

## "The Anatomy of Sin"

While many people think sin is obsolete or no big deal, the Scriptures tell us that sin is our enemy. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Today we're exploring how temptation and sin work.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. The Lord Jesus said in a prayer to the Father in John 17:17, "Your word is truth." We believe God's word is the truth and are committed to searching the Scriptures and sharing what they say. The Scripture is the one hope of mankind for life in Christ. One hope for abundant life, and eternal life. There is no other way to the Father in heaven but through Jesus (John 14 verse 6). Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you and we want to be a part of your life each week.

We often lie to ourselves about our sins! Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 6:9 to 10, "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God." Paul wrote in Galatians 6:7 to 8, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life." In our hearts we know that sin is wrong, but some would rather believe a lie than face the truth about sin.

1 John 1 and verse 8 says that, "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us." In verse ten John writes, "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us." Sin matters, because the wages of sin is still death (Romans 6 and verse 23). We cannot enter heaven with unresolved sin.

Now this is an important study on the anatomy of sin, and we offer it free! If you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have materials free on our website at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org) and on YouTube.

We'll now worship in song, read from Luke 22:1 to 6, and explore how temptation and sin works in our lives.

Our reading today comes from the gospel according to Luke chapter 22 verses 1 to 6. And here we read about the arrangement that Judas Iscariot made with the chief priest to betray Jesus.

Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching. The chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they might put Him to death; for they were afraid of the people. And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, belonging to the number of the twelve. And he went away and discussed with the chief priests and officers how he might betray Him to them. They were glad and agreed to give him money. So he consented, and began seeking a good opportunity to betray Him to them apart from the crowd.

That's a reading from God's holy word. Let's pray. Father we're thankful that You have loved us so much. But we're sorry Father that sin enters into our lives. Help us to say no to temptation and no to sin and to live with love towards You. In Jesus name, Amen.

John 11:57 says, "Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where He was, he was to report it, so that they might seize Him." Now apparently, Judas Iscariot found out about this. Luke 22:3 to 6 reveals that Satan entered Judas, and Judas decided to go and discuss

with the chief priests how he might betray Jesus. They were glad Judas wanted to betray Jesus and agreed to give him money. Matthew 26:14 to 16 tells us more: "Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, 'What are you willing to give me to betray Him to you?' And they weighed out thirty pieces of silver to him. From then on he began looking for a good opportunity to betray Jesus." Yes, Judas "consented, and began seeking a good opportunity to betray Him to them apart from the crowd."

The Scriptures consistently suggest that Judas' desire for money was at the heart of his sin. Judas held the money bag and used to help himself to what was put into it according to John 12 and verse 6. Jesus knew that he was a thief. And his greed became a habit to the point that he criticized Mary for not selling the fragrant perfume, so that the three hundred denarii could be given to the poor (John 12:4 to 5). Jesus defended Mary, which would have irritated Judas, who likely wanted to get his hands on those denarii. Perhaps his disappointment over losing Mary's extravagant gift to Jesus led him to agree to take the thirty pieces of silver.

John 13 and verse 2 follows up with the story that, "During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him." Well Jesus knew what was happening. Matthew tells us Matthew 26:21 to 26 that: As they were eating, He said, "Truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me." Now being deeply grieved, they each one began to say to Him, "Surely not I, Lord?" And He answered, "He who dipped his hand with Me in the bowl is the one who will betray Me. "The Son of Man is to go, just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born." And Judas, who was betraying Him, said, "Surely it is not I, Rabbi?" Jesus said to him, "You have said it yourself."

When John asked Jesus who would betray Him, Jesus answered in John 13:26 to 27, "That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him." So when He had dipped the morsel, He took and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. After the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Therefore Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly." John 13:30 says, "So after receiving the morsel he went out immediately; and it was night." Just as the devil tempted Jesus in the wilderness, so the devil tempted the heart of Judas Iscariot to sin.

James 1:13 to 16 helps us see how temptation leads to sin. "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren."

Sin will deceive! Jesus said the devil has been a liar from the beginning in John 8:44. We must study the word of God so that we don't buy into a lie. Hebrews 3:12 to 14 says, "Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called 'Today,' so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end." Now Satan will promise you many pleasures, but they won't last. In the end they'll become destructive to your conscience, to your faith, to your home, and possibly to society.

Sin will not only deceive you, it'll also enslave you. The Lord Jesus said in John 8:34, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin." Now no one likes to think of himself as a slave, but sin is addictive, it's enslaving. Paul explains in Romans 6 and verse 16, "Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you

obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?" Sin is your enemy and will cause you to do evil, things that you never thought you could or would do. Then it fills your soul with guilt and shame; and it makes you small in your own eyes.

Peter describes the Christian who becomes entangled in sin and is overcome as being in a worse condition than they were before they became a Christian. And he said, "For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them. It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "A dog returns to its own vomit," and, "A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire" (2 Peter 2 verses 21 and 2).

