

YOU

Bible Study

Sermon Series: Essentials of Christianity

To be used with: The Nature of Sin

Sermon Title Possibilities: The Problem with Sin

Scripture: Isaiah 59:1-13

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the small group study “Essentials of Christianity,” this sermon uses the session Scripture passage to discuss the nature of sin—a problem that every person shares. All of us are sinners and on our own, we can do nothing about our sinful condition.

Introduction: When surveyed, 83% of people believe that people are fundamentally good—that they, as individuals, are good. However, in another survey, when asked how they would rate the overall moral values of the country, 38% said “only fair” and 40% said “poor.” So, there is a bit of a disconnect.

While we may believe we are good in and of ourselves, the reality is that when left to our own desires and thoughts, we are a long way from good. Sometimes, we soften it and say we’re “pretty good.” But that is typically said when comparing ourselves to others. “I may not be great, but I’m definitely doing better than ...” But here’s the deal, the Bible doesn’t allow for that type of thinking. God, Himself, is the standard by which our behavior is to be judged. And we fall painfully short of the measure of God’s holiness and perfection. That leaves us with a sin problem that we can do nothing about on our own.

1. Our sin separates us from God (v. 1-5)

The human condition, apart from God, is pathetic. These verses point out the vastness of our sinful actions. Just a look at the daily headlines reveals the truth of these verses. Murder, theft, lies, treachery, assault, rape . . . and the list goes on every day. We are sinful people trapped with a sinful nature. But that’s not what God had in mind when He created humanity. He created us to walk blameless before Him but humanity willingly gave in to their sinful desires.

Verse 2 states very clearly the result of our sinful condition—we are separated from God. It’s as if there is a huge chasm between where we are standing and where God is standing. There is absolutely no way to be in God’s presence because of our sin. God is holy and cannot allow sin into His presence.

2. Our sin can’t be covered up (v. 6-8)

When we recognize our sinful condition, and realize that God cannot allow sin into His presence, we try to rationalize our actions. We try to cover up our sin—bury our sin—by doing a bunch of good works. Our thinking is that if we do

enough good works, volunteer enough hours at a non-profit organization, or give enough money to charities that all the good will outweigh all the bad.

The problem is that God doesn't see things that way. Because of our sinful condition, any works that we do are, by nature, sinful works. And God can see right through our attempts to cover up our sin. He sees, and knows, that our hearts are still sinful and bent toward sinful activity.

3. Our sin needs a Savior (v. 9-13)

When we read these verses, we are left with a feeling of complete hopelessness. These verses describe the despair that comes from a realization of our sin. That realization leads us to groan aloud and mourn over our sinful condition.

Verses 12 and 13 identify how our sin has multiplied before God. He sees it. We know it. Without God's intervention, we are completely separated from God and hopeless in our inability to resolve our sin issue on our own.

Conclusion: The bottom line is this: We are sinners, and on our own, we can do nothing about it. That sounds like awful news—and it is. But look back at verse 1. The Lord is not so weak that He cannot save us; He is not so deaf that He can't hear our cry of repentance. The good news is that God is always ready to welcome and forgive the sinner who earnestly desires to change his or her ways. Redemption is possible—but there is nothing we can do to earn it on our own.

[Sources for Intro: <https://www.inc.com/wanda-thibodeaux/5-statistics-that-will-restore-your-faith-in-humanity-and-office.html>

<https://news.gallup.com/poll/1681/moral-issues.aspx>]

Author Bio: Rick Prall is a senior curriculum specialist with Ramsey Solutions and an ordained minister. He has served churches in California, Oklahoma, Texas, and Tennessee and has written Bible study curriculum material for over 30 years. Rick has been married to Helene for 37 years and they have two grown and married children and two wonderful granddaughters. Rick and Helene have a passion for international missions and have served in many countries together; they are members of Gladeville Baptist Church.