

**MILILANI COMMUNITY CHURCH
ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS
WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES
May, 2003**

LESSON 4: SIN (Part 1)

The two great doctrines of sin and salvation go hand in hand. The need for salvation comes from the fact of the condemnation and ruin of the human race through Adam. The doctrine of sin is the essential postulate that leads to and demands the whole scheme of miraculous and supernatural salvation outlined in the Bible.

The doctrine of salvation in the Bible assumes that the human race is fallen. Unless we are fallen in Adam, there is, in fact, no reason why we should be redeemed through Christ. *"In man's fallen condition we have the awful disease for which divine redemption is the only cure."* A. W. Pink

A. MAN'S ORIGINAL STATE AND FALL

1. His creation in the image of God C.P. Gen. 1

Primarily moral not physical (Gen. 1,2)

- a. Personality – Involves intellect, emotions, will
Provides capacity for fellowship
- b. Holiness – Provides freedom for fellowship

2. His fall and the consequences C.P. Gen. 3 (see Rom. 5; I Cor. 15)

- a. The probation – one negative command among many privileges and freedoms

- b. The fall – a sin of:
 - _____ in the goodness and provision of God (2:16)
 - _____ against the clear command of God (2:17)
 - _____ against fellowship with God (3:8-9)

- c. Results of the fall – seen in the words of God on that occasion
 - _____ "Where are you?"
 - _____ "Have you eaten...?"
 - _____ "Cursed..." (Serpent, Satan, woman, man, ground)
 - _____ "When you eat of it you will surely die"
 - _____ "Who told you that you were naked?" See the lies.

B. MAN'S PRESENT STATE OF SIN

Definition of sin: the Bible defines sin in relationship to God's law and his moral character (I John 3:4). Therefore a good definition of sin is the following: *"Sin is any failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature."*

- Based on this definition, sin includes not only individual acts such as stealing or murder, but also attitudes that are contrary to the attitudes God requires of us.
- Sin is not only a failure to conform to God's moral law in action and attitude but also in our moral nature. Thus, an unbeliever who may be asleep and not committing sinful actions or actively nurturing sinful attitudes, is still a "sinner" in God's sight because he has a sinful nature that does not conform to God's moral law.

Sin was present in the angelic world with the fall of Satan and demons. But the first sin in the human race was that of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-19).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES THAT WE INHERIT SIN FROM ADAM IN TWO WAYS:

1. INHERITED GUILT: We are counted guilty because of Adam's sin
2. INHERITED CORRUPTION: We have a sinful nature because of Adam's sin

1. INHERITED GUILT: We are counted GUILTY because of Adam's sin. Theologians call this the "imputation" of Adam's sin to his posterity.

THE MEANING OF IMPUTATION

The Greek word for imputation is *logizomai* meaning "to put to one's account," "to reckon," "to impute." Philemon 18: "charge that to my account." In a theological sense the word means, "to impute the guilt of sin" (the obligation to satisfy justice).

Romans 5:12-21 teaches that the GUILT of Adam's sin was imputed to us, with the result that the whole human race is guilty and under the wrath of God because of Adam's sin. This imputation is a legal thing. It concerns our external standing before God. It is the obligation to suffer punishment for an offense against the Law.

THE EXPLANATION OF ROMANS 5:12-21

"Therefore...sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned." Romans 5:12

The expression "all sinned" means that God thought of us all as having sinned when Adam disobeyed.

"Sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come." Romans 5:13-14

Here Paul points out that from the time of Adam to the time of Moses people did not have God's written laws. Though their sins were not "counted" as infractions of the law, they still died. The fact that they died is proof that God counted people guilty on the basis of Adam's sin.

"Then as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous."
Romans 5:18-19

Here Paul explicitly states that through the trespass of one man "*many were made* (Greek: *katestathesan*, an aorist indicative indicating completed action in past time) *sinners*." When Adam sinned, God thought of all who would descend from Adam as sinners. Though we did not yet exist, God, looking into the future and knowing we would exist, began thinking of us as those who were guilty like Adam (Romans 5:8).

