

SIN

The first and foremost sin is rebellion against God and His Word

Remember and do not forget how you provoked the Lord your God to wrath in the wilderness. From the day you came out of the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the Lord (Deuteronomy 9:7).

A preference in our hearts for self over God.

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise,^[b] she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate (Genesis 3:6).

Transgression of the law of God

Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness (1 John 3:4)

Falling short of the glory of God

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23)

Suppression of the Truth

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse (Romans 1:18-20).

Not Honoring God as God

For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened (Romans 1:21)

Worshipping and Serving the Creature Rather than the Creator

²⁵ because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen (Romans 1:24-25)

Root of Sin: Romans 1-3

Power of Sin: Romans 5-7

Words David Uses for His Sin in Psalm 51
(written after David's adultery with Bathsheba)

Transgressions (pesha) implies self-assertiveness. David's folly was to make himself the center of the universe which is what sin always does. Sin marginalizes any rival.

Iniquity (awon) denotes the twistedness or distortion that destroys everything. As a sinner I have a fatal flaw. Made for God's glory, I have fallen short of it. Instead of glorifying Him in a God-centered life I glorify myself and thus pervert what I am.

Sin (chattah) failure, miss the mark, squander destiny

Evil (ra) is evil against God. Doing what is wrong in God's sight.
Evil deeds are the fruit of an evil heart

At the very bottom, at the root of all sinning, is a heart that is dead, dark, and diseased that prefers anything above God, a heart that does not treasure God over all other persons and all other things. Sinning is any feeling or thought or speech or action that comes from a heart that does not treasure God over all other things.

Sin is:

- The glory of God not honored.
- The holiness of God not revered.
- The greatness of God not admired.
- The power of God not praised.
- The truth of God not sought.
- The wisdom of God not esteemed.
- The beauty of God not treasured.
- The goodness of God not savored.
- The faithfulness of God not trusted.
- The promises of God not believed.
- The commandments of God not obeyed.
- The justice of God not respected.
- The wrath of God not feared.
- The grace of God not cherished.
- The presence of God not prized.
- The person of God not loved.

Inherited, Inherent, or Original Sin
Imputed Sin
Individual Sins

INHERITED, INHERENT, ORIGINAL SIN

Through the temptation of Satan, Adam and Eve—fell in sin voluntarily disobeyed, rebelled against the clear command of God and fell from original holiness and righteousness. Inheriting a corrupt nature opposed to God and His Law. As a result of Adam's in every human being ever born enters the world with a sinful, polluted, corrupt nature, dead in their trespasses and sins.

This passed-on, passed-down depravity is known as inherent sin or original sin. Just as we inherit characteristics from our parents, we inherited our sinful natures from Adam. King David grieves over this condition of his fallen human nature in Ps. 51:5: “Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.”

IMPUTED SIN

Imputed means to take something that belongs to someone and credit it to another's account. Imputed GUILT of sin. We are regarded as having sinned in Adam, as if we were guilty of his act as well and deserving of the same punishment.

INDIVIDUAL SINS

Sin which is committed every day by every human being. Because we have inherited a sin nature from Adam, we commit individual, personal sins every day. Everything from seemingly innocent untruths to murder. Anger, fear, worry, jealousy, bitterness, unbelief, pride, revenge, and more. “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. ¹⁶For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world” (1 John 2:15-16).

RIGHTEOUSNESS

Imputed Righteousness

Imparted Holy Spirit

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

Jesus Righteousness Imputed to Us

God imputed the sin of believers to the account of Jesus Christ.

Our sin was imputed to Christ—He did not inherit it from Adam.

Christ bore the penalty for our sin—He never sinned! He never became a sinner!

Christ was treated as guilty of all sins ever committed—Yet He committed none!!!

All of our sins, past, present, and future were laid upon Christ who paid the penalty for that sin—death—on the cross. Imputing our sin to Jesus, God treated Him as if He were a sinner, though He was not, and had Him die for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2).

Christ's Righteousness is Credited to Our Account

Our sin *record* is expunged.

We are seen in Christ as having never sinned.

But our sin still remains.

