

# 2

## Salvation

Have you noticed that there is something wrong with our world? Tragedy, injustice, sickness, greed, depression, mental illnesses, poverty, all forms of abuse, corruption and innumerable other scourges. Some, most, or all of these have beset all societies, cultures and countries in all ages past and present. We can come up with all sorts of opinions and elaborate theories however the Bible has a unique diagnosis for this problem – the Bible says that these issues are the result of sin.

### So what is sin?

Sin is spiritual with immediate and long term consequences which are disastrous – separated from God’s manifest Presence now and forever in a much worse place. You could say that the issues listed above – greed, depression, abuse, etc. — are like the symptoms of a sickness.

It is like the fruit on a tree that seems to be continually growing and increasing; if you picked the fruit it would only grow back next season, and in more numbers, because it is the trunk and roots that give it life. The root is called sin.



s 'I' n

At the core of sin is selfishness. An easy way to remember this is to look at the word SIN and consider that its middle letter is 'I'. Effectively sin is the result of turning our backs on the *Manufacturer's Handbook* (the Bible), believing we know better.

***'The faintest ink is better than the strongest memory.'***

Confucius

How easy would it be to forget God's principles if they were not written down.

Aren't you glad we have the Bible?

Not only is the Bible unique in its diagnosis of the human problem it is also unique in its remedy – the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross for our sins.

*'Sin is a very serious matter, and it is taken seriously by God, though men often try to make light of it. It is not only a transgression of the law of God, but an attack on the great Lawgiver Himself, a revolt against God. It is an infringement on the inviolable righteousness of God, which is the foundation of His throne (Psalm 97:2), and an affront to the spotless holiness of God, which requires that we be holy in all manner of living (1 Peter 1:16). In view of this it is but natural that God should visit sin with punishment.'*

Louis Berkhof

Sin is devastating; it separates us from God and is responsible for destroying mankind and the earth which we inhabit.

*'But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.'*

Isaiah 59:2

# Atonement

The Bible reveals that sin is so devastating that it had to be dealt with in keeping with God's holy and just nature. As sin cannot stand in God's awesome presence and needs to be judged mankind was in a dilemma.

*'For the wages of sin is death...'*  
Romans 6:23a

Mankind could do nothing to remedy the situation. So, because God is merciful, He made a way for mankind to be forgiven of the debt of their sin. The only way that a guilty person could be forgiven (apart from taking their own punishment) was for an innocent party to take the offender's punishment. This is called 'substitution'. When the requirements of God's law are satisfied the sin is said to be atoned for, or rather that 'atonement' has been made.

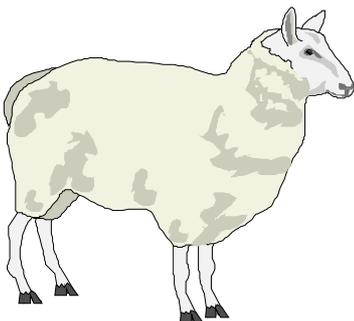
**Atonement**  
Is simply understood to be

**'At-one-ment'**  
God and man have come together again

The substitution could only be effective if there was the shedding of blood.

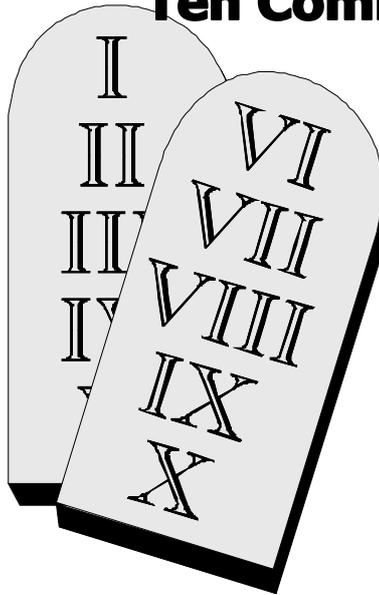
*'For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.'*

Leviticus 17:11



As gruesome as this seems, part of the reason was to demonstrate to mankind the seriousness of sin and how it leads to judgment.

# Ten Commandments



So how do we know if we have sinned?

On Mount Sinai in the Arabian Peninsula 3400 years ago God supernaturally declared His holy standards to mankind through the "Ten Commandments". These primarily reveal the

holy and moral nature of God. To stand blameless in His presence we are not to break one of these laws for if we have ever broken one then we are guilty of breaking all.

