

# Week 6: What is Sin?

## In Preparation for Small Group Discussion:

1. Listen to one of the messages given at Kettlebrook on March 14, 2010 live or on the web at: <http://www.kettlebrook.org/resources/index.htm> or via podcast on iTunes.
2. Read chapter 8 (pages 62-66) in Wayne Grudem's *Christian Beliefs*.
3. Prepare your responses to the questions presented here in this study.

## From Sunday:

What was the main point of the message?

How will this practically change your life?

## From Your Perspective:

What do you think is at the core of the problems in the world and why?

How would you answer a person who asks you at work or school: "What do you think sin is?"

Bible teachers assert that our biggest problem is sin. Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?

## From the Skeptic:

Below are some comments that people have made regarding sin. Underline comments that reflect thoughts you have had about the concept of sin at some point in your life.

- Not sinning is unrealistic. You have to live in the real world. You can play by the goody-two-shoes rules and lose, or you can do what everyone else does & get ahead.
  - If you only lived my life. No one could withstand the temptations I face.
  - Sin is not difficult to defeat. It is entirely possible to live long periods of time without sinning.
  - We are all like the moon. We ALL have a dark side (even God) we want no one else to see!
  - We are punished BY our sins...God won't punish us FOR our sins.
  - I am sick of people trying to tell me that I am a sinner. I am a good person. I try to always do the right thing. I am not perfect, but there are sure worse offenders than me. Besides, who are they to judge?
  - Who is to say what is and is not sin? Everyone gets to define right & wrong for oneself.
  - Create your own:
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Why did you underline the comments you did?

Simone Weil wrote: "All sins are attempts to fill voids." She suggests that we all have God-shaped holes in our hearts that leave us incomplete. To counter this incompleteness, we try to fill this void with all sorts of things, but only God can truly fill it.

What are some of the things that you have tried that you hoped would bring you happiness and wholeness of body, soul and spirit?

How have these things worked out?

## From the Bible:

Read Romans 3: 9-20. Here Paul concludes his argument that runs from Rom 1:18 thru 3:20. His subject is the depth of the sinfulness of humankind. In these verses, Paul calls God Almighty to testify---to bear witness (from a number of Old Testament verses) against humankind as sinful by nature and deed. Read these verses to gain God's perspective on the human condition.

### 3:10-12

How does God describe the human condition (put into your own words)?

### 3:13-19

How does God describe the speech & conduct of humankind (put into your own words)?

Have you ever exhibited such behavior?

### 3:20

Why can no one be declared righteous in God's sight by obeying the law?

What then is the purpose of God's law?

From studying this passage, describe what new insight you have as to your current status before God? Tell the group what actions you feel compelled to take as a result.

## From the Book:

How does Grudem define sin?

How does God feel about sin? Why?

How has Adam's willful rebellion against God impacted us today? (see p.63)

If we receive Christ as Savior & Lord, how does subsequent sin affect us as we relate to God?

## Moving Forward:

### **Group Activity: Celebrate Communion Together**

Psalm 51 is David's heart-broken plea to God asking for His forgiveness after David sinned by having an affair with Bathsheba. David has much to teach us about sin, God and forgiveness. Read Psalm 51 and discuss the following as preparation for Communion

#### **51:1-2**

What are three words that David uses in to describe his offenses?

Against whom does David say all sin is committed?

#### **51:5**

Here David indicates that he was created with an inherent sin nature. How do you think our relationship with God is impacted as a result of this in-born inclination toward sin? (see Ps 51: 3, 8, 11-12)

#### **51:17**

What conditions of mind, heart & soul are necessary when seeking forgiveness of sin from God?

### **Communion (Have bread and wine/juice ready)**

1. Confess your sins in writing (don't read aloud or show to anyone). Ask God to show you what sins you should write out.
2. Ask God to forgive your sins & create in you a new heart committed to loving & seeking God.
3. Burn your lists in the fireplace or in a metal container trusting God has forgiven & forgotten.
4. Read together aloud Ps 31: 1-7
5. Pray as a group allowing each person to express their gratefulness to God for forgiveness of your sins.
6. Have someone read 1 Cor 11: 23-24. Distribute bread & eat together.
7. Have someone read 1 Cor 11: 25-26. Distribute wine/juice and drink together
8. Reflect together in thanksgiving on what David meant in Ps 51:12 as to what being restored to joy of your (God's) salvation means and what value a willing spirit will have to sustain each person in the days ahead.

### **Digging Deeper:**

Some other passages that you may want to explore include:

- Exodus 20: 1-17- Ten Commandments
- Ephesians 2: 1-10 - Once dead in sins, now made alive by grace thru faith in Jesus
- James 1: 13-15 - Life cycle of sin
- Genesis 2 & 3 - Humankind before and after the Fall
- Jeremiah 17:9 - Deceitfulness of our own hearts
- Isaiah 64:6 - Can righteous acts please the Lord?
- 1 Kings 8:46 - Are there any people who do not sin?
- Romans
  - 3:23 - Who has fallen short of God's standards
  - 6:23 - What sin brings about & what can be done
  - 19: 9-11 - How can one be saved from one's sins
- 1 John 1: 8 – 2: 6 - Confession and walking with God

Another message you may also want to listen to:

- <http://www.nationalcathedral.org/mp3s/tk091105.mp3>

Some books that you may want to explore include:

- *The Pursuit of Holiness* by Jerry Bridges (ISBN# 157683932x)
- *The Reason for God* by Tim Keller (especially Chapter 10 on sin) (ISBN # 052595049)
- *Temptation and Sin* by John Owen (ISBN# 0851511260)
- *Speaking of Sin: The Lost Language of Salvation* by Barbara Taylor (ISBN# 1561011894)