



The End of the Beginning. . .

The Fall of Adam and Eve

Sin is one of the most emphasized subjects in God's Word and, not surprisingly, sin is an aspect of life that is inherently devastating. Sin's consequences are considerable in this life but, apart from God's grace to save, profoundly severe in the life to come. Thankfully, God Almighty has provided an eternal solution for the problem of sin, and this solution is only available by and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

You may think, "Why study sin at all? I have enough trouble in life that I don't want a reminder of any more difficulties." That perspective, however, is like a coach who will not study the opponent's tactics prior to an athletic contest. A coach who is not aware of the other team's predictability and vulnerability is preparing for defeat.

Believers in Christ are urged to stand firm against the enemy! Christians can call it living a victorious life, being obedient to God's Word, or becoming a servant of Christ. At every step of the way, however, a believer will face vigorous opposition, not only from personal self-centeredness but also from the forces of Satan, the original instigator of sin on this planet.

Perhaps the greatest benefit of a study of sin, however, is that it shows us how great our need is for a Savior and how much greater is the Savior who meets that need. Believers in Christ can also become more sensitive to their sins and incorporate God's provisions to deal effectively with those failures through a study of this important topic. In the process, believers can grow deeper in their love of God and appreciation of His grace, abounding in thankfulness for His super abundant provision. (See [Spiritual Realities Before and After Receiving Christ](#))

DEFINITIONS OF SIN

Some people tend to minimize sin by viewing it as something illegal, immoral, or fattening. Others may think that "God is an old killjoy who makes me feel guilty anytime I am having fun." It is easy for simplistic ideas like these to skew one's understanding of sin to focus primarily on "how it affects me."

Sin's definition, however, is multi-faceted. For example, the basic concept of sin indicates a self-centeredness that leads one to miss the mark of God's perfection. It focuses on the failure to meet God's standard of perfect holiness. "Trespass" is another word for sin, and it means to cross the boundary from right to wrong intentionally. It focuses on the rebellious attitude of the sinner. Another word for sin is "iniquity," which means a lack of integrity, justice, or honesty. It focuses on the crooked or perverse inclinations of the heart. Finally, a "transgression" is any violation of the law and focuses on the legal standing of the sinner.

To understand aspects of sin that affect all of us in various ways, we will first look at the Old Testament book of Genesis to see how sin originally entered the world.

THE ENTRANCE OF SIN INTO THE WORLD

Genesis chapter one lists the order in which God created the universe, which included the world with its plant and animal life. The last phrase of Genesis 1:25 records God's response to His creation . . . "And God saw that it was good." The Genesis narrative continues with the introduction of the first man and woman on the planet, beginning with verse 26.

Genesis 1:26-31, Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."²⁹ And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food."³⁰ And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so.³¹ And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

At this point in the creation account, ALL WAS GOOD! The first man and first woman were enabled to enjoy fully all that their eternal, sinless lives had to offer. They were perfectly in harmony concerning the three key perspectives of relational life – to God, each other, and one’s self. When sin entered into their lives, however, these perspectives were drastically changed for the worse.

This deterioration was so pronounced that the remainder of the Bible is the story of God’s plan of redemption and restoration, obviously focusing on the restoration of the primary relationship between mankind and God. Through God’s plan of redemption, a person can have a right relationship with God, which allows one to have a better understanding of one’s self and enjoy biblical, God-honoring relationships with others. As long as one’s relationship with God remains broken or hindered by sin, however, it is impossible to enjoy the fullness of divinely designed relationships with others and impossible to have an accurate perspective of one’s self. As the first inhabitants of earth learned (the hard way), apart from loving and obeying God, challenges of life are not only problematic, they are overwhelming.

Since no one is perfect, it is impossible for any of us to realize fully what it was like to be able to relate to God and one another with total openness and honesty. The trust factor between God and Adam, in itself, is astounding. God allowed Adam to have dominion over every living thing that moved on the earth (*Genesis 1:26*). That’s a huge responsibility.

God also knew Adam’s personal needs, so He provided Adam with a wife, details of which are recorded in Genesis chapter 2. As the following verses indicate, God knew that Adam should not be alone even though living in an idyllic world.

Genesis 2:18, 22, Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” ...²² And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

Adam was so pleased at this outcome! You can almost see him kicking up his heels, then doing somersaults, and then dancing around after God brought this newly created bride and helper to him.

