

- In true obedience, we will still falter in areas and come up short because we cannot have perfect obedience.
- Speaking about Jesus' Sermon on the Mount from **Matthew 5**, DeYoung points out, "The commands of Jesus are not meant to crush us any more than Jesus means to crush us." ⁴⁵
- The commands throughout the Bible are there for us learn about God and our Savior Jesus Christ. They are not meant to be a burden but for us to draw closer to God as we come to know more and more that it is only by His grace that we can do anything.

A CHANGE IN OUR SOCIETY⁴⁶

- With the rise of *self* in our modern world and specifically in the United States, the concept of obedience can clash with contemporary Western cultural values. These values highly prize self-reliance, independence, and personal freedom.
 - In a culture which encourages forging one's own path and questioning authority, the idea of submission can be seen as restrictive or oppressive.
- The universal sinfulness of man is obvious and verifiable. Sin permeates every aspect of our existence. It impacts us individually and societally. It is deeply rooted within us and is manifested continually.
- Throughout history, societies have consistently acknowledged man's natural sinfulness. Since the Enlightenment, however, Western civilization has become increasingly antagonistic to the reality of sin, especially as it is defined biblically.
- Obedience has become a *trigger* word for many and brings about feelings and thoughts of inadequacy and domineering personalities.
 - In fact, there is nothing more beautiful and joyful in the Bible than to obey Christ. True obedience to the gospel and to the teachings of Christ not only bring true life but it also brings true freedom.
- This is why there has been a shift in the language of the church from obey Jesus to follow Jesus.
- People don't like the terms *righteous living* but would rather *live a Spirit-filled life*.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 100.

⁴⁶ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 451.

- **There are four main reasons for this shift from a desire to obey and the reality of sin.**
- We live in an age now when people view themselves and others as *naturally good*.
 - Before the philosophical shifts of the 18th century, an understanding of human depravity prevailed.
 - The Protestant Reformation stemmed from Martin Luther's angst over his own sinfulness.
 - Man is viewed as inherently good. Human problems and suffering were linked with ignorance.
 - Many concluded from the advances in education, science, and technology that man was inherently good and that as he was educated, the world would get better.
 - The 20th century clearly obliterated that illusion as man's depravity was put on display, the largest scale of warfare in history—including two devastating world wars, the Holocaust, and the Cold War.
 - The 21st century has also been rife with wars, unstable nations pursuing or possessing nuclear weapons, and increasing Islamic terrorism.
 - Education, science, and technology that brought great medical advances and comforts have at the same time devised weapons of mass destruction.
 - Societies are increasingly opposed to God's standards, even redefining basic aspects of human identity such as gender and marriage. Contrary to the modern and postmodern mindsets, the reality of sin is alive and on full display.
- With the rise of psychology and its mixing with theology, people are, more than ever, challenging the Biblical view of sin being in us to *people being a product of their environment*.
 - We no longer seek to hold people culpable or accountable for their behavior. As an example, we now pay people who do not want to work, seeking to accommodate their depravity.
 - We take no consideration for their choices in life because that would make them responsible.
 - Mankind thinks that if they can change what is going on around people then people are going to change. But we know that even with only two people on the earth, living in the most idyllic place and time in history, they still chose to sin against God.
 - There is no hope for mankind if all we desire to do is change his setting.
- We now live in a *morally relativistic society* where good, and evil are left up to the individual.
 - There are no longer absolute terms, but all things must be understood subjectively.
 - Abortion is not called murder but women's health.

