

Lesson #6 | Sin vs. Sins

Lesson Summary

Sin and sins are not the same. One is the root, and one is the fruit. One is by birth, the other is by choice.

Lesson Goal

Understand that both sin and sins are active in our lives. However, we must see that we have been delivered from being under the power of sin, because we are identified with Christ and His death on the cross.

Study Point #1: SIN is the root

The easiest way to understand the difference between sin and sins is to think of a tree (or a plant) that bears fruit. If the root is rotten, then the fruit will be rotten. The Bible calls this root in us the “old man” and it is often referred to as the “old nature” or the “sin nature.” How do we get this sin nature?

- Read Romans 5:12 - 5:21

Study Point #2: SINS are the fruit

Now that we have seen we are born with a sin nature, that nature begins to bear fruit in our lives at a very young age - we begin to commit sins. So not only do we all have a sin nature, but we also “fall short” as the Bible says, we sin.

- Read Romans 3:10 - 3:23

“All” includes everyone! What if a person says that he has not ever sinned? John had something to say about that:

- Read 1 John 1:8 - 1:10

Study Point #3: Our identification with Christ on the cross - our death with him, solves both problems!

We have two problems - we were born in sin and we commit sins! But Christ took care of both issues for us!

- Read Ephesians 1:3 - 1:7. Forgiveness of sins - the things we do. (Note it says we “have” it - forgiveness is a present possession of the Christian).
- Read Romans 8:1 - 8:3. The Lord Jesus condemned sin in the flesh - he defeated it through the cross.
- Read Romans 6:3 - 6:7. We are free from the power of sin - our “old man” is crucified with Christ.

This last passage is most important. Do not confuse the term “baptism” here with water - the subject here is **not** water baptism (water is not mentioned), the subject is **identification** with Christ. In essence, when Christ was on the cross, so were you. Notice the phrase “we are **buried with him** by baptism into death” - by believing what God has said about the Lord Jesus, we share in the death of the cross, and as verse 6 states, “our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” God has provided a way for us to serve Him, rather than sin.

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Study Point #4: We have been delivered from sin to lead a life pleasing to God

- Read Romans 7:1 - 7:6. The example of the law of marriage applied to the law of sin.
- Read Romans 6:8 - 6:14. If we have died with Christ, then we are alive to God.

We are able to serve in “newness of spirit” because we have been freed from the law of sin and death - the power of the old nature, but why? Because we are “dead wherein we were held” - sin.

We get this deliverance from the dominion of sin through faith in what God has said. If we believe God that he has rendered the old man powerless (crucified it), then we have the strength to choose righteousness over sin - sin becomes powerless to rule our lives. If we do not believe, and submit to our feelings instead, then we allow sin to rule in our life instead of righteousness.

So we exercised faith in what God has said for our salvation, we must also exercise faith in what God has said regarding sin in our lives. If we do, we can truly live a life that pleases Him.

Study Questions

1. Sin is the _____ and sins are the _____.

2. Who did we inherit the sin nature from? Do we all have a sin nature (an “old man”)?

3. Romans 3:23 says that _____ have sinned. (committed sins)

4. We have deliverance from the dominion of sin in our life because our old nature (the “old man”) was _____
_____ with Christ. (Hint, see Romans 6). Does that mean we were physically there, or does it mean that God placed us there through faith? _____

5. Does being free from the power or dominion of sin mean we will live lives free from sin forever?
Why or why not?

Teacher's Notes

Lesson Preparation

It would be best to read Romans 1-9 carefully, a couple of times before you present the lesson. Pay particular attention to the structure of the book as:

- 1:16 - 5:11 deals with sins, the fruit of the old man
- 5:12 - 8:39 deals with the old man, the sin nature as it were, the root of the problem

Do not attempt to teach this lesson without understanding the difference in these two sections!

Make sure you pray!

Teaching the Lesson

The subject of sin vs. sins is an important one. Many people fail to make the distinction between the two, causing misunderstanding about the subject of sin in our lives. The tree/fruit analogy effectively drives home the point that while the two are related they are also separate and distinct. Also, it is easily understood that a rotten tree or vine would produce rotten or bad fruit.

The lesson is designed to teach the following:

- **Each person born is born a child of Adam, and inherits the sin nature by birth.** Romans 5:14 says “Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.” Death is the end for all without a savior, even if they have not sinned after the similitude of Adam - in other words been disobedient to God. This is important! If you were somehow able to live a life without disobeying God, you would still be under judgment because of sin - the root - inherited by birth.
- **Each person has also sinned.** This is the whole point of the first section of Romans. We are both born with sin, and then we commit sins.
- **We are identified - baptized with - Christ on the cross - and this provides deliverance.** This is a hard one for some people to understand. It is vital that you understand that baptism in this sense has no connection here to water! Water is not mentioned here, and none of us could have been physically baptized with Christ at the cross, for *we were not there*. The important point here is that our old man, the sin nature has been nailed to the cross, as it were. **It’s rule (dominion) over us has been broken.** Study closely Romans 6:8-14, particularly verse 11. Then note the follow up in the verses after 14. So we have forgiveness of sins through our redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and we have deliverance over the dominion of sin in our life by our old man being crucified with Christ on the cross - our identification with Him - and we have God telling us to reckon these things as true in Romans. Make sure to make the point that each Christian should reckon themselves dead to sin (regardless of how they feel! This is a faith issue) but alive to God.
- **We are to live a life as servants of righteousness.** Because of these wonderful truths above, we are to live righteous lives to God - because he has delivered us from the rule of sin in order to do so! So note we are told to yield our members to righteousness. This last point compares to lesson 5, Walk Worthy. So now we see that not only has God desired us to walk worthy, he has given us the means to do so.

Remember that the Bible means what it says, and that words are important. Sin and sins are different, and the Bible treats them as such. But God be thanked we have deliverance from both!