Genesis 2:23-25, Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.²⁵ And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

When Adam first met his wife, she had no name. Adam named her, and the name he gave to her signified what he recognized in her and, correspondingly, the value he saw in their relationship.

The name of the first man on earth (Adam) means “man.” In noticing how his wife suited him and he suited her, Adam named her “woman.” In Hebrew, the language of the Old Testament, the closeness of their relationship is reflected in their names. The Hebrew word that Adam used for “man” in verse 23 is *ish*. The word for woman is *ish-ah*—the feminine form of *ish*. In a sense, Adam’s response to his wife showed that he understood his need for a mate. The name he gave her reflected his awareness that she fit him perfectly.

Adam and his wife had mutual openness/nakedness in every area of their lives. This intimacy, however, changed dramatically, as is described in the following verses.

Genesis 3:1-6, Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’”² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden,³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’”⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

The first tactic the enemy used in temptation was to challenge and deny God’s word. He began by questioning God’s command, asking if God forbade the first couple from eating of any tree, and concluded by stating “you will not surely die” (verse 4), directly contradicting God’s promised consequence. In denying God’s word, the serpent also questioned God’s character and motives (verse 5).

Next, he emphasized aspects of what was forbidden (verse 5). In doing so, he pointed to each of the three attractions of the world listed in 1 John 2:16: the desires of the flesh (*gratifying selfish desires*, the desires of the eyes (*coveting, greed, desire for more*), and the pride of life (*a self-orientation that believes an ample supply of tangible things of life are the measure of supposed wisdom and success*).

1 John 2:16, For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.

The woman noticed that the fruit was “good for food” (the desires of the flesh), “a delight to the eyes” (the desires of the eyes), and “to be desired to make one wise” (pride of life). She was deceived, then yielded to the temptation and chose to disobey God. Her husband, likewise, yielded to temptation and willfully chose to sin (Genesis 3:6). To this day, Satan uses the same diabolical methods to seduce people away from God so that they will gratify their own lusts and selfish desires.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF ADAM’S SIN

Let’s look at the consequences of this sin, giving special attention to the relationships that were once so open and honest but would now become clouded with mistrust and dishonesty.

Genesis 3:7-10, Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. ⁸ And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” ¹⁰ And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.”

Did you notice the dramatic change that sin caused in the lives of earth’s first couple?

When Adam sinned, his relationship with God obviously changed. Rather than continuing to enjoy intimate fellowship with God, he hid himself in fear. He also underwent a personal change. He became self-centered. Instead of being able to continue responding obediently to God’s counsel and guidance, he tried to avoid God and relied on his own self-centered perspectives to deal with his sin.

These same characteristics of sin are also in our lives apart from a vibrant relationship with God. When sin takes root in our lives, we no longer are open before God. Instead, we run from Him. We may not have a forest to hide in as did the first couple, but we still hide in “forests” like alcohol, drugs, tranquilizers, wealth acquisition, popularity, good works, hypocritical lifestyles, sexual sins, relational isolation, power or stardom.

When sin is allowed to control us, we are not rational and are spiritually blind. As a result, we have a distorted view of our Heavenly Father, who has proved His love to us by sending His own Son to deliver us from sin. We look upon God as the “Big Bad Man in the Sky” who is out to get us.

In the Garden, not only was Adam’s relationship with God broken, but his relationship with his wife drastically changed as well. Remember Adam’s ecstasy when he was first introduced to his wife while both were in their sinless states? Notice the difference in the following passage as God addressed Adam.

Genesis 3:11-13, He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” ¹² The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” ¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

When God asked Adam how all of this had come about, Adam started doing what humans naturally do even today. He would not take personal responsibility for his actions. There was only one other person in the world to blame and that was his wife . . . so he blamed her. Then, Adam went one step further . . . he blamed God! In effect, Adam said, “It’s not my fault, God; it is yours and that woman you gave me. If you hadn’t given her to me, this never would have happened.”

Adam’s excuse is a well-known ploy to avoid taking responsibility for personal sin. It is rare to hear someone honestly say, “It is completely my fault. I will take full responsibility for my sin(s), first before God and, second, before my family and friends.” Instead, our natural tendency (apart from Christ) is to blame someone else. We try to convince ourselves and others that sinful behavior would never have occurred if it hadn’t been for the other bad people or difficult situations.