- We have made morals flexible, no longer fixed.
 - We make all societies and individuals to have the final say on what is right and wrong, no longer God. This is because we have such a high focus on education and not holiness.
 - We think that advancements are always good and prosperous. But in the meantime, there is so much collateral damage and unintended consequences.
 - In other words, we fully favor what society or those in charge say is right and wrong, no longer caring about what God has to say.
- In our age, self-esteem and being who you desire is at the top of the list. Because of this, *nobody has the thought that they themselves are evil.*
 - “To speak of humans as sinners is almost like screaming out a profanity or obscenity at a very formal, dignified, genteel meeting, or even in church. It is forbidden. This general attitude is almost a new type of legalism, the major prohibition of which is, ‘You shall not speak anything negative.’”⁴⁷
 - There has been a shift from Moral Terminology to Psychological Terminology in our society.⁴⁸
 - A major reason for this perception is that contemporary society has largely replaced purely theological or moral language with psychological and sociological language:
 - **From "Evil" to "Illness":** Actions once universally condemned as evil are now often explained in terms of mental illness, trauma, addiction, or neurological disorders. This shift aims to reduce stigma and encourage treatment rather than sinful behaviors that need repentance.
 - **Emphasis on "Harm" Over "Sin":** Public discourse focuses less on violating a divine law ("sin") and more on the tangible, measurable harm caused to other human beings ("bad actions"). Society has moved to the effect and no longer cares about the cause.
 - **Focus on Systems:** Many people today attribute negative behaviors less to an individual's inherent, personal evil and more to the influence of societal systems, poverty, or environmental factors. Looks more to environment than person.

⁴⁷ Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed, 582.

⁴⁸ Generated from AI

- As Christians, we should always strive to use biblical language in favor of how the world uses words to describe things.
- **1 Corinthians 2:12-13** “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, *which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.*”
- When we talk like the world in how we describe or define things, we are using human wisdom and not words that are taught by the Spirit.
- **Take for example the word addiction.** The Bible never uses this word, but it does say that man can become a *slave to sin* form habits of sinful behavior.
- In other words, when using addiction, it is viewed as the person has no choice in what they are doing. There is a choice, they are either enslaved to sin or to Christ.
 - This is not to say that there is not a physical component to sin and slavery to sin. Our physical bodies can crave something with such intensity that it is seemingly impossible to say to it.
 - But our bodies never make us sin...it is the internal or the nonphysical part of us that controls our behavior.
 - Our sinful desires may be great because of our physical need for something, but we will always be able to say no.
- “The Bible can sympathize with this feeling of bondage, and yet it never avoids holding us morally responsible for our actions. We are moral agents, and the Bible treats us as such, even in the face of addictive habits.”⁴⁹

⁴⁹ <https://www.biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/2019/07/22/a-biblical-definition-of-addiction/#:~:text=Our%20theology%20helps%20us%20to,when%20it%20speaks%20of%20sin>
This is a great article on biblical counseling, addictions, and how Christians can view and also abolish them.

THE ORIGIN OF SIN AND PERSISTANT EVIL IN THE WORLD

- **Certainly, the origin of sin is a deep and dark mystery**, but God is not the chargeable cause of sin. Because created persons sinned, the capacity for sin had to exist as a possibility within them. Sin occurred because Satan, Adam, and Eve chose to exercise their volition to disobey God rather than to love God. Consequently, as creatures, they cannot escape accountability to their Creator.⁵⁰

Fall of Satan

- The Bible lays the blame for the sin and death in the world on the first man, Adam (**Rom. 5:12**). In **Genesis 3** and its account of man's fall, a creature tempted God's image bearers and cast doubt on what God had told them. He enticed them to interpret the world from his perspective, not God's.
- Though this creature was a literal serpent (**Gen. 3:1**), the force behind the snake was the fallen angel Lucifer, Satan, "adversary."⁵¹
- **John 8:44** "...He was a murderer from the beginning...he is a liar and the father of lies."
- **Sin originated with Satan and is his constant practice against God.**
- God created Satan as a free moral agent with the capacity for **REAL** choice, but God did not create evil.
- Evil is the absence of good...everything God creates is good...when Satan utilized his free volition to proudly reject God, he initiated the first sin and hence is called "the Father of lies."
- **What we know about the Fall of Satan:**
- Satan exists and is a real person...He is a created spirit being
- **Psalm 33:6** "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host."
- **Colossians 1:16** "For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created by Him and for Him."
- Satan was created in the original creation

⁵⁰ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 457.

⁵¹ Ibid, 456.

