

# A Study of God – God’s Standard

July 31-Aug 1, 2010

## Introduction

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- Open your Bibles to Genesis 1
- The “average” American = example of “standard”
  - ✓ Owns a home – with three bedrooms or less – pays \$1,000 per month in mortgage – has fewer people than rooms in the house – having a household of 2.5 people
  - ✓ Has attended college but not necessarily graduated from college
  - ✓ Earns about \$32,000 a year
  - ✓ One dog
- God has a standard
- Doctrinal Statement = “*We believe that man was created in the image of God, but fell from his original state through his disobedience to God in the Garden; and that all succeeding members of the human race are sinners by nature and by choice. We believe that man is separated from God by his sin and cannot by himself be rejoined to God.*”

## Exegesis

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### ➤ Statement of God’s Standard

- **Genesis 1:27, 31**
  - 27 *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*
  - 31 *God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning-- the sixth day.*
  - Good = pleasant, agreeable, excellent
- **Romans 3:23**
  - 23 *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*
  - Glory = radiance, splendor, majesty
- **1 Peter 1:15-16**
  - 15 *But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do;*
  - 16 *for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."*

- Leviticus 11:44-45
- Holiness = set apart, sacred, consecrated

❖ **God's Standard is goodness, glory, holiness - perfection**

➤ **The Definition and Nature of Sin**

• **Definition of Sin**

- Sin is failure to conform to the standard of God
- Romans 3:23
  - 23 *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*
    - “*sinned*” = hamartia (Greek) = literally – to miss the mark
- 1 John 1:10
  - 10 *If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.*
- There are 6 Hebrew words in the Old Testament and 6 Greek words in the New Testament used for “sin, transgression, iniquity, unrighteousness, evil” carrying different nuances but all in some way relating to a failure to meet God's standard

• **Nature of Sin**

- Opinions: Sin is ignorance, illusion, cultural, relative, not desirable, sensuality, selfishness
- Sin (by nature) is idolatry – placing something else into the place of God
- Idolatry usually rises out of a lack of faith, belief or trust – I do not trust God to be God
- Lewis Sperry Chafer, “In its fundamental character, sin is a restless unwillingness on the part of the creature to abide in the sphere and limitation in which the Creator, guided by infinite wisdom, had placed him.” (Systematic Theology, Volume II, p. 251)
- Exodus 20:3
  - 3 *You shall have no other gods before me.*
    - “*before*” = higher than, over, in front of
- Re-giving of the Law – Deuteronomy 5:7 (“*You shall have no other gods before me.*”)
- Commendation of Life – Deuteronomy 6:5 (“*Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.*”)
- Sin of Israel in Old Testament – Jeremiah 35:15 (“*Again and again I sent all my servants the prophets to you. They said, "Each of you must turn*

*from your wicked ways and reform your actions; do not follow other gods to serve them. Then you will live in the land I have given to you and your fathers." But you have not paid attention or listened to me."*)

- Idolatry (placing something in the place of God) is the root of all sin – it could be us, someone else, or some other thing
- Being idolatry, can you see how absolutely despicable and disgusting sin is?

❖ **Sin, by definition, is failure to conform to the standard of God and, by nature, is idolatry**

### ➤ **The Origin and Existence of Sin**

#### ● **Principle and Expression**

- Evil and Sin
- “Evil” to talk of the principle of sin
- “Sin” to talk of the expression of sin
- Lewis Sperry Chafer, “The terms *evil* and *sin* represent somewhat different ideas. *Evil* may refer to that which, though latent or not expressed, is ever conceivable as the opposite of that which is good, while *sin* is that which is concrete and actively opposed to the character of God.” (Systematic Theology, II:228)
- Evil as a Principle = Genesis 3:5  
5 *For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.*
- Evil as a Principle = Romans 12:21  
21 *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*
- Romans 5-8 “sin” (singular)
- Evil as a Principle = Not created but exists as necessary counter to Good in a universe with freedom
- Lewis Sperry Chafer, “It is difficult for the human mind to depict a time when there was not an opposite to good even though, for want of beings who were capable of sinning, it could have had no opportunity of expression. But since God cannot err, sin could not come into existence until another form of being was created; and, apparently, following upon God’s creative act, the highest of angels sinned, as did also the first man.” (Systematic Theology, II:228)

- Sin as an Expression = Not created but self-generated
- Sin as an Expression = Fall of Satan (Isaiah 14:4-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19)
- Sin as an Expression = Fall of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3)
- Sin as an Expression = Galatians 5:19-21
  - 19 *The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery;*
  - 20 *idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions*
  - 21 *and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.*
- Most of the New Testament, generally as “sins” or specifically (by name)

