

Soteriology
Lesson 6
The Presence of Sin Part Two

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Now, Romans 5:12 says that the way sin entered this world of humanity is by one man. So the question is: "How did we all get this thing called sin?" Answer: "By one man."

In Psalm 51:5 David said, "In sin did my mother conceive me." Now, you've got two possibilities. One, he is an illegitimate child. His mother was involved in sex outside of marriage and he was the product. Well, we know that's not true. So now what do we do? Well, we go to the second deal, which means that sin is present at conception. Oh-oh! Now we've got a real problem!

Do you know that's one of the reasons why I'm against abortion? Why? It was false doctrine in church history that held that the physical body is sinful. By the way, there're still people that believe that, tons of them. Your physical body is not sinful, but you can yield the members of your body to sin and do a sinful act. But your body is not sinful.

In the Middle Ages they would flog themselves and beat up their flesh; literally their flesh was bleeding and bruised, thinking somehow they could solve sin. Origen castrated himself, tried to do it that way, only to discover that it didn't work. We might smile at those extremes, but you know they still do it in certain societies on this planet, in order to deal with the sin problem.

The physical body is not sinful. Well then where does sin lie? It lies in the arena of the soul. The soul that sinneth, it shall die; a phrase repeated several times in the Bible (Ezekiel 18:4, 20). The soul, the personality, it has a mind and according to the Bible our minds are defiled and corrupt. It has emotional responses and according to the Bible, our emotions are all fouled up. It has a will. According to the Bible, our will is enslaved. You see, sin is in the area of the soul. That's the invisible, immaterial part of us.

Now, wait a minute. If sin is at the moment of conception, then what else do we have at the moment of conception? A soul! Well, if we have a soul, we have a person. Hello? Therefore, we are against abortion. It is killing a person because you can't have sin present at conception unless there's a soul there. Isn't that interesting?

Did you know that many Christians, to handle this, say that the soul is not implanted until the baby is born? It's slapped and, you know, it coughs. The breath of God, they say, is then imparted. Now lest you think it's really silly, this is actually another one of the big controversies of church history between Pelagianism and Augustinianism. It's a huge thing. When does life begin? And what is life?

In the Bible, life is the breath of God (Genesis 2:7; Job 33:4). Well now, did God plant a soul in the egg of a woman or the sperm of the man? Or only when it's fertilized? And if Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit—which it says He was and did not have male sperm, is the reason why He was sinless because sin—hope you're ready for this—is in the male sperm, which means that the girls are not sinful—only the boys are! And all God's women said? “Amen!” You knew it all along anyway, didn't you? Now, we might laugh about that. But that is in fact, what many people believe. So the reason why Jesus was sinless is because He had no human father. Now before you laugh, you can go right upstairs to the bookstore pull out all those doctrinal books and read the exact same thing on the virgin birth of Christ.

I'm here to tell you that, no, no, no, no! He didn't need that and He didn't need the egg of Mary. He was supernaturally implanted by the Holy Spirit of God. The whole thing was supernatural; that's why we call it the incarnation, God becoming flesh and dwelling among us. He didn't need the chromosomes of either one. I'm just telling you, it's interesting how people argue. What is behind all of this? What's behind all of this is the struggle that even good Christian people have had with sin all along.

If we're right on this and man is sinful from conception, if we're right on this that the only reason you sin is that you already are a sinner, then we've got some other real serious questions to deal with. When does a man become accountable for his own actions? And the Christian world has come up with...the age of accountability. Which if asked to explain that... well, it's at four years old with some kids, and five with another, and eight with another, and thirty with another! It's just interesting. It's just human reasoning again.

But as we go through and begin to develop the doctrines of salvation, you're going to see many, many issues like this. That's why people often say if it's the doctrine of salvation, why are we teaching so much on sin? Because you can't understand salvation without understanding sin!

So, what's the order of events here in Genesis? Well, they're very simple; I'm not going to take a great deal of time about it. But in 2 Corinthians 11:3 Paul said, "I fear as the serpent beguiled Eve [There's your clue.] through his subtlety [his craftiness] so your minds would be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." So what's the order? Number one has to be deception by the serpent.

