we start the next Bible study on The Cross of Grace.

*DEFINITIONS

Galatians 5:19-21

Sexual immorality: Fornication, any sexual union outside of marriage. Denotes ungodly sexual acts and relationships—prostitution, rape, homosexuality, petting, adultery, child abuse, bestiality.

Impurity: Any sinful thinking, vulgar thoughts, which cause lusting, masturbation, impure motives; watching pornography cause us to be impure and promtos sexual fantasies.

Debauchery: Any misuse of the body. Usually referring to sexual excesses, but in general refers to a readiness to indulge in any pleasure (indecency, lewd dancing, anorexia and bulimia). There is no respect for self or anyone else. In this state, man is at the mercy of his passions, impulses, emotions, etc. He is completely undisciplined (i.e. gives in to gluttony, laziness, smoking, cravings, masturbation, unlimited pleasure).

Idolatry: Worshipping anything other than God. Giving or devoting one's time, substance, talents, and/or self to anything that keeps one from obeying and following God in every way (i.e. status symbols, investments, engrossing sports or hobbies, selfish ambitions, relationships, property, possessions, pleasure and wants, school, work, pride). Also includes praying to anyone other than God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit.

Witchcraft: Seeking or being involved in any spiritual realm other than God's. Includes astrology (i.e. the stars control; consequently, saying God does not rule), horoscopes, Satan worship, the occult, magic spells, good-luck charms or pictures, praying to saints, drug use, tarot cards, palm reading, channeling (the New Age movement), Ouija Board, etc.

Hatred: Wishing ill or harm on anyone, looking down on anyone, bitter feelings, resentment, wanting revenge, murder.

Discord: Anything that breaks up relationships, stirring up trouble, an inability to get along with people, arguing, slander, gossip, malicious talk, criticalness.

Jealousy: Possessiveness, not sharing.

Fits of rage: Uncontrolled anger, losing your temper, temper tantrums, quick temper, angry shouting, cussing, profanity, fighting.

Selfish ambition: Living to please self, wanting one's own way, getting what one wants at any cost, desiring to be first at any cost, overly competitive spirit. Not willing to do menial or demeaning tasks, refusing to admit being wrong, arrogance, doing things for honor or glory, wanting to look good for others, refusing to compromise, pride, selfishness and independence.

Dissension: Rebelling against authority, not submitting, habitually disagreeing, arguing, causing division, starting arguments, stirring up trouble.

Factions: Feeling superior to others, cliques, refusing to associate with anyone because they are different or for any other reason, wanting to be with "own" kind, prejudice, bigotry, racism.

Envy: Desiring something another person has while wishing that they did not have it at all (i.e. wealth, status, ability, physical features, spirituality, relationships).

Drunkennes: Anything that causes one to lose control—intoxication, alcohol, drug abuse.

Orgies: Living without restraint. Includes partying, sexual parties, unrestrained sex, vandalism, carousing.

And the like: others sins like the above; in any form or degree.