- **Exodus 20:11** “For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them...”
- **Psalms 148:2, 5** “Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts! Let them praise the name of the Lord, For He commanded and they were created.”
- For a short time, he was in a state of unconfirmed holiness...Then Satan fell
- His fall came after creation week and before tempting Eve in Genesis 3 (not sure how much time passed)
- There is no place in Scripture which describes Satan’s fall with absolute certainty but there are two possible passages that make reference to it:
- **Isaiah 14:12-15** “How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations! But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ Nevertheless, you will be thrust down to Sheol, To the recesses of the pit.”
- **Ezekiel 28:12-13, 15-17** “Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the ruby, the topaz and the diamond; the beryl, the onyx and the jasper; the lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; and the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, was in you. On the day that you were created they were prepared. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created until unrighteousness was found in you. By the abundance of your trade you were internally filled with violence, and you sinned; therefore I have cast you as profane from the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, that they may see you.”

Divine Compatibility⁵²

- Compatibilism is an attempt to reconcile the theological proposition that every event is causally determined, ordained, and/or decreed by God with the free will of man.
- The foundation of the compatibility concept of *free will* is how “will” is defined. From a theological viewpoint, the definition of the will is viewed considering the revealed, biblical truths of **original sin** and the **spiritual depravity of man**.
- These two truths render the definition of “will” about fallen man as “captive to sin” (**Acts 8:23**), a “slave of sin” (**John 8:34; Romans 6:16-17**) and subject only to its “master,” which is sin (**Romans 6:14**). As such, although the will of man is “free” to do as it wishes, it wishes to act according to its nature, and since the nature of the fallen will is sinful, every intent of the thoughts of the fallen man’s heart is “only evil continually” (**Genesis 6:5, cf. Genesis 8:21**). He, being naturally rebellious to that which is spiritually good (**Romans 8:7-8; 1 Corinthians 2:14**), “is bent only on rebellion” (**Proverbs 17:11**). Essentially, man is “free” to do as he wishes, and he does just that, but man simply cannot do that which is contrary to his nature. What man “wills” to do is subject to and determined solely by his nature.
- Here is where compatibilism makes the distinction between man having a free will and being a “free agent.” Man is “free” to choose that which is determined by his nature or by the laws of nature.
 - To illustrate, the laws of nature prohibit man from being able to fly, but this does not mean that man is not free. The agent, man, is only free to do that which his nature or the laws of nature allow him to do.
- Theologically speaking, though the natural man is unable to submit himself to the law of God (**Romans 8:7-8**) and unable to come to Christ unless the Father draws him to Him (**John 6:44**), the natural man still acts freely in respect to his nature. He freely and actively suppresses the truth in unrighteousness (**Romans 1:18**) because his nature renders him unable to do otherwise (**Job 15:14-16; Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Jeremiah 13:23; Romans 3:10-11**). Two good examples of Jesus’ confirmation of this concept can be found in **Matthew 7:16-27** and **Matthew 12:34-37**.
- The following examples demonstrate how God can be the ultimate cause of all things (even evil) while never being the proximate or efficient cause of it:

⁵² <https://www.gotquestions.org/compatibilism.html>

- God's punishment of Israel by Assyria in Isaiah 10:1-8.... God ordained the evil of the destruction of Israel by Assyria yet Assyria meant it for evil and are thus accountable for the sin
- God's inciting David to number the people in 2 Samuel 24:1-17...God ordained the evil of numbering the people (see 1 Chron 21:1) yet David was held accountable for the sin and was punished (2 Sam 24:10, 15)
- God's predetermined plan to crucify Christ in Acts 2:22-23 and Acts 4:27-28...God predetermined it, but Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles, and the Jews were the culpable parties

Concluding Thoughts

- "God can restrain not only people's actions, but even their most deeply rooted desires. No part of the human heart is impervious to God's sovereign but mysterious control."⁵³
- The is consistent in its teaching that God is not responsible for sin but that He works in such a way that man's sinful actions are used by God for His own glory.
- "...God is able and does move upon the hearts and minds of people to accomplish His purposes. Yet is also seems equally clear from these passages that God does this without violating or coercing their wills, but rather that He works in His mysterious way *through* their wills to accomplish His purposes."⁵⁴

⁵³ Bridges, *Trusting God*, 54.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 57.

