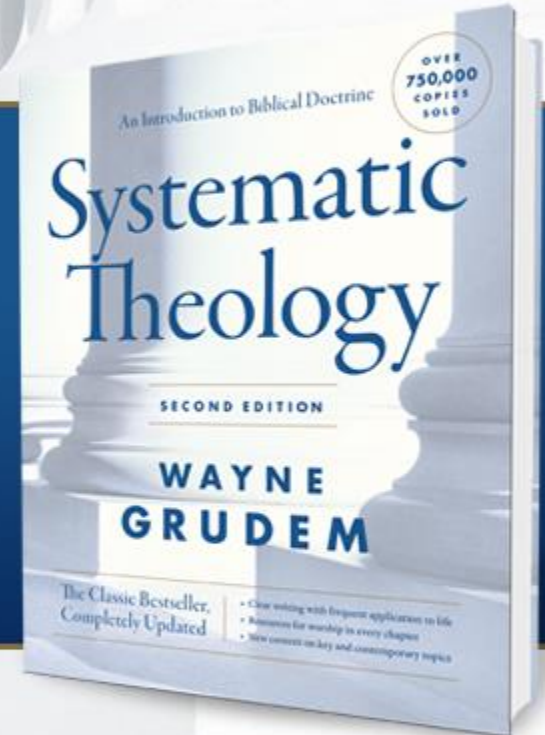


Sin

Chapter 24



The Definition of Sin

- Sin is any failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature.
 - Sin includes our attitudes. (Ex 20:17; Matt 5:22, 28)
 - Sin includes our moral nature. (Rom 5:8; Eph 2:3)
- Is the essence of sin “selfishness”? Scripture does not define it in this way.
 - Some self-interest is good (Matt 6:20; Ezek 33:11), and much sin involves selfless motives or ideals.
 - This definition would make God—who desires his own glory above all else—a selfish sinner.

The Definition of Sin

- Sin is directly opposite to all that is good in the character of God, and just as God necessarily and eternally delights in himself and in all that he is, so God necessarily and eternally hates sin.

The Origin of Sin

- God did not sin, and he is not to be blamed for sin. To blame God for sin would be blasphemy against his character. (Gen 18:25; Deut 32:4; Job 34:10; Jas 1:13)
- Yet, there is no eternally existing evil power in the universe similar to or equal to God himself in power. (This is dualism.)
- God accomplishes all things according to his will. (Eph 1:11; Dan 4:35)

The Origin of Sin

- Sin originated in the angelic world between the end of creation and the temptation of Adam and Eve. (Gen 1:31; 3:1–7)
- The first sin was typical of sin in many ways:
 - It challenged God's words as the basis of knowledge.
 - It challenged God's commands as the basis of moral standards.
 - It challenged God's authority to determine our identity.
 - It was irrational. Sin is always ultimately irrational.

The Doctrine of Inherited Sin

- **Inherited Guilt:** We Are Counted Guilty Because of Adam's Sin (Rom 5:12–21)
 - **Rom 5:12:** Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—
 - God imputed Adam's guilt to us. Is this unfair? Well:
 - Everyone has also voluntarily committed many sins.
 - It is just as “unfair” for God to impute Christ's righteousness to us.

The Doctrine of Inherited Sin

- **Inherited Corruption:** We Have a Sinful Nature Because of Adam's Sin (Ps 51:5; 58:3; Eph 2:3)
 - In Our Natures We Totally Lack Spiritual Good Before God (Rom 7:18; Titus 1:15; Jer 17:9; Eph 4:18)
 - In Our Actions We Are Totally Unable to Do Spiritual Good Before God (Rom 8:8; Jn 15:5; Heb 11:6; Isa 64:6)

Actual Sins in Our Lives

- **All People Are Sinful Before God.** (Ps 14:3; 143:2; Rom 3:9–10, 23; Jas 3:2; 1 Jn 1:8–10)
- **Does Our Ability Limit Our Responsibility?**
 - The idea that we are only responsible for what we are able to do is contrary to the witness of Scripture. (Eph 2:1)
 - The true measure of our responsibility is the perfection of God's moral law and holiness. (Matt 5:48)

Actual Sins in Our Lives

- **Are Infants Guilty Before They Commit Actual Sins?** (Ps 51:5; 58:3; Rom 2:6–11)
 - If infants are saved, it cannot be on the basis of their own merits or innocence, but on the basis of Christ's work.
 - It is possible for God to regenerate infants even before birth though this is unusual. (Lk 1:15; Ps 22:10)

Actual Sins in Our Lives

- **Are Infants Guilty Before They Commit Actual Sins?** (Ps 51:5; 58:3; Rom 2:6–11)
 - Scripture is silent on this, though it is God's frequent pattern in Scripture to save the children of those who believe in him. (Gen 7:1; Josh 2:18; Acts 16:31)
 - David had confidence that he would live in God's presence forever and that he would join his son in the afterlife. (2 Sam 12:23; Ps 23:6)

Actual Sins in Our Lives

- **Are There Degrees of Sin?**

- *Legal Guilt:* Any sin—even a “very small sin”—separates us from God. (Gen 2:17; Rom 5:16; Gal 3:10)
- *Results in Life and in Relationship With God:* Some sins have greater consequences. (Jn 19:11; Ezek 8:6–15)

Actual Sins in Our Lives

- **What Happens When a Christian Sins?**
 - **Our Legal Standing Before God Is Unchanged** (Rom 8:1)
 - **Our Fellowship With God Is Disrupted and Our Christian Life Is Damaged** (Eph 4:30; Heb 12:9–10; Rev 3:19; Rom 6:16)
 - **The Danger of “Unconverted Evangelicals”:**
 - There is a real possibility that some will associate with the church who are not truly born again.
 - A life of disobedience and a lack of the fruit of the Spirit is a warning that a person is not truly regenerated.

Actual Sins in Our Lives

- **What Is the Unpardonable Sin?** (Matt 12:31–32)
 - This sin consists of unusually malicious, willful rejection and slander against the Holy Spirit's work attesting to Christ, and attributing that work to Satan. It includes:
 - A clear knowledge of who Christ is and of the power of the Holy Spirit working through him.
 - A willful rejection of the facts about Christ that his opponents knew to be true.
 - Slanderingly attributing the work of the Holy Spirit in Christ to the power of Satan.

The Punishment of Sin

- The primary reason that God punishes sin is that his righteousness demands it. (Rom 3:25–26)
- When sin is punished, God is showing himself to be a righteous judge over all, and justice is being done in his universe.

Special Terms

- age of accountability
- dualism
- impute
- inherited corruption
- inherited guilt
- inherited sin
- mortal sin
- original guilt
- original pollution
- original sin
- Pelagius
- propitiation
- sin
- total depravity
- total inability
- unpardonable sin
- venial sin