Sin does enslave those who commit it. Paul speaks of the consequences of greed in 1 Timothy 6 verses 9 and 10, "But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs." The love of money enslaves people to do things they would never have done otherwise. When the love of the world, including the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life dominates one's heart, the love of the Father vanishes (1 John 2 verses 5 to 17). Now Judas obviously loved having thirty pieces of silver more than the life of the One who had been his friend.

Sin corrupts us spiritually and physically. Titus 1:15 to 16 says that, "To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed." Sin warps our hearts and defiles our consciences. Galatians 6:7 to 8 speaks of the physical corruption. Paul wrote, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption." Well many sins destroy our health and shorten our life. God in His wisdom tells us to avoid such sins because He knows their harm.

Sin also hardens the heart. 1 Timothy 4 verses 1 to 2 says, "But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron." Callous hearts, pretending to be righteous, admitting no sin, having no shame, and telling lies, exist today. Some who fall away from God get so hardened of heart it's impossible to renew them to repentance. They no longer care about the Lord Jesus or the cross He bore for their sins; they love their sinful ways more than they love the Lord.

Sin brings spiritual death. And God's inspired word says in Ephesians 2:1 to 2 says, "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience." When people follow the ways of the world in sin, they're spiritually dead. Romans 6:23 is clear: "The wages of sin is death." Nothing has changed. We can fool ourselves into thinking that our sins don't matter, but they matter to God. Remember, we have sinned against God. The one sinned against looks at sin differently than the one who sins.

Sometimes people lie to themselves and think their sins aren't so bad as to deserve the wrath of God. We're hearing religious leaders to placate culture and trying to overrule God by proclaiming that sinful practices won't bring about the wrath of God, but they're mistaken and presumptuous. Ephesians 5:5 to 6 says, "For this you know with certainty, that no [sexually] immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one

deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.” Human leaders given to the times and the culture, they’re not gonna change God’s will.

All the schemes of the Jewish leaders to silence Jesus Christ failed. Jesus arose from the dead, and the Lord established His church. All the pagan emperors of Rome couldn’t stop Christianity. Oh, they burned Bibles and tore down churches, but the Truth prevailed, and Christianity survives. The teaching of the Holy Scriptures are still true and they’ll last forever. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 24:35 that, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.”

Spiritual death means that we are separated from God; we do not stand in His grace or favor.

Isaiah 59:1 to 2 says, “Behold, the LORD’S hand is not so short That it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.” When people are separated from God by their sins, God no longer hears their prayers or comes to their rescue. We must take our sins seriously.

Sometimes people ignore their responsibility for sin. Judas used to steal from the moneybox. And when the opportunity came to turn Jesus in to the chief priests, you remember that Judas “went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers how he might betray him to them. And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. So he consented and sought an opportunity to betray him to them in the absence of a crowd” (Luke 22:4 to 5). Now Satan tempted Judas Iscariot, and Judas chose to betray Jesus. He wanted the money that the chief priests offered.

Now Judas regretted his deeds. Matthew 27:3 to 4 says, “Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, ‘I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.’” Now Judas didn’t blame others; he felt such guilt and shame that he took his own life.

Now Jesus didn’t excuse the wicked choices that Judas made to steal and betray Him for thirty pieces of silver. Jesus pronounced a “woe” on Judas. “But behold, the hand of the one betraying Me is with Mine on the table. For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!” (Luke 22:21 to 22). When Christians sin and betray their Lord, they must face their guilt and shame. And unless they repent and are forgiven, they can separate themselves from God forever.

Let’s pray. Father help us to love You and to serve You and never to betray You and give in to the sins and the temptations of this world. Help us Heavenly Father always to do Your will. In Jesus name, Amen.

An ancient philosopher said “Sow a thought, reap an act; sow an act, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; and sow a character, reap a destiny. The Lord Jesus knew that sin begins in the heart. He said in Matthew 15:19, “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.” For this reason, Proverbs 4 and verse 23 reminds us of the wisdom of Solomon given to his son, “Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life.”

We should not think that our thoughts don’t matter, Jeremiah 17:9 to 10 says, “The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds.” Where is your heart? Is your mind and heart continually thinking about sinful things or the things of God? You know if you let your thoughts become a habit and continually sin, it can lead you to do things that you despise. Romans 6:21 asks, “Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death.”

Change your heart and your ways. Come to the Lord for forgiveness. You can leave the old ways behind and be born again. You can be saved by grace through faith. Believing in Jesus and in His word; repent of your sins, confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. With God's help you can change and become the godly person that you desire. Don't let anything keep you from leaving sin and becoming a Christian.

We hope that today's study about the anatomy of sin has stirred you consider the Lord's will and begin following it. Now if you live in the United States and want a free printed copy of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now there's also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches in your area at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). And you can watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry." Now when you're watching, be sure to like the programs and this helps spread the program. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. We're happy to offer them to you. Now if you get a hold of us don't worry, we're not asking for money. We're here to help you draw close to God.

We do ask that you focus your heart on God by worshiping at church. Now everybody needs a church family. And there's probably a church of Christ near you. And if you're looking for a church of Christ that healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. Well we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about this program that you watch and encourage them too. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.