



World Christian Fellowship

www.wcflondon.com
wcflondon@gmail.com

Galatians

Lesson 29- Sin & Hopelessness

Galatians 3:10-14, *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.”¹¹ But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for “the just shall live by faith.”¹² Yet the law is not of faith, but “the man who does them shall live by them.”¹³ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”),¹⁴ that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

Everything about the Lord's table talks about sin. Sin is a very unpopular term in our society, and in our culture. Even in churches there is rather careful effort to avoid the subject of sin, if possible.

Sin is offensive.

Today people don't want to acknowledge their sin. They want to avoid guilt any way they can and blame it on others or the circumstances.

The very heart and soul of the gospel is the issue of sin. Any understanding of the gospel, and presentation of the gospel, any comprehension of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is based upon a proper understanding of sin. Until we understand the sinfulness of sin and the sinfulness of man, the gospel cannot have its full meaning.

Sin has devastated every relationship,

- ✓ man, and God,
- ✓ man, and man, and
- ✓ man, and nature.

It has generated cosmic confusion in the heavens between angels and demons.

Sin waits to attack every baby born into the world beginning at conception. Sin rules every human heart and intends to damn every soul to an eternal hell. Sin has turned beauty into ugly deformity, and the sinner is more concerned to cover his sin than to have it cured. He is more eager to excuse it than to admit it and seek a solution.

The Bible says men are not only sinners, but they love their sin. They love darkness rather than light because they learned to cherish their evil deeds.

The Bible calls sin the accursed thing.

Joshua 7:13, *Get up, sanctify the people, and say, 'Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, because thus says the Lord God of Israel: "There is an accursed thing in your midst, O Israel; you cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the accursed thing from among you."*

It is compared to the venom of snakes;

It is compared to the stench of rotting death.

The grossest kind of language possible in human vocabulary is used in the Bible to describe sin.

A simple definition of sin,

1 John 3:4, *Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.*

Any violation of God's law constitutes sin.

Anytime God's law is broken, that is sin.

Everyone who lawlessly violates God's law, in any part has committed a sin.

So, the standard by which sin is defined is the law of God.

The standard of sin is not cultural values or cultural morals. It is not a matter of some social, ethical system.

Sin is defined by the Word of God, the law of God, the Scripture in which God has revealed His moral law.

Any violation of Law of God is sin.

Sin could be titled a number of things:

- iniquity,
- transgression,
- unrighteousness.

The Bible calls it all of those things. It is breaking of the law of God, or a violating of God's law, or God's expressed will.

It is like living as if there was no God, no law, and no consequences.

- Any act,
- any word,
- any thought,
- any motive

that in any way violates God's holy, just, perfect law is sin.

God is the authority who has established the law. He set the standard for man to live by. Any violation of it constitutes sin.

How are we to understand sin?

1. Defiling
2. Rebellious
3. Ingratitude
4. Incurable
5. Deadly

1. Defiling

It is not only a defection from the standard, it is a pollution.

- Like rust is to metal for our soul.
- Like a scar to the lovely face.
- Like a black ink mark on a white paper.

Isaiah 64:6, *But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away.*

1 Kings 8:38, *whatever prayer, whatever supplication is made by anyone, or by all Your people Israel, when each one knows the plague of his own heart, and spreads out his hands toward this temple:*

Zechariah 3:3, *Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel.*

So, sin is seen as more than just some ethical breach, but it is a polluting thing. It stains the soul and it darkens the mind.

Zechariah 11:8, *I dismissed the three shepherds in one month. My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me.*

Ezekiel 20:43, *And there you shall remember your ways and all your doings with which you were defiled; and you shall loathe yourselves in your own sight because of all the evils that you have committed.*

Sin pollutes, defiles and stains.

"Sin is called poison; sinners, serpents.

Sin is called vomit; sinners licking dogs.

Sin is called the stench of graves; sinners rotted sepulchres.

Sin is called mire; sinners pigs." By Thomas Goodwin.

2. Rebellious

Sin demonstrates that man at heart is a rebel.

Psalm 12:4, *Who have said, "With our tongue we will prevail; Our lips are our own; Who is lord over us?"*

We will say whatever we want to say. Whatever comes out of our mouth is what we desire to come out of our mouth, and nobody is going to take charge over us.

Jeremiah 2:31, *"O generation, see the word of the Lord! Have I been a wilderness to Israel, Or a land of darkness? Why do My people say, 'We are lords; We will come no more to You'?"*

We don't want a thing to do with you, God. We will run our own lives. Rebellion.

