

John's Commentary On Sin

“Our struggle with sin is like an alcoholic’s struggle with drinking. It’s never over. Sinners are never cured; they simply decide to stop sinning...and it’s a daily decision”

– John Fischer

Hb.12⁴ You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.

- Striving: to engage in intense struggle against something

“So, committing the decision to the Creator of the world and exhorting his men to fight nobly to the death for the laws, temple, city, country, and commonwealth, he pitched his camp near Modein” – 2 Macc.13:14.

John gives thorough commentary on sin

I. The definition of sin

- Jn.5:...14

“sin no more”

- Jn.8:...7, 11

- Jesus expected them to know what sin is.
- ‘Sin’: common word, not restricted to Bible.

The meanest criminal can explain the difference between good and bad, right and wrong, fair and unfair, etc. – when it applies to the way people treat him!

- Even if they were ignorant of its meaning, His warning expects them to learn.

Sin is . . .

- Missing the mark. Jn.5¹⁴ Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, “See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.”
 - Miss the mark (Homer). Of a spear that misses the target.
 - To fail, commit a wrong, err, sin.
- Lk.15¹⁸ I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you...”
- Includes neglect, Ja.4¹⁷

Sin is . . .

- Missing the mark. Jn.5:14
- A fall. Ac.1²⁵ to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.

– Mt.15:2-3

'The words of the scribes are lovely, above the words of the law; for the words of the law are weighty and light but the words of the scribes are all weighty' – Rabbinical saying

– Roman Catholic traditions illustrate – traditions of men oppose word of God.

Sin is . . .

- Missing the mark. Jn.5:14
- A fall. Ac.1:25
- Disobedience. Hb.2² For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward . . .
 - Disobedience: failing to hear.
- Mt.18¹⁷ And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

Sin is . . .

- Missing the mark. Jn.5:14
- A fall. Ac.1:25
- Disobedience. Hb.2:2
- Lawlessness. 1 Jn.3⁴ **Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.**
 - Lawless conduct, opposite of righteousness. To behave with complete disregard for laws and regulations; to live as though there were no laws.

Sin is . . .

- Missing the mark. Jn.5:14
- A fall. Ac.1:25
- Disobedience. Hb.2:2
- Lawlessness. 1 Jn.3:4
- Unrighteousness. 1 Jn.5¹⁷ All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not leading to death.
 - Unjust deed, injustice.

I. The definition of sin

II. The destiny of sin

John 8²¹ Then Jesus said to them again, “I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come.”

- Rv.22¹⁵ But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.
- Pr.28¹³ He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.
 - Cover: conceal
 - How: denial, excuses

James
5:19-20

John 8³⁴, Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.

Augustine's stages with sin

1. Lord make me good, *but not yet.*
 - Acts 24²⁴ And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. ²⁵ Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you."

Augustine's stages with sin

2. Lord make me good, *but not entirely*.

- 1 Th.5²³ Now may the God of peace himself **sanctify** you *completely*, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - **Sanctification**: set apart. How much?
 - 'Completely': entirely + completion; wholly; nothing lacking
 - 'Whole': entirely, the whole of you; no part of our person lacks consecration

Augustine's stages with sin

3. Lord make me good.

- 1 Th.5¹⁵ See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.
- 1 Th.5²¹ Test all things; hold fast what is good

I. The definition of sin

II. The destiny of sin

III. The defense of sin

John 15²² If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³ He who hates Me hates My Father also. ²⁴ If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father.

- No excuse

“Once we assuage our conscience by calling something a ‘necessary evil,’ it begins to look more and more necessary and less and less evil” – Sidney J. Harris

Mt.6:33

“Sin arises when things that are a minor good are pursued as though they were the most important goals in life. If money or affection or power are sought in disproportionate, obsessive ways, then sin occurs. And that sin is magnified when, for these lesser goals, we fail to pursue the highest good and the finest goals. So when we ask ourselves why, in a given situation, we committed a sin, the answer is usually one of two things. Either we wanted to obtain something we didn't have, or we feared losing something we had” – Augustine, *Confessions*

Jn.16⁸ And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹ of sin, because they do not believe in Me.

Man calls it an accident, God calls it abomination.

Man calls it a defect, God calls it a disease.

Man calls it an error, God calls it an enmity.

Man calls it a liberty, God calls it lawlessness.

Man calls it a trifle, God calls it a tragedy.

I. The definition of sin

II. The destiny of sin

II. The destiny of sin

IV. The degrees of sin

Jn.19¹¹ Jesus answered, “You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.”

How can one sin be greater than another?

Aren't all sins the same?

- **YES**, if we mean that all sins condemn. No big and little sins.
- **NO**, if we mean that God treats all sins in same way.

OT refers to “great sins”

Gn.18:20, Sodom: ‘sin is *very grave*’

Ex.32:21, ‘*so great* a sin’

1 Sm.2:17, ‘sin of the young men was *very great*’

2 K.17:21, ‘Jeroboam...made them commit **a great sin**’

- **BUT: Those who ignored Jesus are worse than Sodomites [Mt.10:15]**

Lk.12:47-48, greater judgment

- Main points are obvious –
 1. One sinner is in worse condition than the other
 2. In our land of Bibles we cannot honestly plead ignorance

2 Pt.2:20-22

- Before he obeyed gospel, he was headed for hell. How can he be in worse condition?
 - Harder to restore apostate who knows truth than to convert one who never heard.
 - May have hardened his heart against truth.
 - His influence is worse – he tried gospel, rejected it...

Three kinds of sin –

1. Ignorance. Lk.23:34. 1 Tim.1:13

2. Weakness. 2 Sm.11

3. Presumption. Ps.19:13

- Arrogance and rebellion scorn God and His Word
- If David had refused to repent...it would no longer be weakness, but presumption [walking in darkness, 1 Jn.1]

Survey – areas of greatest spiritual challenges to them

1. Materialism
2. Pride
3. Self-centeredness
4. Laziness
5. (Tie) Anger/Bitterness
6. (Tie) Lust
7. Envy
8. Gluttony
9. Lying

Temptations were more potent when they neglected time with God (81%)
... physically tired (57%)

They resisted temptation by prayer (84%) ...
avoiding compromising situations (76%) ...
Bible study (66%) ...
and being accountable to someone (52%)