

## *Discipleship Lesson 7*

# Sin

### *Key Memory Verse:*

*No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

*1 Corinthians 10:13*



# **Discipleship**

## **Lesson 7**

### **Sin**

As you study this lesson you will understand why the following statements are **not true**.

1. It is possible to progress to a place of sinless perfection.
2. All difficult trials are a result of sin in your life.
3. There are certain sins that you can commit that will cause you to lose your salvation.
4. Most of our sins are a result of how we were raised.

#### **How Do I Overcome Sin in My Life?**

A famous preacher once said that when a saved person begins to battle sin in his own life, he enters a combat so intense it makes World War II look like a Sunday school picnic. This truth is not always evident to a young Christian, but as you grow and begin to serve the Lord, you will understand the intensity of the struggle.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this lesson is to help you understand that as a Christian you must continue to battle sin in your life. Salvation does not mean that you will not have any more temptations or continue to battle sin in certain areas of your life.

Galatians 5:17 clearly explains to us that there is a war going on between the Holy Spirit and your flesh. This is very confusing to many Christians, but it explains why at times we feel like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. This lesson is to help you learn how to gain victory over your flesh.

## I. What Is Sin?

- A. When you read Romans 7, you begin to understand that every Christian will battle sin in his life. Note some of the names for sin: “the law of sin,” Romans 7:23; “this body of death,” Romans 7:24; “my flesh” (“my sinful nature” in many translations), Romans 7:18; “sin living in me,” Romans 7:17; just plain “sin,” Romans 7:11; and “the law of sin and death,” Romans 8:2. Theologians like to call it “indwelling sin.”

Whatever we call it, it is an enemy of God and of our souls. The reason for this study is that **the first step in fighting this enemy is to know it and to know it well.**

1. What does 1 John 3:4 say that sin is?

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2. What does 1 John 5:17 tell us?

It tells us that sin is any \_\_\_\_\_.

- B. There are four key truths we need to remember from Romans 7:21 (NIV).

“So I find this law at work; when I want to do good, evil is right there with me.”

1. **Sin living in us is a “law.”**

Why call sin a law? Paul uses “law” as a metaphor. He needs a way to express the power, authority, constraint and control that sin wields in our lives.

**Here is a key question:** “In what sense has Christ defeated sin in the believer?” The answer is that He has overthrown its rule, weakened its power, and even killed its root so that it cannot bear the fruit of eternal death in a believer. Still—and this is amazing but true—sin is sin, its nature and purpose remain unchanged, its force and success can still grab us by the throat.

2. **We find this “law” inside us.**

Believers are the only people who ever find “the law of sin” at work in them. **Unbelievers can’t feel it.** “The law of sin” is a raging river carrying them along. They cannot measure the force of the current because they have surrendered themselves to it and are borne along by it. A believer, on the other hand, swims up stream—he meets sin head on and strains under its strength.

## Notes and Questions



## Notes and Questions:

### 3. We find this “law” even when we are at our best.

As powerful as this law of sin is, it does not rule the heart of the believer. Paul found it at work in him even while “he wanted to do good.” Paul was aware of it even when he most wanted to serve God. The law of sin works from the inside and ambushes believers at their best, yet it is not their dictator. By God’s grace, the desire to obey Him ordinarily prevails in us even against this insidious enemy within.

### 4. This law never rests (Galatians 5:17).

Law of sin and death is in a constant tug of war against the believer’s overall desire to please God (verses 14–25). But sin goes further. When the believer sets his jaw to even the simplest duty to God, sin fights him right at that point (evil is right there with me, verse 21), making him drowsy or distracted when he would pray or stingy and covetous when he would tithe.

- C. In your own words, describe a time when you felt this inward struggle or war with sin.

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## II. Why Do We Sin?—two main reasons:

On what do most people blame their sin? Name three things.

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- A. First of all, we sin because of the rewards that sin offers. Those rewards are **the pleasures of sin**. Those pleasures fall into three areas:

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world” (1 John 2:15–16, NKJV).

Name the three areas of sin:

1. The lust of the \_\_\_\_\_ .  
See also Galatians 5:19–21.

Give two examples:

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2. The lust of the \_\_\_\_\_ .  
See also Matthew 4:8.

Give two examples:

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3. The \_\_\_\_\_ of life. See also Matthew 4:5–6.

Give two examples:

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## Notes and Questions:

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4. The pleasures of sin are usually wrapped with beautiful paper called **deceit** (Ephesians 4:22; Hebrews 3:13). What are some ways that sin tries to deceive us?

For example, as long as Eve could see things clearly, she was fine, but when the serpent deceived her, she ate (Genesis 3:13). When Adam followed her, sin entered the world. Trickery always has been and always will be Satan's mode of operation.