Frank Sinatra's statement, "I'll do it my way."

The Hebrew word for sin is the word '*chata*', and it signifies rebellion.

Jeremiah 44:17, *But we will certainly do whatever has gone out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For then we had plenty of food, were well-off, and saw no trouble.*

We'll do exactly what we're going to say we're going to do.

Sin is doing it my way. Sin is dethroning God! Sinner replaces God.

3. Ingratitude.

Romans 1 points out the fact that God has created everything and given it to man for his enjoyment and to lead man to God so that man is without excuse, but man has turned on God. And Paul says in Romans 1, "He is not thankful."

That is one of the heinous crimes that sin commits against God's goodness, ingratitude.

God had given us

- ✓ life,
- ✓ breath,
- ✓ beauty,
- ✓ food,
- ✓ joy,
- ✓ Home,
- ✓ Love,
- ✓ Adventure,
- ✓ knowledge,
- ✓ wisdom,
- ✓ fun,
- ✓ laughter,
- ✓ skill,
- ✓ health, and
- ✓ world full of goodness.

The sinner surrounded by God's goodness mocks God, abuses His privilege.

It's like Absalom, the son of David. As soon as David, his father, had kissed him and hugged him, taken him into his heart, Absalom left his father's kiss, went out and plotted treason against his father.

So, the sinner indulges in the embraces of God's goodness in the world that God has made for him, and then betrays him by being the friend of Satan, God's archenemy.

Deuteronomy 32:6, *Do you thus deal with the Lord, O foolish and unwise people? Is He not your Father, who bought you? Has He not made you and established you?*

God being so good to you and you repay Him with your ingratitude?

4. Incurable

Jeremiah 13:23, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil.*

Obvious answer?

No.

You can't change yourself at all any more than a leopard can change his own spots, or an Ethiopian change the colour of his skin. You have an incurable leprosy of the soul.

All your sorrow, all your self-effort is useless. The everlasting burnings of hell cannot purify the flaming conscience from the least sin.

Hell is where men pay an unpayable debt, that's why it's forever.

- No human cure,
- not good works,
- no reformation,
- no education,
- no morality,

Can cure the sin because sin is absolutely incurable.

5. Deadly

Ezekiel 18:4, & 20, *“Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; The soul who sins shall die.*

²⁰*The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.*

Romans 6:23, *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

You would think that people would run from it. So, what runs in your mind, people would run away from sin or try and find cure for it.

But just the opposite is true.

They love their sin, they love their iniquity and they work very hard at it. This defiling, rebellious, ungrateful, violation of God's law, which is incurable and ultimately deadly, and damning is hard work.

Jeremiah 9:5, *Everyone will deceive his neighbour, And will not speak the truth; They have taught their tongue to speak lies; They weary themselves to commit iniquity.*

Psalms 7:14, *Behold, the wicked brings forth iniquity; Yes, he conceives trouble and brings forth falsehood.*

In other words, they're literally having labour pains trying to give birth to some evil they want to do.

Proverbs 4:16, *For they do not sleep unless they have done evil; And their sleep is taken away unless they make someone fall.*

They can't even sleep unless they do evil! Their hearts are restless.

Isaiah 5:18, *Woe to those who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, And sin as if with a cart rope;*

More sin than they can carry on their back. It's literally a burden to be dragged around. They work at it like a beast of burden.

Ezekiel 24:12, *She has grown weary with lies, And her great scum has not gone from her. Let her scum be in the fire!*

How many people are affected by sin?

Everybody.

Romans 3:23, *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

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

Major problem is not what's going on around you and it's not what's done to you!

Major problem is YOU and me.

What are the results of this sin?

Psalms 51:5, *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.*

When David said, "In sin did my mother conceive me," he didn't mean he as an illegitimate child. He meant that from the time of conception, sin was a part of his being. It was there woven into his very being.

What are the results of it?

It causes evil to overpower us. People come into the world and with all the best intentions are inevitably overpowered by evil.

It overpowers their,

- Mind,
- Choices,
- Will,
- Affections, and
- Actions.

It also brings them under Satan's control. They walk according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that works in the children of disobedience. They are children of the devil. They do the deeds of their father, the devil. They are slaves. It brings them, therefore, under God's wrath. They are children of wrath. They will be the objects of God's wrath.

Sin causes the heart never to be satisfied! All the best of life when you have gained it brings you, "Vanity, vanity, all is vanity. Exactly that's what Solomon said that life is Empty, empty, everything is empty."