- **Relationship to God and Man**

- God’s Will and Our Freedom
- So, if evil exists as a necessary alternative to God’s goodness (but not personal or part of God) and sin is self-generated...
- How do we reconcile that with God being the creator of all things and all things being a part of His divine plan or decree?
- Romans 8:28
  - 28 *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*
- Romans 11:36
  - 36 *For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.*
- If sin is a part of His divine decree, then how is man responsible for his sin?
- First, we must affirm (as Scripture does) that God is not the creator of evil or sin – 1 John 1:5
- Second, we must affirm (as Scripture does) that God does not cause men to sin – James 1:13
- Third, we must affirm (as Scripture does) that men are responsible for their own sin – James 1:14
- Fourth, we must affirm (as Scripture does) that sin (generally) and men’s sin (specifically) are included in God’s plan – Acts 2:22-23
- Acts 2:22-23
  - 22 *Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.*

23 *This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.*

- Lewis Sperry Chafer, “The presence of sin in the universe is due to the fact that God permits it. It must serve some justifiable purpose attainable in no other way else God would not have permitted it, or, having permitted it, He would now terminate it without delay. The divine purpose relative to sin has not been revealed, and, doubtless the human mind could not comprehend all that is involved.” (Systematic Theology, II:229)
- Millard Erickson, “We must distinguish between two different senses of God’s will, which we will refer to as God’s ‘wish’ (will<sub>1</sub>) and God’s ‘will’ (will<sub>2</sub>). The former is God’s general intention, the values with which he is pleased. The latter is God’s specific intention in a given situation, what he decides shall actually occur. There are times, many of them, when God wills to permit, and thus to have occur, what he really does not wish. This is the case with sin.” (Christian Theology, 361)
- Millard Erickson, “We must understand that the will of God permits rather than causes sin. God never says, ‘Commit this sin!’ But by his permitting the conditions which lead a person to commit a sin and by his not preventing the sin, God in effect wills the sin.” (Christian Theology, 361)
- Example: Parents and their children – wrong choices and natural consequences as teaching (and ultimately beneficial)

❖ **The principle of sin (evil) exists as a necessary counter to good in God’s creation of free moral agents with the expression of sin existing by self-generation of those same agents**

❖ **God has permitted sin in His divine decree but did not cause sin – sin is the choice of the one committing the sin**

### ➤ **The Results of Sin**

#### • **Results of Adam’s Sin**

- Guilt = Genesis 3:7-8

7 *Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.*

- 8 *Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.*
- “*realized...sewed...made...hid*” = expressions of their guilt for what they had done in disobedience
- Punishment = Genesis 3:16-19
- 16 *To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."*
- 17 *To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.*
- 18 *It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.*
- 19 *By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."*
- “*pain...painful*” = Punishment and consequences for their disobedience
- Death = Genesis 3:19, 22-23
- 19 *By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."*
- 22 *And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever."*
- 23 *So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.*
- “*dust...live forever*” = physical death
  - “*banished him*” = spiritual death
- Corrupted human nature = Romans 5:19
- 19 *For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.*
- “*made sinners*” = Adam’s human nature was corrupted

- Adam and Eve's sin resulted in guilt, punishment, death and corruption of their human nature

- **Results of Our Sin**

- All of the results of Adam's sin PLUS

- Broken Relationship = Ephesians 2:12-13

12 *remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.*

13 *But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.*

- Our own sin brings separation and broken relationship

- Enslavement = Romans 6:16

16 *Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey-- whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?*

- Our own sin brings enslavement to sin

- Denial = Romans 1:21-25

21 *For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.*

22 *Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools*

23 *and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.*

24 *Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.*

25 *They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator-- who is forever praised. Amen.*

- Our sin brings a denial of God's truth

- Deceit = 2 Corinthians 4:2-4

- 2 *Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*
  - 3 *And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.*
  - 4 *The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*
    - Our sin brings deceit to what sin is and who Christ is
- Restlessness = John 6:24-26
- 24 *Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus.*
  - 25 *When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"*
  - 26 *Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill."*
    - Our sin brings a restlessness because it is never really satisfying
- Our sin results in broken relationship, enslavement, denial, deceit and restlessness
- ❖ **The consequences of sin (Adam and Eve's and our own) bring such great consequences to our lives**

## Response

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- **As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are to know about God's standard that we could avoid any violation of it.**
  - Observers = Come for restoration to God's standard – in God's way
  - Disciples = Walk in God's standard