

SIN: It's nature and effects
IN HIS IMAGE MINISTRIES~ADAM MILLS

I. What is sin?

1 John 3:4: Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for **sin is the transgression of the law.**

GC 493: Our only definition of sin is that given in the word of God; it is "the transgression of the law;" it is **the outworking of a principle at war with the great law of love** which is the foundation of the divine government.

NOTE: Beyond the actual actions, words, thoughts and feelings, sin is a ruling force operating in the nature of both fallen angels and fallen mankind.

'PRINCIPLE' DEFINITION: "A law of action; operative cause; source or origin." *WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY 1828 edition*

AUCR 6/1/00: Satan's principle is self-serving. This principle he attributed to God, misrepresenting His character to the world. And he led man to accept the principle of selfishness.

RH 4/16/01: Satan separated himself from God, and selfishness became the law of those who placed themselves under his leadership.

ST 6/13/00: In transgression Adam became a law to himself. By disobedience he was brought under bondage. Thus a discordant element, born of selfishness, entered man's life.

RH 12/8/81: Selfishness is the great law of our degenerate nature.

HS 138,139: Selfishness is inwrought in our very being. It has come to us as an inheritance, and has been cherished by many as a precious treasure. No special work for God can be accomplished until self and selfishness are overcome.

II. Are there any other ways that sin is described?

1 John 5:17: **All unrighteousness** is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

Romans 14:23 : ...for **whatsoever [is] not of faith** is sin.

James 4:17 : Therefore to him that **knoweth to do good, and doeth [it] not**, to him it is sin.
NOTE: Sin includes not only what is committed but also what is omitted.

3MR 331: **All sin is selfishness.** Satan's first sin was selfishness.

III. Where did sin come from?

Ezekiel 28:15,16: Thou [wast] perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till **iniquity was found in thee.** By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned:

GC 492,3: It is impossible to explain the origin of sin so as to give a reason for its existence. Yet enough may be understood concerning both the origin and the final disposition of sin to make fully manifest the justice and benevolence of God in all His dealings with evil. Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that God was in no wise responsible for the entrance of sin; that there was no arbitrary withdrawal of divine grace, no deficiency in the divine government, that gave occasion for the uprising of rebellion. Sin is an intruder, for whose presence no reason can be given. It is mysterious, unaccountable; to excuse it is to defend it.

IV. **How did sin enter the human race?**

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.

Genesis 3: 1-6 : Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which [is] in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 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.**

Romans 5:12: 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:

Romans 5:19: For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners,...

NOTE: Not until Adam, being both head and seed-bearer, participated in sin did sin become universal. As the progenitor of our race, his course of action would have direct bearing upon his posterity either for good or evil.

PP 48: The Sabbath was committed to Adam, the father and representative of the whole human family.

GC 533: Adam could not transmit to his posterity that which he did not possess; and there could have been no hope for the fallen race had not God, by the sacrifice of His Son, brought immortality within their reach.

9MR 236: Parents have a more serious charge than they imagine. The **inheritance of children is that of sin**. Sin has separated them from God. Jesus gave His life that He might unite the broken links to God. **As related to the first Adam, men receive from him nothing but guilt and the sentence of death**. But Christ steps in and passes over the ground where Adam fell, enduring every test in man's behalf. He redeems Adam's disgraceful failure and fall by coming forth from the trial untarnished. This places man on vantage ground with God. It places him where through accepting Christ as His Saviour, he becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Thus he becomes connected with God and Christ. Christ's perfect example and the grace of God are given him to enable him to train his sons and daughters to be sons and daughters of God.

'INHERIT' DEFINITION: "To receive by nature from a progenitor." *WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY 1828 EDITION*

13MR 14: These dear children **received from Adam an inheritance of disobedience, of guilt and death**. The Lord has given to the world Jesus Christ, and His work was to restore to the world the moral image of God in man, and to reshape the character.

SW 76: Satan knows upon just what traits of character to work, that objectionable features may be revealed. These **traits of character, received by inheritance or cultivated**, are to be cut away from the soul, and the Spirit of Christ is to take possession of the organs of speech, of the mental power, of the physical and moral powers, else when in the midst of important interests Satan shall work with his masterly power to create a condition of things that will call into active exercise these special traits of character, and will bring defeat just when there should be a victory, and so the cause of God will sustain a loss.

FW 88: We have reason for ceaseless gratitude to God that Christ, by His perfect obedience, has won back the heaven that Adam lost through disobedience. Adam sinned, and **the children of Adam share his guilt and its consequences**; but Jesus bore the guilt of Adam, and all the children of Adam that will flee to Christ, the second Adam, may escape the penalty of transgression.