Isn't it interesting that when God confronted Adam about it, he blamed his wife, right? The Menendez brothers have become quite good at it (shifting blame). See, the reason why I bring that up is not to be critical of those two guys and to make a verdict or render a verdict, which I have no right to do. But it's because we already know by fact and testimony that they did do it (murder their parents). Now the issue is: why did they do it? And look at the millions of dollars for now a second trial to try to explain why they did it. What's the answer? Oh, they were sexually abused. Their parents treated them bad. In other words, it's okay to sin as long as you were sinned against.

Do you understand how far we've come? We have lost all intellectual reasoning. We don't reason anymore. We try to find a way out. Sin has been totally redefined. "Well, they came from a dysfunctional family." I mean, come on! You're not going to punish them for that, are you? Their answer was, "Well, they deserved to die for what they did to these boys." You see, they're creating in the jury's mind that what happened was true justice. And a lot of us are listening to it and we can feel sorry for the boys. I feel sorry for them, if that really happened and it's not a made up story. I really feel sorry for them, but it's never right to do wrong to get a chance to do right. Ever!

You see what we do is we lose our moral thinking patterns. We can't be morally clean, and pure and honest and righteous and wise, the moment we decide that man is not depraved. The

very thing people think will lead us into thinking we are animals is exactly the opposite of what does that. It leads you to a dignity and a sanctity of human life. That is probably the most paradoxical thing about the whole doctrine of sin. If you believe you are depraved and you are a sinner and you are accountable for your actions, it leads to human dignity and sanctity. This is the exact opposite of trying to justify what we do and explain it and blame something.

This is almost, you know from a philosophical point of view, an impossible reconciliation in the human mind. Because we are all arguing constantly, “Well, he got what he deserved.” Excuse me? You know if we all got what we deserved we’d all be in hell! What has happened to us as evangelicals? We’ve allowed the world to dictate to us what the correct way of looking at things is. This is mind-boggling.

The devil deceived. The Bible says he deceives, in fact so much so 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 actually says he can transform himself into an angel of what? Light. It says his ministers, his demon hordes, can look like ministers of righteousness. They can come out like clean, neat, godly, family-oriented.

Now in 1 Timothy 2, we have a very important verse I want you to know, so that you can help somebody in the future. You can turn right to it and you can answer this question. Was Adam deceived? What’s the answer, class? The answer is NO! He was not deceived. Eve was deceived. Does the Bible say that? Yes. 1 Timothy 2:14, “Adam was not deceived; the woman being deceived was in the transgression.”

Did you know that when God uses the word *the* transgression, *the* disobedience, it’s in many, many passages in the New Testament and it’s referring to Adam’s sin? Always Adam’s sin. But Eve, being deceived was in *the* transgression. Isn’t that interesting? God never says that because of the offense of Eve, many were made sinners. Never says that. It’s talking about Adam all the way through. It’s Adam that is a problem.

What is sin? Sin is a transgression of God’s law, 1 John 3:4. It describes Adam’s sin as *the* disobedience. Listen to me carefully, class. What it means is that Adam was told specifically

by God what was right and what was wrong and he directly disobeyed. He made a choice. So it has been since.

Now you can see how he (the devil) deceived. He cast doubt on God's word by saying, "Has God really said that?" That doesn't sound like God! Has God really said that capital punishment for capital...you don't really believe that, do you? This is the age of grace. I mean, did God really say that drunkenness is a sin? Did God really say...it's like, nothing's new, folks! We're still doing it. He contradicts God's word. The devil's going to do that. He challenges God's motives. "God knows that you're going to be like Him! No wonder, He wants to keep you from being like Him!"

See it starts with deception. It moves to the desire by the woman; she desired the tree. The tree was desirable to make one wise. She liked it! The Bible calls that the lust of the?... flesh, and the lust of the?...eye! The word lust goes with both of them, it's really kind of two sides of one thing—lust, desire, strong desire. The desire is a desire to disobey God. What's lust? In the evil sense, it's the desire to disobey God for whatever personal benefit or pleasure you thought you'd receive through it. It then is rooted in a lack of faith. Believing that God really didn't mean what He said, or He doesn't know, or He's not going to get on your case for it. He's just trying to keep you from having fun. That's a Christian view, that's not God's view. There're all kinds of arguments, but understand lust or strong desire, which may be in a good area. Like you take sexual desire, which God gave you, but then all of a sudden you want to fulfill it by violating some particular law God gave. So sin becomes a transgression of the law.

