

Essential: Sin & Salvation

In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity.

One thing we absolutely cannot disagree on – if we are to be Christians – is that we need salvation. So this week, we are going to start on *THE* essential first.

Original & Ongoing Sin

Sin “is the act of violating God's will. Sin can also be viewed as anything that violates the ideal relationship between an individual and God; or as any diversion from the ideal order for human living. To sin has been defined as “to miss the mark.”

There are different ways to think about the fruit that Adam and Eve ate but there is no way to avoid the fact that *the sin was rebellion, leading to idolatry.*

- God told them not to do something and they did it anyway.
- They decided that they would do what they wanted to do and not what God asked them to do.
- They replaced God with themselves as lord of their lives.

You ever do something like this? Every action we do or thought we think that is selfish, self-focused, or not what God asked us to do or think is sin.

1 John 1:8 says, “If we claim to be without sin, we

deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.”

Bad Things NEVER Happen to Good People

Because there is no such thing as “good people.”

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23). Everyone, whether they know the word “sin” or not all know what “sin” is and they all know they do it.

Can we, since we know what the list of good and bad is, do enough good to outweigh the bad?

Paul says, “Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God’s sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin” (Rom 3:20).

The Law is the measuring rod, the ruler, the measuring tape of how good or bad we are. The ticks are the sins and our measurement is never zero.

What do these sins do? “Your sinful acts have alienated you from your God; your sins have caused him to reject you and not listen to your prayers” (Is 59:2).

Here is how we mucked it up:

A. *God is good.*

+B. *God wants to hang out with us.*

+C. *God is so good, he cannot hang out with evil (Hab 1:13)*

So D. *We have to be good to hang out with him.*

“Κυρίος ἰού και ὁ θεός ἰού”
“Lord Jesus and God of Jesus”

Pay Back is a...

In the Old Testament, we could buy an animal to sacrifice or sacrifice one of our very best and most valuable animals to pay back God temporarily for our sins. But it was a never ending cycle of sin – pay for it – sin – pay for it.

Sacrifice was supposed to be costly, showing sin – even very small sins – had a high price. It also foreshadowed God’s plan in Jesus.

We needed a perfect sacrifice. Only God is perfect. So God had to sacrifice Himself for our sins. (2 Con 5:21, 1 Pet 3:18).

Hebrews 7:27 says, “[Jesus] has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.”

A way to think of sacrifice: OT – our sin is paid for by us (see Pentateuch); NT – our sin is paid off for us (Jn 1:29)

God is not about killing animals or blood or sacrifices. *God is about relationship.* Relationship only happens through obedience to God.

- In Genesis 3:8, God walks in the Garden that he created for relationship with us.
- In Revelation 21:3, God once again proclaims that he will walk with mankind in a new Garden, in relationship with us for all time.

What God wants is obedience. When we obey and don’t rebel, we are not sinning. Samuel says to Saul, “Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? To *obey is better than sacrifice...*” (Sam 15:22).

But we can’t. We just can’t. (Tit 3:5-7, Eph 2:8-9, Rom 4:1-5)

God Has Made a Way

In Romans 5:8, Paul explains that since we can’t go to God (be sinless), He will come to us, “But God demonstrates his own love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Because He loves us: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (Jn 3:16). “Believes” means “follows” not “acknowledges” (Jm 2:9). “Follows” means “repents” (Acts 3:19, Lk 13:3).

Moving Ahead

We are all sinners. We cannot do enough good to make up for our sin. Sin separates us from a perfectly good God. We need a perfect sacrifice to perfectly pay for all sins. Jesus was that sacrifice – he died on the cross, was buried and rose again. Now, if we choose, we can once again have relationship with God as our adopted father (Jn 1:12).

Non-Essential: How you are saved.

“Κυριός μου και ο Θεός μου”

[Click for how to say this phrase in English. Click for Greek parallel of John 20:28.](#)