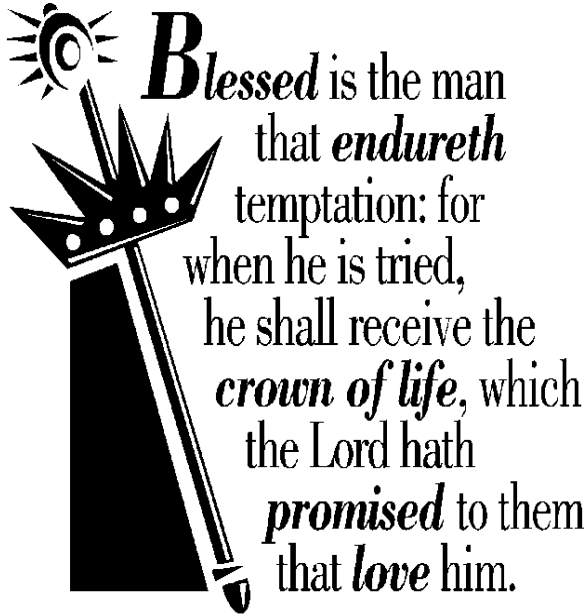


SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 9



James 1:12 KJV

The Nature of Sin

Scripture Texts: Romans 5:12; James 1:13-15; Isaiah 59:2; John 8:34; 1 John 3:8

Sin is the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4). There is sin of conduct – of acts – what we do or leave undone. There is sin of character – of being – what we are. **All unrighteousness is sin (1 John 5:17).** The sinful character or nature is the cause of choosing to sin. Sinful acts spring from sin in the heart. We can also be guilty of sin without committing the act. The wish to is sin. By approving of or taking pleasure in other people's sins, we become guilty of them.

All have sinned. Because all have sinned, all need a Savior. Sin always brings death. Sin separates us from God, makes us children of the devil and will finally take us to hell. **Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people (Proverbs 14:34).**

MEMORY VERSE: *Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.—James 1:15*

The Great Curse

Romans 5:12 By one man sin entered. Adam and Eve, by their act of disobedience, brought sin into the world. This thing they had brought upon the human race was the greatest curse of mankind, in fact, the only curse. Adam's sin brought sin and death to all mankind. **Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.** We are not punished for Adam's sin, but Adam's sin gave us the tendency to yield to sin. All people have done so. Then we each suffer the consequences of our own sins. If we could only weigh more carefully the effects of our every act! Because we all have sinned, none excepted; so all have this death, none excepted; therefore, all need the Savior, none excepted.

Lust Bringeth Forth Sin

James 1:13-15 God does not send temptation to sin. Temptation is the suggestion in our minds. It is caused by our lust. Lusts are normal desires, twisted and corrupted by sin. Lust is the wish which draws us away from God and toward sin. We listen and look and think about the sin, and then temptation appears upon the scene. We yield. The lust **bringeth forth sin: and sin ... bringeth forth death.** Death is separation from God. It is a dark picture, getting blacker at every step – evil, sorrow, fear, and finally, hell forever. The devil tells us there is no harm, but he is a liar (**John 8:44**). On the path away from God, things always grow worse, never better. We all are on it until saved by Jesus Christ.

Sinners Need God

Isaiah 59:2 Your iniquities have separated between you and your God. Separation – death. No communion with God, no smile from Him, no strength through Him, no answer to prayer from Him, and no hope of being with Him. Sin separates and must be cleared away before the contact is made again. Jesus died to clear it away. He is the **one mediator between God and men (1 Timothy 2:5)**, the only One Who can make the connection.

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Like a flower craves sunshine, so the heart of man craves God and cannot be satisfied without Him. The breath of God made man a living soul and gave him holiness, truth, love, light, and life. Sin cut off man from these. Sinners are always wandering in the darkness of death, starving for God and never satisfied. The devil pictured the tree as good, pleasant, and to be desired. What a lie that was! A child asked to be told the story of the poison tree. He named it right. God is the only One Who can heal man of the poison. Jesus, God's Son, died to do it. He tells us, **Beside me there is no Saviour (Isaiah 43:11).**

Sin Enslaves

John 8:34 Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. Sin blinds, sin binds, and sin enslaves. Sinners may say, "I have sin under control in my life. I am not going to do this and that." The entire time one thinks he has sin in his life under control; he is being wound more tightly in its entangling web. No sinner can truthfully say he is a free person. What he would not, that he does, and what he would do, he cannot. Continually fighting continually defeated. The binding, enslaving power of sin is the reason for the failure of some to yield to Christ, even when they hear the Gospel and desire to break with sin. There is one way to freedom, found in **John 8:36.**

Sin corrupts the heart until every imagination of the thoughts is evil continually (**Genesis 6:5**). It twists the conscience until man can do wrong and excuses it, or chooses wrong with no sorrow. Sin changes the affections until people love self rather than God. It sets the affections on earthly things. The more we love material gifts that perish, the less we love the Giver. Sin enslaves the will under the control of the devil until man is no longer free in the choice of right, but his will is over-balanced toward the choice of evil. **Men loved darkness rather than light (John 3:19).** Sin is unjust; it causes the innocent to suffer for others' acts. There is nothing right about sin. God hates sin so much that He made a way of escape in Christ. That which God hates, the saints hate too. Sin keeps a person from God and Heaven. Read **1 Corinthians 6:9-10.** Why do people remain in sin when they are shown an escape route through the Gospel? It is because of this enslavement of the will. Sin binds.

The Cure for Sin

1 John 3:8 He that committeth sin is of the devil. The sinner is not of God. He follows the devil. He is like the devil. He belongs to the devil. He is a child of the devil. The devil did a destructive work in Eden. All wrong, sickness, suffering, and death came in then. The place of the sinner is in the devil's kingdom, in the devil's family. Is there hope for the sinner? Yes. God has not left man to remain the helpless captive of sin. He has a plan to save him. That way is **the Son of God** who was **manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.** Thank the Lord!

To have life of soul, we must get rid of sin from both actions and heart. Reformation of habits – "turning over a new leaf" from evil doings to good works – is not the cure. The soul is dead because of sins committed within. Therefore, we must be made new inside, born again of God. This can be done only through faith in the blood of Jesus Christ.

JUST A THOUGHT

Building boys is better than mending men.

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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