So we have deception by the serpent, desire by the woman, and then deliberate disobedience by the man. And we got sin! "The woman gave it to her husband and he ate." Now, he knew it was wrong. He had the revelation from God. He knew he's directly disobeying. So the question is: why did he do it?

Isn't it interesting, God doesn't spend a lot of time telling you why? He just said He did it! Mark it down. Good counseling does not spend time asking why. Good counseling deals with

what happened and how we can get it straightened out. When you get into “why” you’re doing exactly what the Bible told you not to—judging motives and intents of the heart, which you don’t know—only God knows. You’re wasting your time.

Here are some of the arguments. “Well, he loved Eve so much. He was afraid by her sin, she’d be separated from God. So he wanted to follow her and be separated from God also.” Sometimes it blows my mind what people say. It’s an attempt, you see, to rationalize the fact that Adam was a free moral agent, could make his own decisions. And that every time you do sin, you choose to do so. You did it because you wanted to.

“I just couldn’t help it. You don’t know the pressure I was under, man!” Do understand the reasoning of people? It’s almost a Freudian manifestation of how depraved we really are. We’re so confused.

So what was the outcome of the Fall? Well there were first of all immediate consequences, weren’t there? They had a sense of shame. They tried to hide themselves from God. When Ezra was praying that beautiful prayer in Ezra 9, “O God, I’m ashamed to even speak...” The Bible says it is a shame to speak of those things done by people in secret also.

May God restore the flower of modesty in the cheeks of all of us, so that we really become ashamed when we sin against God. This attempt to hide from God is what people will always do. But Hebrews 4:13 says, “All things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to deal.” You can’t get away with it, people. God knows what you’re doing. He knows what you’re thinking. He knows all those wrong manipulative motives. He knows all about us.

And expulsion from the Garden was an act of grace, not judgment. But it was a consequence that they experienced immediately. Locked out from the beauty of the fellowship that they enjoyed, walking with God in the cool of the day. And it’s interesting, isn’t it, that the reason why God put them out of the Garden was to protect them from the tree of life, the very thing that would give eternal life. Why is that? Because God didn’t want them without their faith!

When men began to call upon the name of the Lord, He didn't want them to be locked eternally into separation from God because of their sin. It was an act of grace. If they would have taken of the tree of life, that eternal life would have kept them in forever separation from God. It would have been hell. God's grace put them out of the Garden. Interesting.

But there were more than immediate consequences. There were some very physical consequences. I simply want to hit the highlights on this. You had in the case of the serpent, Genesis 3:14-15, that he winds up crawling in the dust. That's certainly a physical consequence, and interesting in verse 15, conflicting with the Seed of the woman all of his days! "Enmity, [conflict, strife] between thee and the woman, [Isn't that interesting?] between thy seed and her seed."

It was twenty years ago at a kibbutz in northern Galilee, with eight Israeli guides, that I had a discussion on Genesis 3:15. Earlier in the day at one of our tour sites, I had been preaching and I mentioned that the gospel was from Genesis to Revelation. So one of the guides that night, after everyone went to bed, we were sitting around just talking about the next day's tour and all. And one of guides said, "You know David, we like you but sometimes you're a little religiously crazy."

I said, "What do you mean?"

He said, "Well today you said the gospel's from Genesis to Revelation. I got the Book of Genesis memorized in Hebrew, okay? There's not one word in that whole book about the gospel."

I said, "Yes there is."

He said, "No there isn't. I've read it."

I said, "Open your Bible, Genesis 3:15."

He said, "Hebrew only."

I said, "Fine with me."

So we opened our Hebrew Bibles. Everybody had them all around the table. And I said, “Now who’s the seed of the woman?”

They said, “The Jewish people.”

I said, “Well you know the word ‘seed’ does apply to the Jewish people and the Abrahamic covenant. I understand that. But it also applies to the Messiah and you guys know it. If the seed of the woman is the Jewish people, then who’s the seed of the serpent?”

They looked at one another. “Well, we’d rather not say.”