6. Destination Eternal Hell

Finally, sin brings the soul to eternal hell.

The soul that sins dies, and when it dies, it goes into eternal hell, the lake of fire, Revelation calls it. The doctrine of hell is developed in the Bible by Jesus himself. Jesus is personally responsible for the doctrine of hell.

There is no clearly defined doctrine of hell in the Old Testament. There are bits and pieces of it, but the real doctrine of hell is clearly articulated and defined by Jesus himself.

The loving, gracious, merciful Saviour was the one who defined the doctrine of hell. Obvious reason that He wanted to be sure men and women understood where their sin was taking them, and how important it was to turn to the provision of forgiveness that God offered in Him.

Summary

Sin has pronounced a curse on every human being, and that curse has both temporal and eternal implications.

While living on this earth it brings to all of mankind pain, suffering, sorrow, and trouble. For eternity it brings eternal judgment and eternal punishment.

Galatians 3:10, *"For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse. For it is written, cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law to perform them."*

If you ever broke God's law one time, you're cursed. If you don't always abide by all things written in the book of the law and perform them all in perfection, you are cursed.

Cursed in time and cursed in eternity.

This is the curse of the law, also referred to in verse 13.

V 10, Paul is quoting from **Deuteronomy 27:26**.

God gave his law and God said, "Break it and you're cursed."

It is just kind of stumbling along in our sort of infancy and we don't have the capability to keep it all, all the time and the Lord just kind of picks us up and helps along as we stumble?

No.

The way God's law works is, break it once and you're cursed forever.

You fail to obey God's law at any point, and you are cursed forever.

What is a curse?

A curse is simply a pronouncement of judgment.

It would mean "to be devoted to doom" in the Hebrew. It means devoted to destruction, despised, set apart for judgment.

You break God's law at any point, you will be judged by God. Cursed are all who do not persevere in doing everything written in the law all the time.

This is an impossible situation.

It is absolutely impossible.

You can't keep the law of God. Therefore, we're all cursed. That's exactly what Scripture says. We are all cursed, and we are all on the way to hell. We are all children of wrath under God's judgment.

What is the nature of this cursing?

Deuteronomy 27 and 28 which we saw in the last week.

Few excerpts:

"The Lord will send upon you curses, confusion and frustration in all that you undertake to do until you're destroyed and perish quickly on account of the evil of your doings. The Lord will send a plague, "with fever, inflammation, fiery heat, with drought, with blasting, with mildew. The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. You shall go out in one way against them and flee seven ways before them. You shall be a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. Your dead body shall be food for all birds of the air. For the beasts of the earth, there shall be no one to frighten them away. The Lord will smite you with madness, insanity, blindness, confusion of mind. You shall grope at noonday as the blind grope in darkness. You shall betroth a wife and another man shall lie with her. Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people. It shall not be in the power of your hand to prevent it so that you shall be driven mad by the sight, which your eyes shall see. You shall become a horror, a proverb, a byword."

Jesus pronounced curses.

Matthew 25:41, *“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:*

It was Jesus who pronounced curses on Bethsaida and Capernaum.

The law then becomes a tool for a curse rather than an instrument for salvation.

1. Law can't save you.

You can't be saved by the law because you can't keep it.

It just curses you.

It's a holy law!

It's a good law.

It's a right law.

It's a true law.

It's ethically right.

It's pure law.

It's true to the character of God.

There's nothing wrong with the law itself.

It's you that have a problem. You can't keep it.

Consequently, you can't be saved by it. So, all the law does is curse you because of your inability to keep it.

The law requires behaviour contrary to human nature. The law of God asks you to do what is not normal. It asks you to behave in ways that are not normal. It asks you to do what you don't want to do. It asks you to love what you hate and hate what you love.

It calls for the very opposite of all your longings, all your desires and all your lusts. It asks you to change your natural desires for what is undesirable and unnatural.

2. Law demands impossible

Law not only demands what is contrary to human nature, but it demands what is impossible.

Sinners can't do holy deeds, think holy thoughts, speak holy words. They don't have the ability to do it, so they are forced to do the impossible.

There's none righteous, no, not one. By the deeds of the law shall no one be justified.

Romans 3:20, *Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

It's impossible.

3. Law demands perfection

Law requires perfect performance of every part.

The law is a severe creditor that demands perfect compliance. You can't get a discount on the law. It demands nothing less than absolute perfection. That's not possible.

Matthew 5:48, *Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.*

4. Law does not accept good intentions

Law refuses to accept good intentions and effort as a consolation.