INTRODUCTION TO THE EFFECTS OF SIN ON MAN

When studying the effects of sin, we must look at three key places: the effect of sin upon man, upon man's relationship with their fellow man and most importantly, upon man's relationship with his Creator. The emphasis throughout the whole Bible is that sin is a very serious matter with far-reaching and long-lasting consequences. Before looking at the overall effects of sin, we need to look at original sin and its transmission.

Original Sin

- How does the first man's sin affect all born after him? Theologians often refer to this reality as original sin. In one sense, original sin refers to the first sin committed by Adam. But original sin also encompasses the sinful state and condition of all people because of their relationship to Adam, which is the reason people are depraved and tainted with sin from conception.⁵⁵
- There have been many models and attempts to understand and elucidate how this original sin came about in Adam and then has been passed down through subsequent generations.

Theories of Original Sin

- There are three main theories to consider when dealing with the doctrine of original sin: Pelagianism, Arminianism and Calvinism. The question that each of these theories attempts to answer is *but just what is the nature of this influence exerted by Adam upon all humans, and by what means does it operate?*
- The answer to that question influences everything and shapes our view of all things pertaining to God.

⁵⁵ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 461.

Pelagianism⁵⁶

- The man, Pelagius, was a moralist (a monk) whose primary concern was for people to live good and decent lives. He postulated that when man looked down upon man's nature, there could only be negative and unfortunate consequences. In other words, he did not like talking about sin because it only led to sin.
- To counteract these tendencies, Pelagius strongly emphasized the idea of free will. He thought that man was created without or free from any controlling influences of the universe. In other words, when Adam fell into sin, **only** Adam fell into sin. There are no subsequent consequences for us today.
- When Adam fell, he left us a bad example to follow.
- As Pelagius spelled out the implications of his various tenets, the idea emerged that humans can, by their own efforts, perfectly fulfill God's commands without sinning. There is no natural inclination toward sin at the beginning of life; any later inclination in that direction comes only through the building up of bad habits.
- Salvation by works is thus quite possible, although that is something of a misnomer. Since we are not sinful, guilty, and condemned, this process is not a matter of salvation from something that presently binds us.
- It is rather a preservation or maintenance of our right status and good standing. By our own accomplishment we keep from falling into a sinful condition.

Arminianism⁵⁷

- Unlike Pelagianism, Arminianism holds that we receive from Adam a corrupted nature. We begin life without righteousness. Thus, all humans are unable, without special divine help, to fulfill God's spiritual commands. This inability is physical and intellectual, but not volitional.
- Although some Arminians say that "guilt" is also part of original sin, they do not mean actual responsibility, but merely liability to punishment. For whatever culpability and condemnation may have accrued to us through Adam's sin have been removed through prevenient grace, a doctrine that

⁵⁶ Millard Erickson *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed, 575-577.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 577

is a unique contribution of later Arminianism. This prevenient grace is extended to everyone, and in effect neutralizes the corruption received from Adam.

Calvinism⁵⁸

- Calvinists have given more attention to the question of original sin than have most other schools of theology. In general terms, the Calvinist position on this matter is that there is a definite connection between Adam's sin and all persons of all times.
- In some way, his sin is not just the sin of an isolated individual but is also our sin. Because we participate in that sin, we all, from the beginning of life, perhaps even from the point of conception, receive a corrupted nature along with a consequent inherited tendency toward sin.
- Furthermore, all persons are guilty of Adam's sin. Death, the penalty for sin, has been transmitted from Adam to all humans; that is evidence of everyone's guilt.
- Thus, whereas in the Pelagian view God imputes neither a corrupted nature nor guilt to humanity, and in the Arminian view God imputes a corrupted nature but not guilt (in the sense of culpability), in the Calvinist scheme he imputes both a corrupted nature and guilt.
 - The Calvinist position is based upon a very serious and quite literal understanding of Paul's statements in **Romans 5:12–19** that sin entered the world through Adam and death through that sin, and so death passed to all people, because all sinned. Through one person's sin all became sinners.