I said, “Well let me say, because with my Jewish blood, I know exactly what your view is. (They didn’t want to say it’s the Gentiles.) But you think the Gentiles are of the devil. And that’s why we’ve had the conflict between Jews and Gentiles.”

And they said, “Well, what’s your view?”

I said, “Your view is incorrect.”

They said, “Wait a minute. All the Jewish rabbis...”

I said “No, no, no, it’s incorrect. Flat out on the basis of grammar. You all got your Bibles there. Now tell me, is the seed of the woman singular or plural? Is it *they* crush the serpent’s head? In Hebrew, is it *their* heel or is that a singular pronoun or did I misread that?”

They looked at that. They looked at one another. They looked at me.

“Well, that is interesting,” they said.

I said, “Oh we’re talking about one Jewish kid, one Jewish descendent.”

This guy next to me says, “Oh that’s why you think that’s the Messiah.”

I said, “Right! That’s the Messiah, He’s the Seed of the woman. We’ve got one Person and He’s going to crush Satan. I said, “Now what happens when you crush the head of a snake?”

They all laughed. “He’s dead.”

I said, “That’s right. He’s really dead. What happens if you get bit on the heel?”

One of the guys said, “I’ve been bit on the heel by a snake. It’s not fatal if you can just get somewhere quick.”

When you get bit in the heel, the poison doesn't disseminate through the body that fast. See, so you've got time to get somewhere and get that out of there and get it fixed. And they all know it. Several of them had been bit by a serpent in the heel. So, I said, "Well, if it's not fatal, then at what point did the serpent bite the heel of this one Jewish boy and it wasn't fatal, but it looked like it?"

This one guy, he was shaking his head across the table. I can just still see him. He had a beautiful beard. But he was just shaking his head. He said, "You're not going to tell me that that's when Jesus died, are you?"

I said, "Yep."

They started looking at me and said, "So that's why you think the gospel is in that verse."

I said, "That's right! Now if you all bow your heads, we'll receive Jesus as our Savior."

They all laughed and they said, "Hey wait a minute now. We're not saying we believe in it yet."

You see one of the consequences is this enmity between the devil; it's between his seed and her Seed. His seed is all unbelievers. Her Seed is one Person. Jesus said, "If they hated me, they'll hate you. If they persecuted me, they'll persecute you" (John 15:18; John 15:20). "Ye are of your father, the devil. The lusts of your father ye will do. He's a murderer from the beginning" (John 8:44). Do you understand what He's saying? That enmity and that hostility is between the unbeliever and the Lord. Always has been. But you know, the Lord has already solved the enmity problem. By His death on the cross, it's gone. The battle's over, the conflict is taken care of. He is our peace; breaking down the middle wall of partition between them. The enmity, Ephesians 2:14-15. Well, it's a great, great story.

In the case of the woman, of course, she is going to experience sorrow in child bearing. It's going to be difficult to bear children. If she hadn't sinned, it would have been no problem at all to have kids. But now, it's going to be a struggle. Why? 1 Timothy 2:15 says, "She shall be saved in childbearing." Does that mean that every woman becomes a Christian by having a child?

No. In the Greek text of 1 Timothy 2:15, please make a note of it, *the* definite article is in front of the word childbearing. “She will be saved in *the* childbearing.” The one, of course, that brought us the Messiah, the Seed of the woman. So you see when the Lord said, “sorrow” in child bearing, “Sorrow endures for a night, but joy comes in the morning” (Psalm 30:5). It is through *the* childbearing that she will be saved. So all the sorrow is the consequence of sin that leads us to the Savior; who will come out of the womb of a woman, a Jewish woman one day and save all the women whose sorrow has been showing nothing but the fact that we are born in sin and we need a Savior. Isn’t that neat? You’ve got the gospel in childbirth.

We have also, submission to her husband’s authority and that causes trouble right there! “Thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee” (Genesis 3:16). All right, he’ll make all the major decisions. I know that our world is not at all sympathetic to this. But again, speaking from the standpoint of the woman, I like what my wife often says. She says, “The way I see this, the husbands are the leaders; they’re responsible to make these decisions. And when they make bad ones, if I read my Bible correctly, they’re the ones that get zapped! We go scot-free. I’m so glad to be a woman whom God has saved by His precious blood. Submission is easy when you realize your relationship to Christ and the fact that you don’t therefore bear the responsibility, he does! God is going to work on him.

