



Broken People

*God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.
And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.*

Genesis 1:31

“Man is the only animal that blushes. Or needs to.”

Mark Twain

What is the Fall?

God created this world in a perfect state and upon the creation of the man and woman God declared His entire creation “very good” (Gen. 1:31). This intended state of perfect beauty in all things is described in the Old Testament as “Shalom” (Isa. 2:2–4, 11:1–9, 32:14–20, 43:1–12, 60:1–22, 65:17–25; Joel 2:24–29, 3:17–18). Surveying the condition of our planet and human life (including death, suffering, injustice, boredom, annoyances, miseries, fears etc.), it is obvious that something has gone terribly wrong. **All of the individual and corporate shortcomings of God’s perfect intentions for all of creation, whether intentional or unintentional or through omission or commission, qualify as sin.**

Scripture teaches that God clearly commanded the first man and woman not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil or they would die (Gen. 2:16–17). The man and woman sinned against God. Because Adam was the head of the human race, when he sinned everyone who would ever live (other than Jesus Christ who had no earthly father) was implicated in his sin (Gen. 3:1–6; Hosea 6:7; Rom. 5:12–21; 1 Cor. 15:21–22, 15:45–50).

Everyone (except Jesus Christ) is from conception sinful by nature and corrupted to the very core of their being and therefore incapable of doing anything that pleases God (Psalms 51:5; Rom. 3:10–18; Rom. 8:7–8). Thus, everyone (except Jesus Christ) sins (1 John 1:8) by breaking God’s holy laws (Ps. 14:1–3; Isa. 53:6; Rom. 3:10, 3:23; 1 John 3:4) because they are sinners by nature and are simply showing forth their hearts (Prov. 4:23, 17:19, 20:9; Matt. 6:21; Luke 6:45).

The fall was the descent of the human race and the rest of God’s creation (Rom. 8:18–27) into a state of rebellion against God. Despite his depravity, man continues to have dignity because He still remains an image bearer of God even though that image is marred by sin (Gen. 1:26, 9:6; James 3:9).

Is everyone totally sinful?

Yes, while people are not absolutely sinful (they could do evil things with greater degree and frequency) all people are totally sinful in that their every motive, word, deed, and thought is for their own glory rather than God’s (Ps. 29:2; Rom. 3:23, 11:36, 16:27). This is because those who do not belong to God are utterly incapable of pleasing God and doing things for His glory (Matt. 7:17–18; Rom. 8:7–8).

There is a vestige of moral sense, however, in people because of the conscience that God gave them (Rom. 2:14–15). However, even the seemingly good deeds done from the moral conscience are mere filth to God if done apart from loving obedience to Him, because they are attempts at meriting our own righteousness which is the heart of pride. These attempts are an enemy of the humble grace in which one receives the righteousness of God as a free gift (Isa. 64:6).

Anybody who has once been horrified by the dreadfulness of his own sin that nailed Jesus to the cross will no longer be horrified by even the rankest sins of a brother.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Where does sin come from?

The Bible is clear that God is Light and in Him is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5). The Bible is also clear that God does not take any delight in sin (Ps. 5:4), He hates and detests sin (Prov. 6:16; Zech. 8:17), He hides His face from sinful people (Isa. 59:2, 64:7). Therefore, God does not in any way cause sin and sin is a deviation of His good creation and a distortion of His beautiful and glorious perfect works.

God does not tempt us to sin, but instead the temptation arises from within our own hearts. Therefore, mere behavioral change is not sufficient to remedy the human condition, but instead we need a new heart and nature if there is to be any true victory over sin in our lives.

James 1:13–15 When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God can not be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, **by his own evil desire**, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

Mark 7:21–23 For from within, **out of men’s hearts**, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance, and folly. All these come from inside and make a man ‘unclean.’

Proverbs 27:19 Proverbs 4:23 Matthew 12:34 Proverbs 20:9 Jeremiah 17:9 Luke 6:45

What are the consequences of sin?

Genesis 2:16–17 And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Matthew 13:14 John 8:43 Ephesians 2:1 Colossians 2:13

How should we deal with our sin?

Conviction – recognizing our sin through the ministry of the Holy Spirit and truth of Scripture (John 16:7–11)

Confession – agreeing with the Holy Spirit and Scripture regarding our sin (1 John 1:5–9).

Repentance – a turning from the sin and to God and obedience to Him out of love (Luke 17:3_ Acts 3:19, 5:31, 11:18).

Restitution – seeking to make amends as much as possible for our sins (Ex. 22:3, Prov. 6:31, Ezek. 33:15).

Forgiveness – asking for grace from those you have sinned against, or giving grace to those who have sinned against you (Matt. 6:12–14, 18:35; Mark 11:25; 2 Cor. 2:10; Eph. 4:32).

Reconciliation – once all parties have resolved their sins they can be reunited (Matt. 5:24, Eph. 2:14–16, 2 Cor. 5:18).

How can I stop committing a sin?

Rom. 8:13–16 For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are **led by the Spirit** of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry “Abba, Father.”

- 1. Repentance** – I want to change. Based upon the good, perfect, and acceptable nature of God’s will. (Rom. 12:1–2).
- 2. Faith** – I can change. Based upon God’s faithfulness to His promises made possible by His power. (1 Cor. 10:13).
- 3. Worship** – I have a plan to change. A realization that virtue goes beyond merely changing a vice to repenting and doing good works.
 - Clearly identify your goal of replacing a sinful habit with a godly one. (Eph. 4:28–31).
 - Clearly identify your resources (i.e. prayer, Holy Spirit, Scripture, elders, Christian friends, books, etc.).
 - Clearly identify your plan for using your resources:
 - i. Recognize how sin is birthed
reduced spiritual stimulus (Bible/prayer) + external stimulus (world and Satan) + internal reaction (flesh) = sin.
 - ii. Recognize how obedience is birthed
increased spiritual stimulus (Bible/prayer) + reduced external stimulus (world and Satan) + reduced internal reaction (flesh) = obedience.
- 4. Discipline** – I am working my plan. Daily or hourly commitment and prayer for God’s help.
- 5. Perseverance** – I am never going back. Use any failures as learning opportunities to grow in your sanctification.