

Session 10

The Doctrine of Sin

I. Discipleship Scenario

2. Discussion Questions

- a. “Sin” (Chap. I of Holiness, by J.C. Ryle)

Review Questions

- What is Ryle’s definition of sin? How does he deal with the issue of “known sin”? Have you ever dismissed the guilt of sin, because it was not known? Why is this unbiblical reasoning?
- Ryle writes, “*Let us, then, have it fixed in our minds that the sinfulness of man does not begin from without but from within.*” Why is this point so important to our Christian lives and how does it under-cut modern therapeutic notions?
- Ryle writes, “*So deeply planted are the roots of human corruption, that even after we are born again, renewed, washed, sanctified, justified, and made living members of Christ, these roots remain alive in the bottom of our hearts and, like leprosy in the walls of the house, we never get rid of them until the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved.*” Do you believe the roots of sin remain alive in us after conversion? How would you support your conclusion biblically? And how would you show from Scripture that sin no longer has dominion in the life of the believer? How do these two issues relate to the practice of mortification of sin?

Questions for Personal Application

- What has been the deepest experience of the knowledge of sin in your own life? How did you come to experience this revelation/illumination? Why do you think we so rarely feel sufficient conviction for the exceeding “*sinfulness of sin*”? (See page 5)
- Have you considered how the doctrine of substitutionary atonement is proof of the seriousness of sin? In what ways is this so?
- Do you believe that the best things that you do “*have somewhat in them to be pardoned*”?
- How has a deepening understanding of your sinfulness helped you to cultivate humility? How has it helped you to cultivate joy, thankfulness, and contentment?

- On pages 11 & 12, Ryle biblically criticizes “perfectionism”. Ave you ever been tempted to think that you might attain sinlessness in this life? Why is this a deception that is dangerous?

b. “*There is a Lion Outside! I Shall Be Slain in the Streets*”, Godward Life II, by John Piper

Review and Application Questions

- What is Piper’s point in the article? Ho and why does our mind, “*bend reality to justify the desires and fears*” of our hearts?
- Why is prayer to God and the practice if the spiritual disciplines so essential to overcoming patterns of sin?

c. “*The Discipline of Choices*”, from The Discipline of Grace, by Jerry Bridges

Review and Application Questions

- What part does choice play in the development of holiness? Give a personal example of how choices are helping you to change or overcome sin? (See pp.182-184)
- Illustrate how choices train us in certain habits, which then lead us to a lifestyle. Show how this can cultivate righteousness or unrighteousness. (See pp.185-187)
- As you consider recent choices you’ve made, which have been deliberately for the purpose of training in godliness? Which ones, although perhaps neutral at the time, could lead to a bad habit and/or greater temptations to sin? (See pp.186-187)
- How does Scripture help us in this matter of choices? Explain from you own experience. (See pp.187-188)
- What is *mortification*, and how do we exercise this discipline in our day to day lives? Does this particular teaching (mortification) show us in the way of a proper attitude toward sin? Explain the need for such an attitude. (See pp.188-194)
- Contract *convictions* with *desires*. Where do desires and convictions fit in the process of mortification? (See pp.193-194)
- Explain how the discipline of mortification and the grace of God work together. (See pg.190)

3. Scripture Memory Verse

Ephesians 4:20-24 ²⁰ But that is not the way you learned Christ!- ²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

4. Exercise

Take time to praise God for the gospel. Thank him for doing what we could not do – reconcile lost sinners. Thank him for breaking the dominion of sin. Ask him to change our hearts so that we can continue to grow in our hatred for sin.

5. Assignment for Next Time

Read chapters 17-18 in Bible Doctrine and [The Doctrine of Election, a Sovereign Grace Ministries Perspective publication](#). Next meeting is _____.