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IMPARTED HOLY SPIRIT

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” Acts 1:13

Given a new heart. New creature in Christ

Given the Holy Spirit and the Fruit of the Spirit

The Spirit of Christ within

The law is written on our hearts

And the power to live that law through the Spirit of God.

Jonathan Edwards puts it this way:

"A divine and supernatural light are immediately IMPARTED to the soul by the Spirit of God"

REMAINING INDWELLING SIN

Remaining indwelling sin means that although
100% of our debt has been paid
100% of our record has been expunged
We still have 100% of our sin!

We choose to Love God and say **NO** to the Self, the Old Self, the Flesh, the Old Nature.
We choose to Love Others say **NO** to Self, the Old Self, the Flesh, the Old Nature.
Because God first Loved Us.

You have Died. Put to Death what is Earthly. Old Self. New Self.

Colossians 3:3-11 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. 5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 On account of these the wrath of God is coming. 7 In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. 8 But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

New Creation. Old Passed Away.

2 Corinthians 5:16:-17: From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Put off the Old. Put on the New.

Ephesians 4:22-24 Put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Desires of the Flesh. Desires of the Spirit. Keep in Step with the Spirit.

Galatians 5:16-26 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy,

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Sin and Righteousness and Remaining Sin

fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.

I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Dead to Sin. Alive to God.

Romans 6:1-23 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

¹² Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. ¹³ Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

¹⁵ What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶ Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves,^[a] you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, ¹⁸ and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹ I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented

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your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

²⁰ For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. ²¹ But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. ²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Crucified with Christ. Live by Faith.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

THEOLOGIANS ON REMAINING INDWELLING SIN

The Reformation Study Bible text note Galatians 5:17

“For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.”

"...The narrowest use, especially when placed in contrast to 'Spirit', is to refer to the sinful human nature that is part of the old fallen world, which here includes the mind and soul..."

George Smeaton described the tension this way:

'There (is) an internal conflict between flesh and spirit between an old and new nature. And the strange thing is, that in this conflict the power and faculties of the Christian seem to be occupied at one time by the one, and at another time by the other. The same intellect, will, and affections come under different influences, like two conflicting armies occupying the ground, and in turn driven from the field.'

R. C. Sproul

"But we protest, we are Christians. We are lovers of God. We have experienced reconciliation. We have been born of the Spirit and have had the love of God shed abroad in our hearts. We are no longer enemies but friends. All of these things are true for the Christian. But we must be careful, remembering that with our conversion our natural human natures were not annihilated. There remains a vestige of our fallen nature with which we must struggle every day. There still resides a corner of the soul that takes no delight in God. We see its ragged edge in our continued sin, and we can observe it in our lethargic worship. It manifests itself even in our theology." pgs. 181-182 of 'The Holiness of God'.

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Jerry Bridges: Growing Your Faith

'There (is) an internal conflict between flesh and spirit between an old and new nature. And the strange thing is, that in this conflict the power and faculties of the Christian seem to be occupied at one time by the one, and at another time by the other. The same intellect, will, and affections come under different influences, like two conflicting armies occupying the ground, and in turn driven from the field.'

Another way of describing this tension between the sinful nature and the Spirit is to liken it to a tug-of-war. With two opposing teams pulling on the rope, its direction of movement often goes back and forth until one team eventually prevails. This is the way it will be with us until the Holy Spirit finally prevails."

John Piper

Romans 7:25 Paul's shout of victory in verse 25, "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord," is *not* a signal that he has moved to a new, triumphant kind of life above the battles and losses of Romans 7. Instead this shout of hope is followed by a sober, realistic summary that Paul, the Christian, is both a new man and an old man. He is both indwelt by the Spirit and harassed by the flesh. He is freed from the dominion of sin and indwelt by remaining corruption. This will be his lot until he dies or until Christ comes.

Paul says that his life of obedience comes from his mind being renewed by the Holy Spirit so that he can prove what is the will of God, and when he fails in thought or feeling or word or act it is the flesh – the old fallen nature – harassing him and getting the upper hand.