The conclusion to be drawn from these verses in Romans 5:12-19 is that all members of the human race were represented by Adam in the time of testing in the Garden of Eden. As our representative, Adam sinned, and God counted us as guilty as well as Adam. GOD COUNTED ADAM'S GUILT AS BELONGING TO US. Theologians call this the IMPUTATION OF ADAM'S SIN to his posterity.

IS IT FAIR OF GOD TO IMPUTE THE GUILT OF ADAM'S SIN TO US?

When we first confront the idea that we have been counted guilty because of Adam's sin, our tendency is to protest because it seems unfair. We did not actually decide to sin, did we? So how can we be counted guilty?

In response at least two things can be said:

1. Everyone who protests that this is unfair has also voluntarily committed many actual sins for which God also holds us guilty.
2. The most persuasive answer is to point out that if we think it is unfair for us to be represented by Adam, then we should also think it is unfair for us to be represented by Christ and to have his righteousness imputed to us by God. For the procedure that God used was just the same, and that is exactly Paul's point in Romans 5:12-21. "*As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous.*" (5:19). Adam our first representative sinned and God counted us guilty. But Christ, the representative of all who believe in him, obeyed perfectly and God counted us righteous. God regards the human race as an organic whole, a unity, represented by Adam as its head. And God also thinks of the new race of those who are redeemed by Christ, as an organic whole, a unity represented by Christ as head of his people.

"AND CAN IT BE"

(CHARLES WESLEY)

*No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in him, is mine!
Alive in him, my living head,
And clothed in righteousness divine,
Bold I approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown through Christ my own.*

"THE SOLID ROCK"

(EDWARD MOTE)

*When he shall come with trumpet
sound,
O may I then in him be found,
Dressed in his righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne.*

“KNOWING YOU”

(GRAHAM KENDRICK)

*Knowing you, Jesus,
Knowing you, there is no greater thing.
You're my all, you're the best,
You're my joy, **my righteousness**
And I love you, Lord.*

THE THREE GREAT IMPUTATIONS

(See Charles Hodge, Systematic Theology, Vol. II, pp. 194-195).

1. THE IMPUTATION OF ADAM'S SIN TO US

“And when it is said that the sin of Adam is imputed to his posterity, it is not meant that they committed his sin, or were the agents of his act, nor is it meant that they are morally criminal for his transgression; that it is for them the ground of remorse and self-reproach; but simply that in virtue of the union between him and his descendants, his sin is the judicial ground of the condemnation of his race, precisely as the righteousness of Christ is the judicial ground of the justification of his people.”

2. THE IMPUTATION OF OUR SINS TO CHRIST

“When it is said that our sins were imputed to Christ, or that He bore our sins, it is not meant that he actually committed our sins, or that He was morally criminal on account of them, or that the demerit of them rested upon Him. All that is meant is that He took our place. He undertook to answer the demands of justice for the sins of men, or, as it is expressed by the Apostle Paul, to be made a curse for them.”

3. THE IMPUTATION OF CHRIST’S RIGHTEOUSNESS TO BELIEVERS

“In like manner, when it is said that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to believers, it does not mean that they wrought out that righteousness, that they were the agents of the acts of Christ in obeying the law; nor that it constitutes their moral character; it simply means that his righteousness, having been wrought out by Christ for the benefit of his people, in their name, by Him as their representative, it is laid to their account, so that God can be just in justifying the ungodly. A righteous man is one with regard to whom the demands of justice are satisfied. He may be personally unrighteous (or ungodly) and legally righteous. If this were not so, no sinner could be saved. There is not a believer on earth who does not feel and acknowledge himself to be personally unrighteous, ill-deserving, meriting the wrath and curse of God. Nevertheless he rejoices in the assurance that the infinitely meritorious righteousness of Christ, his full atonement for all sin, constitutes Him legally, not morally, righteous in the sight of divine justice. When, therefore, God pronounces the unrighteous to be righteous, He does not declare them to be what they are not. He simply declares that their debt to justice has been paid by another.”

Note: Next week we will cover the second aspect of inherited sin: Inherited Corruption. We will learn that not only are we all counted guilty in Adam, but we have also all inherited a sinful nature from Adam. Our sinful acts come from a sinful nature that has been totally corrupted as a result of the Fall.