



▶ WHAT DOES PRAYER DO?



▶ IS MONEY THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL?



▶ WHAT ARE ANGELS?

February 12, 2012
Study 3

Sunday Morning

Discovery *study*

SEARCHING, SHARING, AND STUDYING REAL ISSUES OF FAITH TOGETHER WITH THE BIBLE AND DISCUSSION

"If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one." Matthew 18:15

What is Sin?

"So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." (Gen 1:27) When we think of sin we don't often think back to either of the two creation stories. Usually we'll jump to Leviticus or Deuteronomy for a hardline approach, or the Gospels or even some of Paul's letters for a more pastoral approach. However, sin may best be described as anything which distorts or corrupts the image of God in us.

The word for *sin* in the New Testament is closely related to the word *witness*, in fact it's an opposite of *witness*. So we may think of sin as those behaviours we have which do not witness, or do not show other people what God is like and do not show how we should live with each other. Again back to that image of God in us.

So what is the image of God in us? Often it's described as living with others in a mutually self-giving way. This is the ideal of living in relationship with other people and with God where the other isn't merely an object we use for our own benefit. We live seeking what is good for the other and for the relationship. We live seeking those things which are life-giving and liberating for all people. Murder would obviously be bad for the other person. So would abuse. What about paying someone less than a livable wage, is that a sin?

Is sin only personal or can there be communal sin? In a global economy, every thing we do causes disruption, injustice, injury to others. When we buy gas for our cars, diamonds for our loved ones, or food for our table, do we contribute to communal injustice and commit sin? Is sin inescapable?
Matthew Sams



For all have sinned....

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

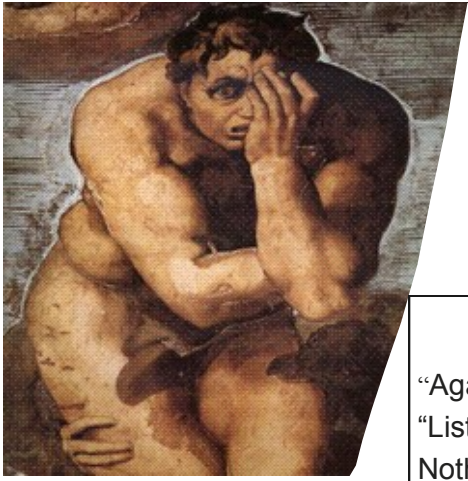
Romans 6:23

"When you **sin** against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you **sin** against Christ."

1 Corinthians 8:12

"For all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God"

Romans 3:23



Asking Questions that Matter

Pleasure is the bait of sin.
Plato.

“Sin is a power present in every human life, even at birth. It issues in such sins as pride asserting itself against God, indifference towards God and neighbour...”

10.3 Living Faith: A Statement of Christian Belief (Presbyterian Church in Canada)

Are some sins worse than others? Are there unforgivable sins?
“As there is no sin so small but it deserves damnation; so there is no sin so great that it can bring damnation upon those who truly repent.”
Westminster Confession BC 6.084

Further Reflection

“Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. ¹⁵ Nothing outside a man can make him ‘unclean’ by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him ‘unclean.’

¹⁷ After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable.

¹⁸ “Are you so dull?” he asked. “Don’t you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him ‘unclean’? ¹⁹ For it doesn’t go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body.” (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods “clean.”)

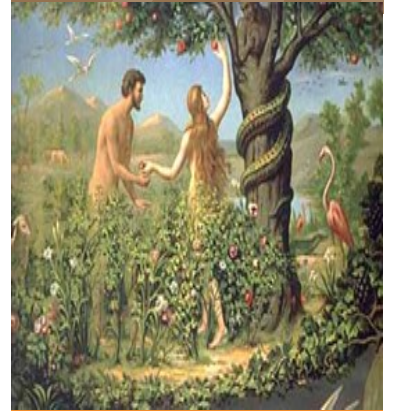
²⁰ He went on: “What comes out of a man is what makes him ‘unclean.’ ²¹ For from within, out of men’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²² greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. ²³ All these evils come from inside and make a man ‘unclean.’”
Mark 7:14-23

Question for Reflection:

We often pay attention to what we put into our bodies, but how much time do we take to monitor what comes out of us?

In what ways can we keep evil from coming into the world through us?

COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY



“Sin is collective irresponsibility... It is the sin that rises from the fact that we simply are *not* little islands separated by the sea, but one great landmass of humanity. Our lives are so bound up with one another that we share even in one another’s guilt: not even our sins are our private concern, because they have a grim habit of ensnaring other people in their meshes.”

Brian Gerrish, “The Pilgrim Road”

“Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her...” John 8:7