Over and over again, when God warns us against sin, He cautions us to watch out for its treachery. In fact, you can write this down as a maxim: when the flesh deceives you ... you will sin (Titus 3:3; Ephesians 4:22).

5. It is very important to remember that God does not \_\_\_\_\_ us to do evil (James 1:13).  
What does this mean?

**B. Secondly, when we do right, sin threatens us with punishment (Hebrews 11:24–26).**

1. Sin threatens us with all sorts of evil, trouble, and danger if we decide to stand for God. Like Moses, if you take a stand for God in our world, what are some of the costs?
  2. The life of the disciple is not for the timid. Most would rather give in to sin than go through the painful work of discipline. How often do Christians have to say no to their flesh? Review Luke 9:23.
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### III. How to Gain Victory Over Sin

Romans 8:13, "For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live."

If you are going to enjoy the abundant Christian life and have a positive spiritual impact on others, you must learn how to defeat your number one enemy, the flesh. God has given us the weapons to win, yet too many Christians are not using them effectively.

- A. Step 1. The main command the Lord Jesus gives us in order to prevent sin and temptation is to \_\_\_\_\_ (Mark 13:37; 2 Timothy 4:5a).

The word means to be diligent, to not be surprised and entangled by temptations (Deuteronomy 32:29; Hebrews 6:11–12; 2 Peter 1:5–11).

1. This speaks of our desire to stand guard against temptation and sin's deceitful ways.
2. What does Proverbs 4:23 say we should guard above all else? \_\_\_\_\_  
This refers to our affections and passions.
3. In your own words, what is the first step?

- B. Step 2. Prepare your mind.

1. Your mind is the watchman of the soul, commanded to judge and determine whether something is good and pleasing to God (Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 10:4–5).  
**Read 2 Corinthians 10:4–5** and identify some strongholds in your life. (A stronghold is an entrenched pattern of thought, and ideology, value, or behavior that is contrary to the Word and will of God.)  
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2. The flesh, on the other hand, wants to fix your imaginations on something that will lead you into the clutches of sin. Once you begin thinking about evil, the flesh will always give you some excuse to practice it (Romans 13:14).

### Notes and Questions:

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3. What weapons does God give us to defeat evil imaginations?

Weapon #1—Matthew 26:41

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Weapon #2—Psalm 1:1–3, 19:14, 119:97; 1 Timothy 4:15

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On a scale of 1 to 10, how well are you daily practicing these two spiritual disciplines?

\_\_\_\_\_ (1 poor–10 great)

### C. Step 3. Trust God's promise (1 Corinthians 10:13).

1. What does God promise not to do?
2. This means I know I can have victory over the flesh each day because God will not put me into a trial that is too great for me.
3. This promise gives me great confidence that if I watch, pray, and meditate on God's Word, I can have victory over the deceitful ways of the flesh.

## IV. What should you do when you sin?

- A. What does 1 John 1:8–10 say we should do?

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- B. When you confess your sin, what does God say He will do?

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## V. Understanding God's Chastening for Sin

- A. Read Hebrews 12:5–13. The key word in this section is *chastening*. It is the Greek word that means “child training, instruction, and discipline.”

God makes it very clear that He will develop every Christian through training, instruction, and discipline.

God's purpose in these disciplines is to transform us into the image of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18).

1. What is the first reason that God chastens all Christians? See Hebrews 12:6.

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Satan wants us to believe that the difficulties of life are proof that God does not love us, but we must learn that just the opposite is true (Psalm 94:12; Proverbs 3:11–12; Revelation 3:19).

The Father does not want us to be pampered babies. He wants us to become mature adults who can be trusted with the responsibilities of life. **Remember, God never uses more pain than is necessary to change our behavior.**

2. What is the second reason God chastens all Christians? See Hebrews 12:11.

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3. What's important is *how* a Christian responds to chastening. He can despise it or faint under it (Hebrews 12:5), both of which are wrong. He should show reverence to the Father by submitting to His will, verse 9, and use the experience to exercise himself spiritually, verse 11.

- B. Chastening is a proof that you are a Christian. If you can sin and never feel the conviction of the Holy Spirit and the correction from your heavenly Father, then what does God say is true of you? See Hebrews 12:7–8.
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## Notes and Questions



## Notes and Questions:

## V. Practical Application

- A. Where do you most often place the blame for sinful choices?
- B. What are you watching, reading, or listening to that stimulates evil imaginations?
- C. What scriptures can you meditate on when you are tempted?
- D. Name two important truths or principles that stood out to you from this lesson.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_