



Lesson Three: An Introduction To Sin

We are still in our first G, which stands for Gather. Remember that Gather is an introduction. Last lesson, we were introduced to God and what He wants for us. That introduction to God is important to understanding the topic that we are going to cover in this lesson, so if you need to take time to review that information go and do that now.

Rules

When it comes to rules, there are basically 3 kinds of people.

1. Those who like rules and strive to follow them.
2. Those who test the boundaries of rules and get as close to the line as they can.
3. Those who see rules as a challenge and want to break them.

Which category do you find yourself in? _____

I generally go along with the rules and don't have a problem with that. And to prove my point, I have never had a speeding ticket in my life....until recently. My family and I made a trip to Montana with some friends to celebrate their parents' 50th wedding anniversary. We went to Glacier National Park, did a lot of hiking, and had a lot of fun.

On the way back home, I decided to go through Yellowstone, and then we went through Wyoming, and that's where it happened. The wind was blowing incredibly hard, so I was really working to keep the van in my lane, and not paying too much attention to how fast I was going. We came up over a hill and start to make our way down. We were almost all the way down, and that's when I saw him. The state trooper. He immediately puts his lights on and turns his car around. Busted! I broke the rules, so I had to suffer the consequences. So now, I have had one speeding ticket in my life.

Who Makes The Rules?

Remember in Genesis 1:1 we learned that God made everything, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." As the Creator of all that is, He has a right to make the rules. God created Adam and Eve and placed them in the Garden of Eden. God gave them tremendous freedom to do pretty much whatever they wanted to do, but He did give them one basic rule. Notice what He says in Genesis 2:16-17, "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." What was the one rule that God gave Adam and Eve? _____

In Genesis 3 there is recorded a conversation between the serpent and Eve, where the serpent tries to get Eve to break God's rule. He begins by questioning what God said, and then outright calls Him a liar that is holding back from Adam and Eve. At that moment Eve has a choice to make, and then Adam is confronted with that same choice. We see the choice that they made in verse six, "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit

thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.” What is the choice that Adam and Eve made? _____

In Romans 5:12 Paul writes, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:” Sin may not be a word that you are familiar with, so let me help explain it for you. Sin in its simplest context is breaking God’s rules. We break God’s rules when we don’t do things that He tells us to do. So, if there are things that I know that God wants me to do, it is sin not to do it. What are some things that you know that God wants you to do? _____

We also break God’s rules when we do things that God tells us not to do. For instance, when God told Adam not to eat the fruit and he did, that was sin. What are some things that you know that God wants you not to do? _____

Who Makes The Repercussions?

Just as God has the right to make the rules, God has the right to make the repercussions as well. We may choose to break God’s rules, but we do not get to choose the consequences of breaking those rules. Looking back at Genesis 2:16-17, we can see that God told Adam what the repercussion of eating the fruit would be. What did God say would happen if Adam ate the fruit? _____

The main repercussion for sin has never changed. It was restated in the New Testament in Paul’s writings to the believers in Rome. He said in the first part of Romans 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death;”. The payment/punishment is the same today as it was in Adam’s day. What did Paul say was the payment earned for breaking God’s rules? _____

The death being spoken of is what is called the second death in the book of Revelation. John writes in Revelation 20:11-15, “And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

In Revelation 20, we see all those who have not trusted in Jesus for salvation standing before this great white throne. With these books, it is proven that they are guilty of breaking God’s rules. Those who are found guilty here are cast into the lake of fire to pay for their sins. John calls this the second death. So just as God stated on a number of occasions, the penalty for sin is death. That is what anyone who sins deserves.

But I’m A Good Person!

You may argue that you are a good person. “Yes, I might lie or get angry every once in a while, but I am generally good!” you say. But it isn’t about how we evaluate ourselves. It only matters how God evaluates us. We can all easily find people who are not as “good” as we are. Spend more than two seconds online and you can do that! The problem is we are not judged based upon how we compare to others, but how we compare to a holy God.

Let’s read Romans 3:10-12 and see what God has to say about how good we are, “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all

gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." So according to these verses, how many righteous people are there? _____ How many have gone out of the way? _____ How many good people are there? _____

Paul then goes on in the next few verses to prove that we aren't good. Continue on into verses 13-18, "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes." He proves his point by telling us that we are not good, because we sin with our mouths, we sin with our bodies, and we sin with our hearts.

You are not a good person and neither am I!

We Have All Sinned!

Earlier in this lesson, we looked at Romans 5:12. Let's read it again, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:" Why does death pass upon all men? _____ Remember, sin is breaking God's rules by not doing what He tells us to do and by doing what He tells us not to do. Paul told the Romans that everyone is guilty of breaking God's rules in one way or another.

He said the same thing a few chapters earlier in Romans 3. Just down from where he proves that we are not good people, he comes right out and states in verse 23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;". Who does he tell us has sinned? _____ Does that include you? Have you ever broken God's rules? _____ If you are willing to admit that you have sinned, list five sins that you have personally committed: _____

Conclusion

In this lesson, we have shown that God alone has the right to make the rules and to tell us what the repercussions of breaking those rules are. We looked at the topic of sin. What does the word sin mean in its simplest context? _____

We also proved that according to God's standards that we are not good. And it's not just that we are not good, but that we all have sinned. According to the verses that we looked at in this lesson, what do you deserve because you have sinned? _____

But, luckily for all of us there is more to the story than this. God doesn't want you to have to pay for your own sins. He loves you and provided a substitute to take your punishment for you. We will cover this good news in the next lesson.