HOW DID ORIGINAL SIN TRANSMIT TO ALL ADAM'S POSTERITY?

Realism⁵⁹

- Also known as the Augustinian or seminal view, realism asserts that all humanity was physically present in Adam when he sinned. As the first man, Adam collectively represented human nature, of which Adam's descendants are all a part. And all were in Adam in seed form when he sinned. This means that Adam's descendants were in Adam's loins participating in his sin. And since everyone participated in Adam's sin, all people are morally guilty and condemned for doing so. Thus, both the corrupt nature and guilt are passed down naturally from Adam.

⁵⁸ Ibid. 577–579.

⁵⁹ MacArthur and Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 463–464.

- The realism view affirms that the connection between Adam’s sin and the sin of humanity is more than just a bad example from Adam or an inherited sin nature. Instead, all people actually participated in Adam’s sin. So the guilt and condemnation are deserved because all actually sinned. Realism offers an explanation as to how all people can appropriately be guilty for Adam’s sin. **When Adam sinned, all sinned in him. If that is so, advocates say, no one can make the charge that “innocent” people are wrongly imputed with Adam’s sin, since everyone actually participated in his transgression.**

Unexplained Solidarity

- One view is that **Romans 5:12–21** reveals a vague solidarity between Adam and all people that is not explained. Some connection admittedly exists, but proponents of this opaque idea suggest that it cannot be known with certainty. We must be content with not knowing. This unexplained solidarity position appears to be the default for those unsatisfied with the other views.⁶⁰

Bad Example

- This bad-example view is flawed, since it does not adequately grasp the sinfulness of people after Adam’s fall (**Eph. 2:1, 5**). It also does not do justice to the comparison between Adam and Christ in **Romans 5:12–21**. **Further, if Adam is only a bad example, does this mean that Christ is only a good example and that we are left to save ourselves?** Judging by Pelagius’s reliance on the freedom of the human will for salvation, one must answer affirmatively. His condemnation for heresy at the Council of Ephesus in 431 is therefore justified.⁶¹

Representative or Federal Headship⁶²

- One of the most accepted positions is that Adam’s sin is imputed to all who were united to him as the representative of humanity. Adam’s guilt is our guilt. While affirming that a corrupt nature is passed down from Adam, representative headship teaches that all people are condemned because of their direct relationship to Adam.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 462.

⁶¹ Ibid

⁶² Ibid., 464-465.

- The representative-headship view (often called federal headship) asserts that the action of a representative is determinative for all members united to him. When Adam sinned, he represented all people; therefore, his sin is reckoned to his descendants.
- Adherents of this view also appeal to **1 Corinthians 15:22**, which says, “For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.” This verse shows that death and life are linked with Adam and Christ as two representatives of mankind. In addition, Romans 5:14 states that “death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam.”
- This verse explicitly teaches that Adam’s offspring did not commit Adam’s sin. **So Adam relates to his offspring as their representative head, and thus the act of Adam is imputed to others, even though the others did not actually commit the sin that Adam did.**

HOW SIN EFFECTS MANKIND

- Now that we know original sin exists and that it has infected and affected all of mankind (except Jesus), we turn our attention to what extent it has taken hold of us.

All of Mankind: God’s Image Defaced in Man

- **Genesis 1:26-27** “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”
- Because of man’s sinful nature and sinful tendencies, he misuses and undermines that very gifts that God has given him for his own devious desires.
- “He takes all that God has lavished upon him to enable him to live in free and joyful obedience, and he transforms it into a weapon by which he can oppose his Maker. The very breath which God gives him thousands of times each day he abuses by his sin. The magnitude of his sin is also the measure of his need of salvation.”⁶³
- **Romans 8:29** “For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become conformed to the image of His Son*, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren.”

