

ALL !N WITH JORDAN EASLEY

What Is Sin?

God Defined It | Part 6 | Romans 3:23

INTRODUCTION

Every Saturday one of my kids asks what I'm preaching on, and no matter the text, my go-to answer is the same: "Jesus and sin." So as we close out the *God Defined It* series, that's exactly where we land — what God's Word actually says about Jesus and sin. And it starts with a verse that levels the whole room: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). That's every one of us. I've never met a person who could honestly claim to be sinless — we've all crossed the line.

The problem is that the longer we live, the harder the world works to reclassify sin. We're told sex outside marriage is just part of dating, that getting drunk is no big deal because everyone drinks, that gossip and gluttony and lust and "little white lies" are small things God won't sweat. But here's the truth: every sin is a big deal to God — including the ones we call small. God didn't design sin, but He is the one who defines it. So let's look at sin from His perspective, tracing its root, our response, its fruit, and the truth that changes everything.

KEY POINTS

1. The Root of Sin

Most people assume sin began in the Garden of Eden, but a deeper look shows it began in heaven — with Satan, a beautiful and powerful angel whose pride drove him to rebel and exalt himself above God (Isaiah 14; Ezekiel 28). It entered humanity when the serpent whispered his lie in the garden and Adam and Eve chose to disobey. And it didn't stop with them: "Just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death spread to all people, because all sinned" (Romans 5:12).

That means sin isn't a surface issue — it's our foundational one. Think of the man who kept painting over a crack in his pristine wall until a contractor finally told him, "Your problem isn't the crack; it's the foundation." We all have cosmetic cracks we rush to cover with behavior modification, but until we deal with the foundation — sin itself — we'll never be truly free. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23); we're even born into it (Psalm 51:5).

2. The Response to Sin — and Who Draws the Line

Temptation always leads to a decision, and every decision points us toward life or death. "After desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death" (James 1:15). So who gets to decide where the line for sin actually is? Not the world — only God. He didn't design sin, but He defines it, and His measuring stick is His unchanging Word (Isaiah 40:8; Malachi 3:6). Many sins are black-and-white — the Ten Commandments, the works of the flesh in Galatians 5, the lists in 1 Corinthians 6 — and there we never have to wonder.

But where the line seems less defined — smoking, overeating — God's measuring stick becomes our heart. That doesn't mean we get to decide right and wrong; it means sin is often revealed less by our actions than by our attitude, motive, and desire. Jesus said even a lustful look is "adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:28), and His "cut it off" in the verses that follow points past hands and eyes to the real source. That's why Christianity isn't behavior modification but heart transformation: only Jesus can remove a heart of stone and give a heart of flesh (Ezekiel 36:26). And a changed heart changes how we treat the line — whether we flee from it, flirt with it, or cross it and never look back.

3. The Fruit of Sin — and the Truth that Redeems

If you don't kill the root of sin, you'll eventually eat its fruit. Scripture names it plainly: spiritual death — "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23); separation from God (Isaiah 59:2); bondage — "everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin" (John 8:34); and judgment (Matthew 25:46). Put simply, if you don't kill your sin, your sin will kill you.

But here's the whole truth about sin: it is universal (Romans 3:23), personal (Psalm 51:4), spiritual — and a spiritual problem can never be fixed with a

practical solution — and punishable. And yet it is also, gloriously, redeemable. "He made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Jesus didn't come to refurbish your heart; He came to replace it (Ezekiel 36:26). "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). We were all born with a heart problem — and that is exactly why Jesus came. Has He done that for you?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. The world keeps reclassifying certain sins as "no big deal." Where have you quietly adopted the culture's line instead of God's about what actually counts as sin?
2. Where the line isn't black-and-white, God weighs the heart — attitude, motive, and desire. In what area is your behavior technically "fine" while your heart isn't?
3. Christianity is heart transformation, not behavior modification. Have you asked Jesus to replace your heart of stone — and where do you most need to stop painting over cracks and let Him repair the foundation?