So what has been the problem all along is the woman, being deceived, wants that authority. So she takes that authority in marriage and what happens? She now becomes accountable and now the frustration and now the problems and now the stress. What has led her to do this in our world has been abusive husbands. Sin defiles everything God does. But if a husband is truly a spiritual leader, then he is a servant leader. He’s in servant leadership. He knows he has to make the right decision, but he wants his wife’s advice. He knows he needs to get on his knees and call out to God. But if he’s not the leader in his home, let me tell you something, that isn’t the only problem they’re going to have.

My wife was teaching a bunch of our gals at college and career that were thinking about marriage. And she said, “In addition to finding a man who knows the Lord—because that’s the only criteria, to know the Lord—the number two spiritual direction every woman ought to ask for is to find a man that truly will be a spiritual leader in his home.” And the impact, because it was a group of working girls, it was amazing!

And yet the devil comes in and he corrupts everything, doesn’t he? He makes the woman rebellious, makes the man angry and violent and abusive. The homes are disintegrating and so the more abusive and hostile, the more independent and rebellious the woman becomes. It’s just a war! The more rebellious the woman becomes, the man says, “You’ve had women’s lib...wait ‘til you see male liberation!” And what we have here is the devil winning! The devil is winning, people.

We didn’t see the beauty of the gospel in the story. We’re trying to argue over who’s in charge. Do you understand that the Bible says a man is to provide for his own family or he has denied the faith and worse than an infidel (1 Timothy 5:8). You’re going to have a sinful nature and every child is going to be born with it. So guess what? You’re going to have a problem in the family, which is exactly what happened!

The Bible even says we’re captured by sin. Jesus says we’re slaves to sin. They’re serving us and we can’t do anything else. That’s how it dominates our life. We’re corrupted by it. God says, “They’re all corrupted. They’re all gone out of the way. They’re all defiled. Their righteousness is as filthy rags. None of them are any good; no, not one” (Isaiah 53:6; 6:4).

You know, what your depravity is all about? You are totally unable to help yourself. You are totally unable to do anything that is good. You think our world wants to hear this? They don’t want to hear this. And there are a lot of Christians who are confused between the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of the Bible and they don’t want to hear it either.

You know as a Christian who has accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior, I need to continue to remind myself of what the Bible teaches about my depravity. Why? So that I don’t trust myself

at all for anything; that I learn to trust the Lord with all my heart; that I learn every day that I have to depend on the Lord and the control of the Holy Spirit. I need help and so do you. And if you think you can handle it by yourself, you're headed for a bad fall. "Those who think you can stand, take heed lest you fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12). That's powerful!

This sin also condemns us because the Bible says in Romans 3:19-20, "The whole world is now guilty before God." Not only do you have a sin nature, you're going to prove very quickly that you are a sinner.

Please turn to Isaiah 59:1-2. And with this, we'll conclude today. By the way, we're not done with the sin issue. We're moving right away into the temptation issue.

Isaiah 59:1-2,

1 Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy that it cannot hear: [Then what's the problem?]

2 Your iniquities have separated between you and your God and your sins have hid His face from you that He will not hear.

Or to put it in the words of Psalm 66:18, "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me." In addition to being redeemed from sin, I still struggle with sin's presence in my life. I do not have a single hesitation to tell you that I don't fear condemnation of sin at all. I will never face the penalty of my sin. God will never remember my sins against me any more. He has thrown them into the depths of the sea and removed them "as far as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12). But I'll tell you something, as a Christian, I struggle with the presence of sin daily.

"As ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in ye in Him." You received Him how? By faith, you simply believed what God said. Can you also believe that you can live victoriously

over sinful habits and desires? “We walk by faith not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7). Can you believe what God says in terms of how to have victory? More about this next week. . . .

Let’s pray.

Father, we thank You for Your word. We pray that You’d keep us clear in our thinking. And careful as we look at the verses in the Bible that we might truly have a doctrine of sin that represents Your truth, Lord. That we wouldn’t get side-tracked, confused, or go to human methodology to solve our problems. That we’d see that our basic problem is sin. That we must confess our sins knowing that You’re faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We thank You, Lord, in Jesus’ name. Amen.