Even if we had a few good desires and meant to do well and wanted to do well and gave it a best effort, intention counts for absolutely nothing because the law has no consolation bracket. Trying doesn't count.

5. Law does not offer payback plan

Law accepts no payback plan. That is, you can't say, "Well, I've violated a lot of it in the past now I'm going to keep some and make up for the past." You can't make up for the past. You can't present and future good deeds to work off your past debt. The debt is never discounted and never repayable. If you were

to break the law once in the beginning of your life, lived the rest of your life a perfect life, hypothetically, you would be damned by that one time. There is no accumulated merit plan that can undo any past iniquity.

On the other hand, if you kept the law your whole life and broke it on your deathbed, it could damn you. You can't accumulate merit to pay off sins in the future. You can't accumulate merit to pay off sins in the past either.

6. Law an unrelenting taskmaster

The law is an unrelenting taskmaster. It never lightens up, it never eases off, it never backs away, never relaxes the requirement, never gives the sinner a moment's rest, doesn't say, "Take next Tuesday off. You can do whatever you want, it won't count." Never does that. No days off.

7. Law breaks happiness

The law shatters happiness. When you measure your life against the law, it's a crushing experience. It's like a steel rod smashing a clay pot, like a hammer breaking a pane of glass. You live with shame and guilt and restlessness and sorrow and fear and pain, dissatisfaction, futility, doubt and hopelessness, you can't find relief. The law furthermore requires the severest penalty, hell with no parole. No time off for good behaviour.

Summary:

The law makes only all of these above demands, but it doesn't help.

The Law has

- ✓ no strength
- ✓ no power,
- ✓ no plan,
- ✓ no assistance,
- ✓ no method
- ✓ no salvation,
- ✓ listens to no repentance,
- ✓ no grace,
- ✓ no mercy,
- ✓ no forgiveness,
- ✓ no hope.

That's the curse of the law and that's where every sinner is. Because everyone has violated God's law, they are under that curse.

Everyone is going to feel the effect of that curse in this life time and, monumentally, in eternal hell.

With one exception of the one sinless one, the incarnate God, Jesus Christ, all men are included.

This takes us to the gospel!

V 13, *"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law."*

This is the great truth of Christianity.

"Redeemed" is to buy us, buy us out. Greek word **'Exagoraz'**, 'agoraz' from agora, the marketplace, out of the marketplace. Jesus came, we were slaves, we were for sale in the marketplace, He bought us and took us out. He ransomed us, paid the full price.

Galatians 4:5, *to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.*

He bought us out from under the curse.

How did He do that?

V 13, *"Having become a curse for us."*

How is it that God could let him do that?

How could Christ buy us out from under the curse?

Jesus became a curse for us! This is the only way He can redeem us from the curse of the law.

Jesus literally took our place. He absorbed the full curse of God against us. He took the curse on himself. That is the great significance of His substitutionary death, and that's the gospel.

Romans 5:6, *For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

He died for us. He died in our place.

Deuteronomy 21:23, *"Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree."*
This is a very good illustration.

Criminals in ancient Hebrew time, under Mosaic Law, were executed usually by being stoned to death. They literally would be placed down on a hard surface below the people with the stones who would then just throw the large rocks until they crushed their life out.

After the person was stoned, they were then, the corpse was then taken, and frequently tied to a post in a very visible place. Displayed to bring shame upon the person for the crime committed, serious warning to the rest. Tying to a post stated that they had been cursed by God. In other words, they had violated God's law and they felt the fury of God's judgment. They were rejected because of their sin.

They were symbols of cursing as per Deuteronomy 21:23. When you see a person there, you're seeing evidence of the curse of God upon them, the judgment for sin.

Paul sees Jesus on the cross like that, like a cursed and executed criminal, rejected by God for his sin. He's hanging there as a

symbol of the wrath of God against sin. Jesus took the curse for us. He became the cursed for us. He bore in his body our sins on the cross. He who knew no sin became sin for us. That is the great reality of the death of Jesus Christ.

If you believe that Jesus died in your place, if you believe that Jesus is God, came into the world in human flesh, died on the cross in your place to be your Saviour, bore the fury of God, absorbed the full curse, if you believe that He died in your place, rose again from the grave having given evidence of satisfying the wrath of God.

If you believe that Jesus accomplished your redemption on the cross, died in your place to provide you forgiveness of sin because the price was paid by Him, then all you need to do is invite Him to be your Saviour, forgive your sin, confess Him as Lord, and by that act of faith, the curse is removed from you and placed upon Him.

This is the gospel.