

Lesson # 4 -- The Meaning and Consequences of Sin.

I. The Definition of Sin.

- A. Negatively, sin is a shortcoming, James 4:17. Positively, sin is a transgression, I John 3:4.
- B. "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of the Law of God." (Westminster Shorter Catechism)
- C. "Christians generally understand that the Ten Commandments and the law of love (Cf. Exodus 20:1-17 and Luke 10:27) constitute a brief summary of God's holy moral law for man. And this is all based on God's holy character. Sin may then be defined ultimately as anything in the creature which does not express or which is contrary to the holy character of the Creator." (Buswell, A Systematic Theology, p. 264).

II. The Meaning of Sin.

- A. Speaking ultimately, all sin is a lack of conformity to or a transgression of God's Person -- as He has made Himself known through His Law or Word. It is therefore the Law or Word of God that defines what is sinful. Ezekiel 18:4,5,20,21; Hosea 8:1; Rom. 3:20; 4:15; 5:13,20; 7:7-10; I Cor. 15:56; Gal. 3:19,24; I John 3:4.
- B. A Biblical sample of what is meant by sin.
  - 1. Genesis 39:9 -- adultery
  - 2. Exodus 32:31 -- idolatry
  - 3. I Samuel 15:23 -- rebellion against God
  - 4. I Samuel 15:24 -- transgressing God's law
  - 5. Psalm 51:4 -- adultery and murder
  - 6. Matthew 23:13-29 -- self-righteousness
  - 7. Romans 1:18 -- ungodliness, unrighteousness, suppression of truth
  - 8. Romans 14:23 -- practice of non-belief
  - 9. I Cor. 8:12 -- offending the brother
  - 10. Romans 8:7 -- not being subject to God
  - 11. James 1:15 -- lust
  - 12. James 4:17 -- failure to do good
  - 13. I John 3:4 -- lawlessness

III. The Consequences of Sin. (This is only a sample.)

- A. Sin brings the obsession of lust, John 8:34; Gal. 5:16; I Thess. 4:5; I John 2:16,17.
- B. Sin brings spiritual defilement, Mark 7:1-23; Heb. 12:15; James 3:6.
- C. Sin brings self-defeat, Acts 18:6; II Timothy 2:25.
- D. Sin brings the enslavement of the snare of the Devil, I Tim. 3:6,7; II Tim. 2:25,26.
- E. Sin brings deception, I Cor. 3:18; Gal. 6:3; James 1:22,26.
- F. Sin brings guilt, I Cor. 11:27; James 2:10.
- G. Sin brings disruption of fellowship, I John 1:3-6.
- H. Sin brings a change of character, Prov. 14:14; Jer. 17:1; James 4:4.
- I. Sin brings a hardening of the heart, Hebrews 3:8,13,15; 4:7.
- J. Sin brings death, Romans 6:23; 8:6; James 1:15.