Piper Ephesians 4:22-24

What is the first thing Jesus says to us when we enter his school? Answer: Ephesians 4: 22–24 (my literal translation): Put off the old person [or: old self; or: old man] which accords with the former way of life and which is corrupted in accord with the desires of deceit. And be renewed in the spirit of your mind. And put on the new person which was created in accordance with God in righteousness and holiness of the truth. And so after you hear the voice of Christ and are made alive and brought to faith in him and enter into his school to let him teach you how to live, the first thing he says to you is: "change your clothes." Take off the old person and put on the new person.

Putting Off the Old Person

So we should ask immediately: What do these two garments refer to? What is the old person and what is the new person? Verse 25 gives a helpful clue. The same word is used for "put off" both here and in verse 22, as though Paul meant to illustrate now what he intends by putting

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off the old person. He says, "Therefore putting off falsehood, speak truth." So it seems like one example of putting off the old person is to put off bad practices that belong to the old way of life—like lying. Another good clue to the meaning of "the old person" is in [Colossians 3:8–9](#).

But now put them all away [same Greek word as in [Ephesians 4:22](#)]: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old person with its practices.

So putting off the old person is more than putting off old practices, because [Colossians 3:9](#) says we put it off WITH its practices. And [Colossians 3:8](#) mentions things that lie beneath and behind practices—like anger and wrath.

So the old person is the old bundle of attitudes and emotions and practices that I used to be. That's who I was before I was called out of darkness by the voice of Jesus and began to be taught in his school.

Putting On the New Person

[Colossians 3:12](#) gives the same kind of clue about the meaning of the new person that we are supposed to put on. Paul says, "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and loved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience."

So the new person is the new bundle of attitudes and emotions and practices that Jesus has called us to become in his school. We must take off the old person and put on the new person. It is absolutely imperative that we get our moral clothes changed. If we don't, we will not graduate. We will not make it to heaven.

Sinclair Ferguson

Repentance includes a new attitude toward self.

It means dying to old ways, crucifying the flesh. Initial repentance is simply the beginning of an ongoing process in which the lifestyle of the old self is dismantled and put to death. Older writers referred to this as mortification of sin. Such repentance is radical. It involves agreeing with God's judgment on my sinful life, justifying God in his righteousness, and condemning myself in my sinfulness. It is taking up the cross, denying myself, putting off the old man ([Ephesians 4:22](#), [Colossians 3:9](#)) and crucifying the flesh with its lusts ([Galatians 5:24](#)).

The Christian is a new person in Christ, but he is imperfectly renewed. He has died to sin and had been raised to new life. But this mortification and vivification continue throughout the whole course of his life on earth. We are no longer what we once were but we are not yet what God calls us to become; and as long as that is the case we are called to an ongoing battle for holiness.

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John Owen, Of the Mortification of Sin in Believers

“Indwelling sin is compared to a person, a living person, called “the old man,” with his faculties, and properties, his wisdom, craft, subtlety, strength; this, says the apostle, must be killed, put to death, mortified, — that is, have its power, life, vigour, and strength, to produce its effects, taken away by the Spirit.”

Ligonier Ministries, The Flesh

Article First published in Tabletalk Magazine, an outreach of Ligonier.

When the Bible speaks of the war between flesh and spirit, it is not speaking about a war between body and soul. Rather, it is speaking about a war within ourselves — a war of our desires. This war is fought between the new life granted to us by the Spirit and our sin nature which has not yet been removed from us completely.

When we place our trust in Christ alone, we are set free from the slavery to sin and enabled to live our lives according to His will. That is, we are enabled to live our lives by the Spirit. However, our sinful nature is not totally eradicated. Though it no longer controls us, it still presently resists the Spirit at times so that we do not follow Jesus, the life-giving Spirit, on every occasion. The flesh is the term for this sinful nature. This nature will not be eradicated until we are glorified. Until then, we are commanded to put it to death so that we will keep in step with the Spirit ([Col. 3:5](#)).

In order for us to progress in our walk, the old nature of the flesh must be weakened and our new nature must be strengthened. One of the most powerful ways we can do this is through godly fellowship with other believers. Find another believer whom you do not know well, and take steps to establish a godly relationship with him or her.