Eve used a similar approach by not taking personal responsibility for her sin. She minimized her own responsibility by blaming the serpent.

God responded in righteous judgment to this initial appearance of sin on earth, and stern consequences were the result.

Genesis 3:14-19, The LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.”¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”¹⁶ To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.”¹⁷ And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life,¹⁸ thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.¹⁹ By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

After sin entered the picture, the relationship changed between the first couple and God. The relationship also changed between the first husband and wife as is indicated by *Ishah*’s name change.

Genesis 3:20, The man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

At this point, the wife’s name was changed from *Ishah* to Eve. “Eve” means “mother of all living.” Do you notice the significant change in the relationship that is reflected in that name change? Before sin entered, *Ish* (meaning man) related to his wife, *Ishah* (woman) for who she was. When sin entered their relationship, he related to her not for who she was but, instead, for what she would do (bear children). Instead of the openness of relationship based on who they *were* as a couple living in complete harmony, they now related to each other according to what each *did*. “Being” was superseded by “blaming.” The harmony they enjoyed between *Ish* and *Ishah* was shattered.

Every person, apart from Christ, is still like Adam and Eve. Even a Christian can yield to fleshly desires, choose not to submit to the Holy Spirit, and selfishly try to fix blame on anyone or anything else for personal sins.

By God’s grace, in spite of the destructive effects that sin has on human and divine relationships, there is an Answer that allows one to depart from living under sin’s control. God indicated the Answer in His statement to the serpent by pointing to the Messiah, Jesus Christ, who would come to provide freedom from sin.

Genesis 3:15, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

God foretold that Satan would instigate the death of Christ through crucifixion (bruise his heel), but God also foretold that the subsequent resurrection of Jesus would conquer Satan (bruise his head).

In the immediate situation in the Garden of Eden, God demonstrated His continuing and personal care for Adam and Eve in the face of His justice toward them. Even though He banned them from the Garden, He clothed them for the lives that they now had to live.

Genesis 3:21-24, And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.²² Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—”²³ therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken.²⁴ He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

GOD’S PROVISION FOR YOUR DELIVERANCE FROM SIN AND ITS DEVASTATION

God clothed Adam and Eve to protect them physically. God can save you and clothe you spiritually in the righteousness of Christ. He desires for you to break through the devastation that sin causes in your life, and when you believe in Christ, you receive the gift of eternal life and the righteousness of God.

John 3:16, For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Romans 3:21-25, But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—²² *the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe*. For there is no distinction:²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins [*Emphasis added*].

2 Corinthians 5:21, For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God

Left on your own, you are in a helpless state, but the Bible describes the solution.

Romans 5:6-10, For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

The crucifixion of God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, fully dealt with the eternal consequences of sin. You can accept His sacrifice for your sins and, on that basis, have an eternal relationship with God. This relationship is the key to the welfare of all other relationships as well as helping you maintain a biblical perspective of yourself.

Are you out of step with God today? Are you the focus of your life? Do you have relationships with family and friends that have become distorted and confused?

Christ-honoring answers to any of the above three questions depend on a personal relationship with God. The first step toward establishing that relationship is to recognize and accept God's sacrifice for sin that is provided by the Lord Jesus Christ.

See [*Life's Most Important Decision: Spiritual Realities Before and After Receiving Christ: He Gained More for Us than Adam Lost for Us*](#)

After receiving Christ into your life, you are empowered to die to sinful desires and, instead, obey God's Word out of love for Christ.

See [*Becoming a Christ-like Servant: Your Way or God's Way ... Your Choice: Is Dying to Self Really Necessary: God's Truth is Your Foundation for Life*](#)

God has a plan for your life and by His grace, mercy, and peace, that plan can come to fruition.

See [*Truth \(The Measurement for All Aspects of Life and Relationships\): Grace, Mercy, and Peace: Servanthood—The Low Road to Our High Calling: Are You a Loving Person? \(The Love Test\): True Love is Not Based on Feelings*](#)

Adam and Eve experienced the end of a perfect beginning. You, on the other hand, can experience the beginning of a perfect end as a result of faithfully responding to God's love that He has bountifully showered on you through the Lord Jesus Christ.