*'For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.'*  
James 2:10

Amazingly the Bible declares that He has written these "rules" on the inward conscience of all mankind. We inwardly and intuitively know that lying or stealing is wrong. Consequently the Ten Commandments have morally underpinned most societies and cultures from that day forward.



The Ten Commandments are God's moral guidelines for all people in all generations.

If God wanted us to live in moral uncertainty,  
He would have given us  
Ten Suggestions,  
not Ten Commandments!

# How Do We Know We Have Sinned?

Let's just look at just a few of the Ten Commandments. Have you ever lied? Stolen? Not even a small thing like an employer's pen? Used the phone at work for your own personal benefit? Have you ever hated someone? The Bible says, 'whoever hates his brother is a murderer.'

How did you go?

If we are honest we have to admit that no one has ever lived their whole life without having broken some, most or all of the ten commandments innumerable times. They are designed to convince us of sin and direct us to God for salvation.

God instituted an elaborate system of animal sacrifices in the Old Testament utilizing substitutionary atonement to remind us of the reality and consequences of sin. This continued for hundreds of years until God brought about the fullness of His salvation plan to mankind.

What would take place is absolutely unthinkable but truly demonstrates how much God loves mankind.

Jesus came down as a perfect, sinless man, demonstrated a perfect, sinless life, and voluntarily laid down His life to be the sacrifice on the cross for the sins of the world.

*' The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"'*

John 1:29

However, the story doesn't end at Jesus' death, the Bible further declares that He rose again on the third day according to what had been prophesied.

# Ten Commandments

1

You shall have no other gods before Me.

2

You shall not have any idols  
(i.e. create a god to suit yourself)

3

You shall not take God's name in vain  
(i.e. blaspheme)

4

You shall keep the Sabbath  
(i.e. rest one day a week to worship God and let your body & mind heal)

5

You shall honour your mother and father

6

You shall not murder

7

You shall not commit adultery

8

You shall not steal

9

You shall not lie

10

You shall not covet  
(i.e. intensely desire or lust after)  
other people's spouse or possessions.



Jesus' resurrection is attested by more than 500 people (1 Cor. 15:6) and it is this resurrection that assures us that God has accepted Jesus' death as our substitutionary sacrifice.

See Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians. 15:17, 20.

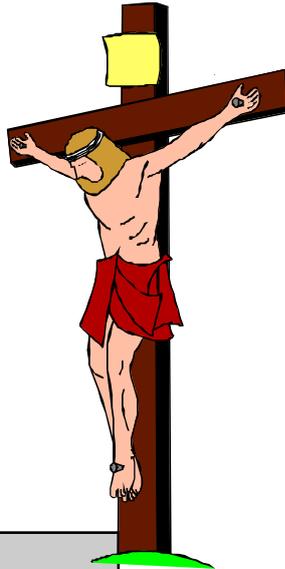
## Applying This Truth

So where does this leave you and me? There are many people in the world who don't believe and don't care that God did this for them. God's amazing provision of salvation is offered universally but unfortunately it won't be received universally.

It is important now that we don't passively acknowledge or just give mental assent to this, we need to embrace, and pro-actively receive this truth and apply it to our life.

- We need to first repent (turn from our own ways and turn to God)
- We need to believe that Jesus is God's Son and that He died for our sins and rose from the dead.

We need to receive Him and His forgiveness of sins through a simple prayer of faith.



**Prayer.** Dear Jesus, I believe that you are the Son of God; that you died for my sins and rose from the dead. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and I receive You into my life as Lord and Saviour. I thank You that You now live in me as I now will live for You.

# Questions

1. What does the Bible have to say about who has sinned? (Romans 3:23)

---

2. What are the consequences of un-forgiven sin before God? (Romans 6:23)

---

3. How is sin forgiven and atoned for? (Leviticus 17:11)

---

4. Why did Jesus come to the earth? (Luke 19:10)

---

5. How was He going to do this? (Mark 10:45)

---

6. What was God's motivation? (John 3:16)

---

7. What does it mean when we say that Jesus died as our substitute? (2 Corinthians 5:21)

---

8. Is there any other way we can have access to God and be saved from our sins? (Acts 4:12)

---

9. How do we become children of God? (John 1:12)

---

10. What does the Bible say is our first step? (Rom 10:9, 10)

---

11. What do we receive when we receive Jesus as our Lord and Saviour? (John 3:16)

---

12. Is it as straight forward as to believe in Jesus? Don't we have to do any good deeds to be saved? (Ephesians 2:8,9)

---