13MR 18: The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin upon him; he was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. Because of sin, his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience. But Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God.

DA 49: But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like **every child of Adam** He accepted the **results of the working of the great law of heredity**. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life.

5T 419: The future world is close at hand, with its unalterable and solemn issues--so near, so very near, and such a great work to be done, so many important decisions to be made; yet in your councils the preconceived opinions, the selfish ideas and plans, the **wrong traits of character received by birth**, are lugged in and allowed to have an influence. You should ever feel that it is a sin to move from impulse.

PP 118: **As a rule, children inherit the dispositions and tendencies of their parents**, and imitate their example; so that the sins of the parents are practiced by the children from generation to generation. Thus the vileness and irreverence of Ham were reproduced in his posterity, bringing a curse upon them for many generations. "One sinner destroyeth much good." Ecclesiastes 9:18. On the other hand, how richly rewarded was Shem's respect for his father; and what an illustrious line of holy men appears in his posterity! "The Lord knoweth the days of the upright," "and his seed is blessed." Psalm 37:18, 26.

PP 561: **Both parents transmit** their own **characteristics**, mental and physical, their **dispositions and appetites** to their children. As the result of parental intemperance children often lack physical strength and mental and moral power.

NOTE: The law of heredity dictates that ALL descendants of Adam receive, at conception, the effects of his actions.

V. To what extent has Adam's sin affected the human race?

Leviticus 12:6-8: And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest: Who shall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. **This [is] the law for her that hath born a male or a female.** And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for **a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her,** and she shall be clean.

2 Chronicles 6:36: ...[there is] **no man** which sinneth not,) ...

Job 25:4: How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean [that is] born of a woman?

Psalms 51:5: Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and **in sin** did my mother conceive me.

Ecclesiastes 7:20: For [there is] **not a just man** upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

Isaiah 53:6: **All we** like sheep have gone astray; we have turned **every one** to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of **us all.**

Isaiah 64:6: But **we are all** as an unclean [thing], and **all our righteousnesses** [are] as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Jeremiah 17:9: **The heart** [is] deceitful above all [things], and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Matthew 7:11: If ye then, **being evil,** know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

John 3:5,6,17,18: Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and [of] the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. **That which is born of the flesh is flesh;** and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit....For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but **he that believeth not is condemned already,** because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Romans 3: 9 -12,19,23: What then? are we better [than they]? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are **all under sin;** 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.... Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that **every mouth** may be stopped, and **all the world** may become **guilty before God....**For **all have sinned, and come short** of the glory of God;

Romans 5:18: Therefore as by the offence of one [**judgment came**] upon all men to **condemnation**; even so by the righteousness of one [the free gift came] upon all men unto justification of life.

Romans 6:6: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with [him], that **the body of sin** might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Romans 7:17: Now then it is no more I that do it, but **sin** that **dwelleth in me**.

NOTE: The Greek word translated 'dwelleth' [oikeo] can also be translated as 'inheres'.

Romans 7:23,24: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to **the law of sin** which is **in my members**. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the **body of this death**?

1 Corinthians 15:22,42,43,50: For as **in Adam all die**, even so in Christ shall all be made alive....So also [is] the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in **corruption**; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in **dishonour**; it is raised in glory: it is sown in **weakness**; it is raised in power....Now this I say, brethren, that **flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption**.

NOTE: Notice the evidence of our continuing connection to the first Adam.

Galatians 3:22: But the scripture hath concluded **all under sin**, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

Ephesians 2: 1-3: And you [hath he quickened], who were dead in trespasses and sins: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: **Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh**, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were **by nature the children of wrath, even as others**.

NOTE: It is worthy of note that Paul includes himself as having experienced such a past as he describes here, given his testimony found in Phillipians 3:3-7.

Colossians 2:11: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off **the body of the sins of the flesh** by the circumcision of Christ:

1 Timothy 1:8-10: But we know that the law [is] good, if a man use it lawfully; Knowing this, that **the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane**, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

Titus 3:3: For **we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts** and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, [and] hating one another.

James 3:2: For **in many things we offend all**. If any man offend not in word, the same [is] a perfect man, [and] able also to bridle the whole body.

1 Peter 1:18: Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, [as] silver and gold, from your **vain conversation [received] by tradition from your fathers**;

NOTE: The Greek word translated '[received] by tradition from your fathers' [patroparadotos] can also be translated 'inherited/transmitted from your ancestors'.

1 John 1:8: If we say that we **have no sin**, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

TM 133: Adam and Eve **and their posterity** lost **their** right to the tree of life because of **their disobedience**.

NOTE: Notice that the first pairs' disobedience is counted as the act of the entire race.

