

## The Many Sides of Sin By Trey Sullins

If you were asked “what is sin”, how would you respond? In its most basic definition sin is breaking the law of God (1 John 3:4). When someone chooses to do something other than what God has commanded then they have sinned. In the book of 1 John we find three important principles that we must remember in relationship to sin.

Sin is darkness. In 1 John 1:5-6 the Bible says “This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.” Darkness is used many times throughout the Bible to convey that which is evil or against God (John 8:12, Romans 1:20-21, 1 Peter 2:9). Some try to make the argument that God allows smaller sins as long as we are still good people overall. However, the passage in 1 John 1:5-6 is clear: God is light, in God is no darkness, and those who partake in darkness are not with God! Our response to darkness should be to keep it out of our lives completely! Ephesians 5:11 makes this point clear when it says, “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.” Verse 8 of the same chapter explains that we were once in darkness, but now are light in the Lord. That’s why it’s so important to stay away from darkness. If we stay away from darkness, then we will continue to be children of light.

Sin is lawlessness. The word lawlessness means to break, violate, or go against what is law. We already mentioned 1 John 3:4 which says, “sin is lawlessness.” Imagine a physical world with no law. Everything would go to chaos pretty quickly as people went around doing anything they desired. This is the same effect that sin has on us spiritually. With continued sin, our morals slowly turn to chaos and our souls become stained. The end result of this lawlessness is just as Jesus said in Matthew 7:23 “depart from me, you who practice lawlessness.” The Christian’s response to this should be to abstain from lawlessness. We should always be living under the law of God and never find ourselves outside of that law. Romans 6:19 explains the need that we have to move from the state of lawlessness to righteousness. Where before we were slaves of sin, Christians should be “slaves of righteousness.”

Sin is unrighteousness. The Bible plainly says “all unrighteousness is sin” in 1 John 5:17. The word unrighteousness means something that is wrong, unjust, or a violation of law. Being unrighteous is a sin in the eyes of God. A life of unrighteousness is a life of sin. This is a sharp contrast to God’s commands which are righteousness; Psalm 119:172 says in reference to God, “all your commandments are righteousness.” Therefore, whenever we fail to keep God’s commands, then we are being unrighteous and sinning. It is also important to remember that the Bible has revealed that only those who are righteous are going to make it to that eternal reward in heaven. Hebrews 5:9 explains, “and having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.” Jesus is the author of salvation to those who obey Him. In other words, salvation comes to those who follow His righteous commands! We must choose to obey all of His commands in our lives.

Sin is a self-inflicted plague which humans have been fighting for thousands of years. We must all consider our souls’ situation to make sure that we are living outside of the life of sin. Consider one

final verse 1 John 5:18. “We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.” Our first focus every single day should be to fit the description of this verse. We can only do this by keeping away from sin and correctly serving God. Are you born of God?