⁶³ Ferguson, *The Christian Life*, 11.

- **2 Corinthians 3:18** “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, *are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory*, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.”
- **Colossians 3:10** “...and have put on the new self *who is being renewed* to a true knowledge *according to the image of the One* who created him.”
- **James 3:9** “With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, *who have been made in the likeness of God.*”
- While man can never regain the complete image of God in them, through Christ the process of being renewed starts with salvation and continues until our glorification.
- When a saved sinner acts in accordance with their new identity in Christ, they are imaging God to an onlooking world.
- When the new creation obeys its Creator, they are showing the world what a new life can look like now and will look like when fully revealed in heaven.

All of Mankind: Man’s Total Depravity

- Total depravity emphasizes the devastating impact of sin on the person and covers three related concepts: (1) **the pollution and corruption of all aspects of a person**; (2) **the complete inability of a person to please God**; and (3) **universality, in that all are conceived and born as sinners.**⁶⁴
- Man, as totally depraved, does not mean that they are not able to do good in our society. Jesus said in Matthew 7:11a “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children...”
Unredeemed man is capable of acts of relative goodness.
- **What total depravity emphasizes is that the total or pervasive in that all components of a person are polluted by sin. There are no parts of mankind which have escaped the effect of sin.**
 - Ephesians 2:3 “Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by **nature** children of wrath, even as the rest.”
 - This word **nature** means “the natural things, laws, order of nature.”
 - We were born “this way” as sinners, as the natural order of things in life.
 - We did not become children of wrath but were born children of wrath.
- Because man is completely depraved, he is incapable of pleasing God through his own efforts.
- There is nothing that man can do in himself which will be pleasing to God.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 467.

- **Ephesians 2:1** “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins...”
- This is probably one of the hardest (if not *the* hardest) ideas for mankind (both saved and unsaved) to fully grasp.
- This is because man looks at the outside of a person and God looks at the inside. In other words, our motives for our actions matter (in some cases) more than the actions themselves.
- Since this issue affects all men after Adam, all men are fallen. There are no people who have escaped being born with a sinful nature and the effects of sin upon them (except Jesus).
- It is of the utmost importance to fully understand that people are not neutral. They are not able to accept or reject the gospel of Jesus Christ based in its merits.
 - **Romans 6:16** “Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?”
 - What some people consider freedom to sin, freedom from the restrictions of obedience to the will of God, is actually the enslavement that sin produces.⁶⁵
- In his unredeemed state, man hates God.
 - **Romans 8:7-8** “because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.
- In his unredeemed state, man cannot accept spiritual truth. He denies the existence of Biblical sin.
 - Man does not, nor has a desire, to take responsibility for his actions.
 - **1 Corinthians 2:14** “But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.”
- Once we are able to accept the fact that man is completely tainted and controlled by sin, then accepting the fact that God is sovereign in salvation is the next natural step.

⁶⁵ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 561.

Man's Relationship with God

- Man became spiritually dead. Unredeemed man no longer has any relationship with God. He cannot pray to God; he cannot love God, and he cannot do anything for God.
 - **Isaiah 59:1-2** “Behold, the LORD'S hand is not so short That it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.”
 - The reason there is separation between man and God is sin. God does hear the prayers of the unrighteous, it is not as if He is deaf.
 - We know that the Lord hears the prayer of repentance, of the one who is penitent in heart.
- Man came under the wrath and punishment of God. Mankind is no longer in a favorable place with God but now under His righteous judgment.
- Unsaved and unredeemed man is under the judgment of God and the sway of Satan. There is no hope for man outside of Christ.
- Man, and God became enemies. Since there is nothing that man can do for God, all that he does is against God. While his actions may seem genuine, his motives and desires are impure and not seeking to bring God glory.