ST 6/13/00: Adam's fall in the Garden of Eden **caused all** to sin;

9 MR 229: Adam was **required to render perfect obedience** to God, not only in his own behalf, but **in behalf of his posterity**. God promised him that if he would stand the test of temptation, preserving his allegiance to the Creator during the great trial to which he would be subjected, his obedience would ensure his acceptance and favor with God. He would then be forever established in holiness and happiness, and these blessings would extend to all his posterity. But Adam failed to bear the test. And **because** he revolted against God's law, **all his descendants have been sinners**.

NOTE: In this we are made to understand that Adam held the position of mankind's representative, the progenitor of our race. Bearing our seed in himself, we were all present IN ADAM and participated in his action.

9 MR 234: We mourn over Adam's transgression, and seem to think that our first parents showed great weakness in yielding to temptation. But if Adam's transgression were the only evil that we had to meet, this world would be in a much better condition than it is. **There has been a succession of falls since Adam's days**.

9 MR 237: Instead of remaining under God's influence in order that he might reflect the moral image of his Creator, man placed himself under the control of Satan's influence, and was made selfish. Thus sin became a universal evil. And what a dreadful evil is sin!

ST 7/23/02: **As a result** of Adam's disobedience, **every human being is a transgressor** of the law, sold under sin. Unless he repents and is converted, he is under bondage to the law, serving Satan, falling into the deceptions of the enemy, and bearing witness against the precepts of Jehovah.

RH 4/16/01: Through the medium of influence, taking advantage of the action of mind on mind, he [Satan] prevailed on Adam to sin. Thus **at its very source human nature was corrupted**. And ever since then sin has continued its hateful work, **reaching from mind to mind**. Every sin committed awakens the echoes of the original sin.

8 MR 39: Eve fell under the temptation, and Adam accepted the forbidden fruit from his wife's hand. He fell under the smallest test that the Lord could devise to prove his obedience; and the floodgates of woe were opened upon our world. He was furnished with a holy nature, sinless, pure, undefiled; but **he fell** because he listened to the suggestions of the enemy; **and his posterity became depraved. By one man's disobedience many were made sinners**.

RH 2/23/05: Adam sinned, and his posterity became sinners.

DA 122: In our own strength it is impossible for us to deny the clamors of our fallen nature.

GCB 3/5/95: The law claims from man entire obedience through the whole period of his life. Hence it is impossible for him by future obedience to atone for even one sin. And without the grace of Christ to renew the heart, we cannot render obedience to the law of God. Our hearts are by nature evil, and how, then, can they bring forth that which is good? "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." Job 14:4. All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin.

ST 6/6/95: Those who thus accept of Christ are looked upon by God, not as they are in Adam, but as they are in Jesus Christ, as the sons and daughters of God.

1SM 321: The human family have all transgressed the law of God, and as transgressors of the law, man is hopelessly ruined; for he is the enemy of God, without strength to do any good thing. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7).

VI. How are the effects of Adam's transgression manifested in our lives?

Mark 7:20-23: And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: **All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.**

Romans 7:18-23: For I know that **in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing**: for to will is present with me; but [how] to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but **sin that dwelleth in me**. I find then **a law**, that, when I would do good, **evil is present with me**. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another **law in my members**, warring against the law of my mind, and **bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members**.

Romans 8:7,8: Because the carnal mind [is] **enmity against God**: for it is **not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be**. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Galatians 5:17,19-21: For **the flesh lusteth against the Spirit**, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that **ye cannot do the things that ye would....** Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are [these]; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told [you] in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Ephesians 2:2,3: Wherein in time past ye **walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air**, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, **fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind**; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Colossians 1:21: And you, that were sometime **alienated and enemies in [your] mind by wicked works**, yet now hath he reconciled.

1SP 60: Seth was a worthy character, and was to take the place of Abel in right doing. Yet he was a son of Adam like sinful Cain, and inherited from the nature of Adam no more natural goodness than did Cain. He was **born in sin**; but by the grace of God, in receiving the faithful instructions of his father Adam, he honored God in doing his will.

5T 35: Every man has his **peculiar defects of character**. One may be free from the weakness which he sees in his brother, yet he may at the same time have faults which are far more grievous in the sight of God.

IHP 145: There are temptations that will come to every one of us. We all have **our different dispositions to overcome**, and how are we to know that we are doing this work day by day? We must look into the mirror--God's holy law--and there discover the **defects in our characters**.

IHP 292: God declares, "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). All have **the same sinful nature**. All are **liable to make mistakes**. **No one is perfect**. The Lord Jesus died for **the erring** that they might be forgiven. It is not our work to condemn. Christ did not come to condemn, but to save.

