FIRST BAPTIST INSTITUTE

ANTHROPOLOGY & HAMARTIOLOGY: MAN & SIN
THE ORIGIN, DEFINITION, AND NATURE OF SIN | NOVEMBER 8, 2026

DEFINITIONS

Sin: Any lack of conformity to God's moral _____ in nature, desire, attitude, omission, or action

Original Sin: The inherited guilt and _____ of all Adam's natural descendants resulting from Adam's first sin

SIN ORIGINATED IN CREATURELY REBELLION, NOT IN GOD

God created everything very good. Sin is not eternal or a substance that God created, but a moral corruption of God's good creation. God is never the _____ of sin or the source of temptation (Gen. 1:31; James 1:13).

Before Adam's fall, sin was already present in _____ and other fallen angels (1 John 3:8; 2 Pet. 2:4). Sin entered the human race through Adam's voluntary disobedience (Rom. 5:12). God sovereignly permitted sin without causing the evil of His creatures (Gen. 50:20; Acts 2:23).

GOD'S CHARACTER IS THE STANDARD BY WHICH SIN IS DEFINED

God's moral law is not an arbitrary set of rules. It expresses His own holy and righteous _____. Therefore, sin is ultimately a failure to conform to God Himself (Ps. 119:137; 1 Pet. 1:15–16).

Sin includes both doing what God forbids and _____ to do what God requires (1 John 3:4; James 4:17). Sin is moral evil, not merely human weakness, suffering, or creaturely limitation.

God's moral standard applies to all people, whether known through His written revelation or reflected in the conscience (Rom. 2:12–15). Ignorance of God's law does not make a person morally _____. God's law does not make us sinful but exposes and identifies the sin already present in us (Rom. 3:20; 7:7).

SIN IS MORE THAN OUTWARD ACTION

Scripture describes sin not only as something that we do but also as an inward condition and disposition. Sinful thoughts, desires, and attitudes are morally significant, and outward sins proceed from within the _____ (Matt. 5:21–22, 27–28; Mark 7:20–23).

For this reason, sin cannot be limited to deliberate _____ acts. Scripture can even speak of "sin that dwells within me" (Rom. 7:17).

Sources: A Systematic Theology of Biblical Christianity (McCune); Reformed Systematic Theology: Man and Christ (Beeke and Smalley)

SIN IS FUNDAMENTALLY AGAINST GOD

Scripture describes sin from many angles.

Biblical Term	Basic Idea	Example
Sin	Failing to meet or falling short of God's standard	Romans 3:23
Transgression	Crossing a boundary God has established	Numbers 14:41–42
Lawlessness	Rejecting or violating God's law	1 John 3:4
Disobedience	Refusing to hear and obey God	Romans 5:19
Rebellion	Resisting God's rightful authority	Isaiah 1:2
Wandering	Departing from God's appointed way	Isaiah 53:6
Defilement	Moral uncleanness before a holy God	Mark 7:20–23

These descriptions point to the same God-centered reality. Sin expresses itself as _____ toward God's Word, rebellion against His authority, and idolatry that exchanges His glory for created things (Gen. 3:1–6; Rom. 1:21–25).

Sin turns love away from God toward _____ and creation. Even when we sin against another person, our sin is ultimately against God (Gen. 39:9; Ps. 51:4).

ADAM'S SIN BROUGHT THE HUMAN RACE INTO A STATE OF SIN

Original sin does not merely refer to the first sin committed in Eden. It refers to the sinful _____ shared by Adam's natural descendants because of his first transgression.

Adam did not merely give humanity a bad example to imitate. Scripture teaches that sin entered the world through Adam and that through his disobedience his descendants were _____ sinners (Rom. 5:12, 19). David therefore confessed that his sinfulness reached back to his conception (Ps. 51:5).

We are not born morally _____ and then become sinners only after committing our first personal sin. We enter life already in a sinful condition.

ORIGINAL SIN IS THE ROOT FROM WHICH ACTUAL SINS PROCEED

Our problem with sin reaches deeper than bad behavior. For Adam's descendants, sin is already present as a condition before it appears in personal acts. Our _____ sins flow from this original sinful condition.

Therefore, mankind needs more than better examples, education, or moral reform. Our problem reaches into what we are by _____ and shows our need for God's saving grace.