Man's Relationship with People

- **Sin brought tension between men and women specifically.**
 - Women would now desire to rule over their husbands, but their husbands will have rule.
 - **Genesis 3:16** “To the woman He said, ‘I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you.’”
- **People, in general, will have strife and conflict between them.**
 - An increasing self-centeredness also results from sin. In many ways sin is a turning in upon oneself that is confirmed with practice. We call attention to ourselves, and to our good qualities and accomplishments, and minimize our shortcomings. We seek special favors and opportunities in life, wanting an extra little edge that no one else has. We display a certain special alertness to our own wants and needs, while we ignore those of others.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Ibid., 563.

- **Inability to love.**
 - Since other people stand in our way, representing competition and a threat to us, we cannot really act for the ultimate welfare of others if our aim is self-satisfaction. And so suspicions, conflicts, bitterness, and even hatred issue from the self-absorption or the pursuit of finite values that has supplanted God at the center of the sinner's life.⁶⁷

SIN BROUGHT DEATH

- One of sin's obvious results is death. This truth is first pointed out in God's statement forbidding Adam and Eve to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: "for when you eat from it you will certainly die" (**Gen. 2:17**). It is also found in clear didactic form in Romans 6:23: "The wages of sin is death." Paul's point is that, like wages, death is a fitting return, a just recompense for what we have done. This death that we have deserved has several different aspects: (1) **physical death**, (2) **spiritual death**, and (3) **eternal death**.⁶⁸

Physical Death

- The mortality of all humans is both an obvious fact and a truth taught by Scripture. Hebrews 9:27 says, "People are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment." Paul in Romans 5:12 attributes death to the original sin of Adam. Yet while death entered the world through Adam's sin, it spread to all humans because all sinned.⁶⁹

Spiritual Death

- When Adam and Eve sinned, physical death did not occur immediately. Adam lived 930 years (Gen. 5:5). **Spiritual death, however, happened instantly.** Spiritual death is the state of spiritual alienation from God. As a result of Adam's sin, all living people are born spiritually dead.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Ibid., 564.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 557.

⁶⁹ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 557.

⁷⁰ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine*, 460.

Eternal Death

- Eternal death awaits those who physically die while being spiritually dead. Those who die in unbelief will face the lake of fire forever (Rev. 20:11–15). John refers to this as “the second death” (Rev. 20:6). While it does not cause people to cease to exist, eternal death is still a kind of death since it involves everlasting ruin, punishment for sins, and separation from God’s presence to bless.⁷¹

SIN AND THE REDEEMED MAN

- What is the effect of a Christian sinning? The Bible does not teach perfectionism in this life or before the resurrection, so Christians will sin. 1 John 1:8 “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”
- But when a person trusts in Christ, he receives both forgiveness of sins and Christ’s righteousness. As a result, Paul declares in Romans 8:1 “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” Christ died for our sins (**1 Cor. 15:3**), so all sins—past, present, and future—are forgiven.
- God, who began a good work in us, will be faithful to complete what he started (**Phil. 1:6**). Sin will not remove a Christian from God’s love; indeed, Paul says in Romans 8:39 “nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- **However, while instances of personal sin cannot break the believer’s union with Christ, they do have a negative impact on the believer’s communion with Christ.**
- When Christians sin, they grieve the Holy Spirit (**Eph. 4:30**). Sin also brings God’s discipline. Jesus said in Revelation 3:19 “Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.”
- In addition, Hebrews 12:6 says, “For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.”
- Christians should examine themselves for sin and be open to loving exhortation and rebuke from other believers (**Gal. 6:1**).
- Jesus instituted a church discipline process for dealing with sin in the life of a professing Christian (**Matt. 18:15–20**).

⁷¹ Ibid., 460.

- Unrepentant sin leads to expulsion from the church, so that the church maintains its purity (**1 Cor. 5:13**).
- Sin in the life of a Christian is a serious matter. It harms one's spiritual growth and testimony for Christ.
- While Christians will never face judicial punishment for sins, they will stand before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account for their deeds done in the body, both good and bad (**2 Cor. 5:10**).
- The dross will be burned away, and the eternal reward will reflect what remains (**1 Cor. 3:12–15**).⁷²

⁷² John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine*, 472.