UL 328: We know that **we are sinners** and that we **often err** and are **frequently overcome** with temptations; but this should not lead us in our great need to keep away from the only One who can help us and save us from the power of Satan. This is the enemy's work to discourage and drive to despair.

RH 8/18/85: **All have defects of character to overcome**, and therefore no human being can be your pattern.

RH 3/12/95: In order to have peace and unity in our institutions and in the church, our selfish ideas and preferences must be sacrificed. No principle of divine truth is to be sacrificed by any means, but **our own hereditary and cultivated tendencies** must often yield. No man is perfect, **no one without defects**.

RH 11/21/99: **We are all sinners**, and should seek for true elevation of character through Christ. We are not to exalt ourselves, and then expect the sinner to climb to us.

RH 5/25/05: Each one of us has all that he can do to **overcome his own faults**. Search out your own defects, and ask God to help you. Do not, for Christ's sake, excuse yourself from doing the very work that God has called you to do for yourself, and instead busy yourself trying to set some one else right.

11 MR 263: How much sweet peace we lose because we keep poring over **the disagreeable items in ourselves** and in our brethren. We must look away from the disagreeable to Jesus. We must love Him more, obtain more of His attractive beauty and grace of character, and cease the contemplation of others' mistakes and errors. We should remember that **our own ways are not faultless**. **We make mistakes again and again**, and should others watch our every word and every action as diligently as we watch them, they would present **a catalogue fully as dark** as we are able to present against our

brethren and sisters. No one is perfect but Jesus. Think of Him and be charmed away from yourself, and from every disagreeable thing, for by beholding our defects faith is weakened. God and His promises are lost from sight.

16 MR 7: Not all have the same work to do, but to every man is given his work. To no one man is committed the whole work. No man is to exalt himself or any other man; for whatever man's position may be, he is **not free from defects**, and he should guard against self-exaltation, envy, jealousy, selfishness, covetousness.

18 MR 328,9: We shall be **often disappointed, for we shall not find perfection in those who are connected with us, and they will not see perfection in us**. It is only by agonizing effort on our part that we shall become unselfish, humble, childlike, teachable, meek and lowly of heart, like our divine Lord. We must bring our hearts and minds up to a high point of education on spiritual and heavenly things.

This world is not heaven, but it is the workshop of God for the fitting up of His people for a pure and holy paradise. And while each one of us is to feel that he is a part of the great web of humanity, he **must not expect that others in that web will be without a flaw any more than himself**.

Mistakes will be made, and if the erring are willing to be corrected, a valuable experience is gained, so that their defeat is turned to victory. You should consider that while **many of our own errors** are not brought to light, [we should] be careful not to make the mistakes and imperfections of others appear in their worst light either to yourself or to others. No man is perfect, and unjust criticism indulged towards others is not wise or Christlike.

1SM 337: We are to grow daily in spiritual loveliness. We shall **fail often in our efforts** to copy the divine pattern. We shall **often have to bow down to weep** at the feet of Jesus, **because of our shortcomings and mistakes**; but we are not to be discouraged; we are to pray more fervently, believe more fully, and try again with more steadfastness to grow into the likeness of our Lord.

Education 29: Christ is the "Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 1:9. As through Christ every human being has life, so also through Him every soul receives some ray of divine light. Not only intellectual but spiritual power, a perception of right, a desire for goodness, exists in every heart. But **against these principles** there is struggling **an antagonistic power. The result of the eating** of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is **manifest in every man's experience**. There is **in his nature a bent to evil, a force** which, unaided, he cannot resist.

VII. Do these facts furnish us with an excuse for remaining in sin?

Romans 5:19;6:1: For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. What shall we say then? **Shall we continue in sin**, that grace may abound? God forbid. **How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?**

ST 8/29/92: There are many who in their hearts murmur against God. They say, "We inherit the fallen nature of Adam, and are not responsible for our natural imperfections." They find fault with God's requirements, and complain that he demands what they have no power to give. Satan made the same complaint in heaven, but such thoughts dishonor God....

They argue that they are born with strong passions and appetites, and are surrounded with objects that solicit to sin, and under such circumstances how is it just to condemn them? **But God answers:** "I did all that could be done for your forefather Adam; I gave him the noblest qualities and the highest powers; my requirements were light upon him. It was because he did not believe my word, did not choose to stand the simple test I imposed upon him, but believed the word of my enemy, that he fell from his holy estate. But in his fallen condition **did I not send help?** I sent my Son, who was equal with myself, that he might live an example upon earth, and die for man's transgressions, that you might make no mistakes or failures in obtaining eternal life."