

So Nobody's Perfect

Topic: The Nature and Extent of Sin

Purpose of this study:

To provide a clear understanding of the nature of sin and effects upon mankind.

Motivation for teaching this study:

Most people today, including Christians, do not understand the seriousness of sin and its far reaching effects upon them. Sin is a watered-down term in our culture. The church, as a whole, is growing less concerned with sin and more obsessed with victimization and self-help books. We have become more concerned with denying our guilt and putting the blame on someone else than in dealing with our sin before a holy God. Teenagers need, more than ever before, a clear and concise knowledge of the depth and consequences of their sin before God. Only when sin is truly seen for what it is, can the rest of the Gospel even make sense.

Introducing the Lesson:

Ask your students what comes to their minds when they think of sin? Or, divide your students into groups of 2-3 and see who can come up with the longest list of sins in three minutes.

Teaching the Bible study:

As the students share their responses on the true or false section, ask them to give Biblical support for their views. Be prepared to give Biblical support yourself for your answers. These questions should stimulate some good discussion on sin and should lead you into covering the four basic points concerning sin below.

Defining Sin - Originally the word sin was a Greek archery term. The Greeks would shoot their arrows at a target and then measure the distance between where the arrow hit and the bulls-eye. That distance was called the 'sin' of the arrow. Spiritually before God the bulls-eye is complete perfection and righteousness. Emphasize that sin is equally as dangerous in our thoughts as in our actions. All sinful actions begin as sinful thoughts, and God requires holy thoughts as well as holy behavior.

The Source of Our Sin - It is important to identify where sin originated in man and the chain reaction in men since then.

President Analogy - Suppose the president decided to declare war on Russia tomorrow. He appeared on TV warning everyone to go to the nearest bomb shelter and await further instructions. Suppose you woke up tomorrow and decided you personally didn't want to be at war with Russia and that you were going to take a trip to visit Moscow. Would you be in danger? Yes of course since even though you personally did not decide to declare war on Russia, the president decided for you. Because you are a citizen of the United States, the president makes decisions nationally which affect you. It doesn't matter how you feel about the issue personally. As a leader of the United States, the president has decided for you. Adam, as the leader and representative of the human race, decided to sin against God and pay the consequences. So everyone born after him is a sinner.

The Extent of our Sin – (Psalm 53:1-3) Emphasize that all men do not naturally seek God. Since they have inherited a fallen, corrupt nature from Adam, they all hate God and turn away from Him. This may be a hard truth for your Bible study to swallow and you may have to spend additional time trying to communicate this to them. The next two scripture passages describe how deep sin really is within us. Tell them it is not our outward actions that make us sinful before God, but our sinful hearts that produce the sinful actions that God hates.

The Consequences of our Sin - Romans 5:12 is a key verse to understanding the true consequences of our sin. In the Bible the sin equation looks like this: SIN = DEATH. EVERYONE SINS > EVERYONE DIES. Remember to tell them that this equation is without Christ and His forgiveness. They must understand the seriousness of their sin before God to really grasp all that Christ has done for them. The three parts of death show that all types of death are the direct result of sin.

Closing the Lesson:

Read Romans 5:8 to make a transition to God's forgiveness at the end of this study. Have someone in the group close in prayer thanking God for His forgiveness of all of our sins through Christ.

Evaluation:

The following are questions to ask once this study has been completed.

1. Define sin and give some examples of actions and thoughts that are considered sin by God.
2. How did Adam and Eve's sin affect us today?
3. Do people sin because they are sinners, or are we sinners because we sin?
4. How has sin affected the human race?

Outside Activities:

Have students find examples of people in the Bible who sinned, and report next week on how their sins were dealt with, and what resulted.