

3) Do I sin? Am I a sinner?

Job 5:7 "For man is born for trouble as sparks fly upward."

Job 25:4 "How then can a man be just with God? Or how can he be clean who is born of woman?"

Psalms 19:12 "Who can discern his errors? Acquit me of hidden faults"

Psalms 51:5 "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me."

Psalms 58:3 "The wicked are estranged from the womb; these who speak lies go astray from birth."

Ecclesiastes 9:3 "the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil and insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives."

Jeremiah 17:9 "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick" (sick is *anush*, [אֲנֹשׁ] an incurable illness, cf. 2 Sam 12:15; Isa 17:11; Jer 15:18; 17:16; 30:12, 15)

Matt 5:27-28 ²⁷You have heard that it was said, 'you shall not commit adultery'; ²⁸but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

Mark 7:21-22 ²¹"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, ²²deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness."

Rom 3:23 "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"

Rom 3:10-19 ¹⁰as it is written,

"There is none righteous, not even one;

¹¹there is none who understands,
there is none who seeks for God;

¹²all have turned aside, together they have become useless;
there is none who does good,
there is not even one."

¹³their throat is an open grave,
with their tongues they keep deceiving,"
the poison of asps is under their lips";

¹⁴"whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness";

¹⁵their feet are swift to shed blood,

¹⁶destruction and misery are in their paths,

¹⁷and the path of peace they have not known."

¹⁸"there is no fear of God before their eyes."

¹⁹Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God"

Eph 2:1-3 ¹"And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ²in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. ³Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest."

James 4:17 "Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin"

Summary of these passages:

- Everyone is **born** a sinner (Job 5:7; 25:4; Ps 51:5; 58:3)
- Everyone's **character** and **thoughts** fail to conform to God's holy character and will (Jer 17:9; Matt 5:27-28; Rom 3:11, 23)
- Everyone's **actions** fail to conform to God's holy character and will. This includes—
 - (1) Voluntary acts—you *meant* to do that or *refused* to do it (Rom 3:9-19, 23; Jas 4:17)
 - (2) Involuntary acts—you had no idea or were unaware that what you did was wrong (Ps 19:12)
- Everyone has a natural bent or disposition to sin (this is called a sinful **nature**) (Eccl 9:3; Jer 17:9; Mark 7:21-22; Eph 2:3)
- Statement: *Before God every human being is sinful and a sinner.*

4) What does sin *do* to me?

- **What effect does sin have on me?**

Psalm 10:3-4 ³For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire, and the greedy man curses and spurns the LORD. ⁴The wicked, in the haughtiness of his countenance, does not seek Him all his thoughts are, 'There is no God.'"

Eccl 10:2 "A wise man's heart directs him toward the right, but the foolish man's heart directs him toward the left."

Ezekiel 28:2 "Son of man, say to the leader of Tyre, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Because your heart is lifted up and you have said, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods in the heart of the seas'; yet you are a man and not God, although you make your heart like the heart of God"

John 8:34 "Jesus answered them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.'"

Romans 3:10-11 ¹⁰as it is written, 'There is none righteous, not even one; ¹¹there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God"

Romans 6:20 "when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness."

Romans 8:5-8 ⁵For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, ⁷because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God."

Ephesians 4:17-19 ¹⁷“So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; ¹⁹and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.”

Summary of these passages:

- The sin nature **controls** words, thoughts, attitude, pursuits, and actions.
- The sinner does not live for **God**—he will live for himself, others, or other things, but not God.
- To sin is to be sin’s **slave**. You are under its mastery, dominion, and power.

The result of God’s creation of man was a perfect, finite “copy” of Himself—man was made in His image. God made man a personal, spiritual, and moral being so that he would reflect His character in **every** part of life and understand, accept, and follow His will.

Quite a change has happened in our human “constitution” since God created us. When man sinned against God, his entire person—his body, mind, emotions, and will—was penetrated and corrupted by sin. The image of God is not lost (you are still a human being) but it is so **marred** that man now uses all his God-given capacities for the opposite purposes God intended.

This doesn’t mean that every person is as sinful or evil as he *could* be. But the *potential* is there, as Jeremiah’s words in 17:9 make very clear.

When we think, act, and feel we never do so as God originally intended. We do not do so in a way that perfectly conforms to God’s holy character and will. Instead, we make anything other than God the object and affection of life. We determine what the supreme end and center of our existence will be, rejecting God our Creator’s original design and intention.

Sin has so thoroughly penetrated and corrupted us that **every** part of our life rejects God, will not welcome God’s truth, and refuses to follow God’s will.

What effect does sin have on me?

Statement: Sin **completely** corrupts and controls every person.

- **What are the consequences of sin?**

Romans 6:23 “the wages of sin is death”

Ephesians 2:1 “you were dead in your trespasses and sins”

Hebrews 9:27 “inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment”

James 2:26 “just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.”

Revelation 20:14-15 ¹⁴Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

Revelation 21:8 “But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death”

There are three important consequences of sin:

(1) **Spiritual** death.

The relationship God intended for us to enjoy with Him is lost. We are spiritually blind—this means that no one can or desires to seek after God.

(2) **Physical** death.

“Death” is separation—in this case, the sinner will be separated from physical life.

(3) **Eternal** death.

This is also called “the second death” and occurs in a literal place called hell. What is hell like?

Hell is not a place of fun and games; the Bible says that it is a place of “eternal punishment” (Matt 25:46) and “darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matt 22:13). There “the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night” (Rev 14:11).

The “second death” on the one hand is eternal separation from the presence and blessing of God, but on the other hand it is the unimaginable, never-ending punishment that an infinitely holy God will level against sinners.

Statement: *Death is the consequence of sin: spiritual, physical, and eternal death.*

5) **Why does God punish sin forever in hell if sin is committed only over a few years? That doesn’t seem fair!**

The Bible clearly describes the sinner’s eternal future as one of endless punishment and suffering. It does not seek to explain *why* it is eternal, it simply states that it *is*. To question or modify what the Bible says is to doubt and deny God’s Word. However, a theological explanation can be given.

This question assumes that the duration of a punishment is determined by the amount of time it took to commit the sin. The problem here is that even human courts of law render judgment based upon the *nature* of the crime.

When we're considering sin, the "court" or standard of judgment is not human law or consideration of what is "fair" or "right." The standard violated by sin is the holy character and will of the infinite and perfect Spirit in whom all things have their source, support, and end!

There is a major difference between slapping your dog and slapping your wife/husband/child, or kicking a bum on your porch and kicking the president of the United States. The difference lies in the character and dignity of the person offended.

In the case of sin, the character and dignity of the Person offended is the Creator and Sustainer, who is absolutely pure and without peer, who is in His essence truth and love. To sin against the eternal God who gives and sustains life is to reject Him, and if God is rejected life is lost.

Sin is a direct affront (offense, insult) to God. Sin cannot occur apart from the individual made in the image of God (neither rocks nor dogs sin). The heinous nature of sin is that it is accomplished using the gifts and abilities given by a holy God for the original purpose of reflecting His character and obeying His will!

As God is holy He loves holiness and therefore necessarily responds to sin in line with His holiness. That which is not holy is against God and therefore God will react to it.

Furthermore, as sin is against God and God is infinite in His being and majesty, sin takes on infinite proportions. Because an infinitely holy God has been offended, infinite punishment must be inflicted.

Statement: *Sin is against an infinitely holy God who will respond with an infinitely righteous judgment.*