

What Saith the Scripture?

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Must We Then Sin?

**Or, A Response to the Doctrine of Sin Nature or the Doctrine of Original Sin
Or, A Clarification of What is Sin, Why We Sin, and How Not to Sin**

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His Seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God"
(1John 3:9).

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Preface

Why do we need to discuss something so basic as man's propensity to sin? After all, if we are so close to the Rapture, the Tribulation Week, the Abomination of Desolation, the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, etc., then shouldn't we more profitably be spending our time preparing not only ourselves, but those around us for these momentous events? "The time is at hand" (Revelation 1:3; 22:10). True, but our apparent lack of grounding in the basics, affects our ability to understand the more complex nature of prophecy, and necessitates a second look at this Doctrine of Sin Nature-- also, called the Doctrine of Original Sin. "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the First Principles of the Oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat" (Hebrews 5:12). Our understanding of why we sin affects not only how we reach the Lost, but how we promote Godliness in the Saved-- the same Godliness that many debate under the title of **worthiness**, i.e., "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36).

"In Adam's Fall, We Sinned All"

In this oft-quoted catechism taught to young children of days gone by, is the essence of a misunderstanding that has robbed Philadelphia of its "little strength" (Revelation 3:8) and given Laodicea its present brazen lukewarmness in sin. Possibly, you have heard a Sunday School teacher evangelize young children, preparing them for a presentation of God's Simple Plan of Salvation, that "There are only two types of people in the world-- Lost Sinners and Saved Sinners-- but, all of us are sinners." "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will **not** depart [or, not have departed] from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Though both your personal experience and past human teaching may initially revolt at the thought that you were **not** born into this world as a sinner, the testimony of Scripture is plain for the origin of the Godly. "9 But Thou art He that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. 10 I was cast upon Thee from the womb: Thou art my God from my mother's belly" (Psalm 22:9-10). The LORD Jesus, Who revealed to the Apostle John that "any thing that defileth" (Revelation 21:27) would **not** enter the New Jerusalem, was unmistakable that Little Children were **not** tainted with Original Sin or Actual Sin, and **would** enter Heaven. "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as

Little Children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 18:3).

Sin nature was never a part of the LORD's explanation for why we sin. Pause for a moment, and realize that our LORD gives us to understand that Little Children **must be without any kind of sin**, to be able to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. "Suffer the Little Children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the Kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14). And, once we fully appreciate the fact that Little Children are only pristine humans in early development, we would banish the thought that man cannot ever be entirely and absolutely without sin. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2Corinthians 5:17). Even Solomon confessed, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright" (Ecclesiastes 7:29). But, sadly, man has sinned-- "they have sought out many inventions" (7:29). "Thus they provoked Him to anger with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them" (Psalm 106:29).

What, then, is this insistence that man is constitutionally sinful, that man is a natural born sinner? Unfortunately, *the commonly taught Doctrine of Sin Nature-- or, Original Sin-- most often results in an excuse for sin and sinning, and becomes an impediment to any attempt to live apart from sin*. This is the deplorable hallmark of the Laodicean Church of these End Times, i.e., "Christians aren't perfect, just forgiven". "But put ye on the LORD Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Romans 13:14). This flawed Doctrine of Sin Nature robs, drains, saps, and taxes those who receive it, making difficult the natural action of the True Saints, which is to lovingly obey the "Blessed and Only Potentate, the KING of kings, and LORD of lords" (1Timothy 6:15), who "purchased [us] with His own blood" (Acts 20:28). **After all, should not we that love the LORD most fervently desire to be different from the lukewarmness of Laodicea?** "15 If ye love Me, keep My Commandments... 21 He that hath My Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him... 14 Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 14:15, 21; 15:14).

A Warning to the Present and an Explanation About the Past

A caveat to those potential humanists and latent advocates of the Social Gospel, who would espouse the innate goodness of man, looking for a Divine spark that draws all men upward-- but, to the ultimate worship of a man sitting "in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (2Thessalonians 2:4)-- the infallible testimony of the Word of God is that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Those who can sin, have sinned. "There is none righteous, no, not one" (3:10). This dismal description of humanity is given by none other than the inspiration of the Spirit of God Himself. "For the wages of sin is death" (6:23). Is it any wonder that the God Who "is Love" (1John 4:8) would be so compelled to establish a way to rescue mankind by giving "His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have Everlasting Life" (John 3:16)?

And, to the many great and good men who have espoused this mistaken Doctrine of Sin Nature, I am reminded of what a great preacher said of another who preceded him in time, with whom he disagreed: "*Peace to his ashes, death to his errors, life to all the truth he preached.*" "The memory of the just is blessed" (Proverbs 10:7). As finite and fallible man, we must look to the Almighty for

whatever understanding we may attain, that we may not be numbered among **the ungodly, who "will not endure sound doctrine"** (2Timothy 4:3). In the end, the goal for the Body of Christ is that "we all come in the unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a Perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13). We trouble ourselves about Sound Doctrine so that we, "speaking the Truth in Love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (4:15).

What is Sin?

Sin is the voluntary act of the human will entrenched against God. The Greek word "*hamartia*", that the New Testament writers used for "*sin*", means "*to miss the mark*". "He that committeth sin is of the devil" (1John 3:8). Anyone that willfully aims at the wrong goal of selfishness, which is the ultimate choice of one's own gratification-- "fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind" (Ephesians 2:3)-- and thereby misses the mark of supreme love to God and an equal love to our neighbour as ourself (Matthew 22:37-39), is of the devil. "37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the First And Great Commandment. 39 And the Second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 22:37-39). And, what would be the opposite of selfishness? Plainly, it would be seeking to please God, i.e., "Thou art worthy, O LORD, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and **for Thy pleasure** they are and were created" (Revelation 4:11). A vital clue to this process of pleasing God, which is diametrically opposite to sinning, is our necessity to exercise faith in God. "But without faith it is impossible to **please Him**: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of **them that diligently seek Him**" (Hebrews 11:6). Further, that faith, which is a commitment to the Truth and to the God of Truth, comes **only** from the Word of God. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17). And, the stimulus to exercise that faith comes from the pre-eminent motivation of Love, i.e., a "faith which worketh by Love" (Galatians 5:6). "Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1John 4:10).

The LORD Jesus spoke of sin as a **voluntary** act of the human will. "Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant [Greek, "*doulos*", which means "*servant*" or "*slave*"] of sin" (John 8:34). Once the human will or heart **chooses to reject** the Precepts, the Examples, the Commands, the Promises, or the Warnings of the Word of God, then one falls into the snare and bondage of sin. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Romans 6:16). This **voluntary** entrenchment against the will of God is abominable sin, which is committed against the "Father of Lights, with Whom is **no** variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17).

To properly account for the reason we sin, we must first come to an understanding of the nature of sin; and, as True Saints, we need not fear that a discussion such as this cannot be undertaken without the advanced tools of theological training or instruction, because we have been Providentially provided with the infallible teaching and guidance of the Holy Spirit. "But the Anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach

you: but as the same Anointing teacheth you of all things, and is Truth, and is no lie, and even as It hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him" (1John 2:27).

Our Heavenly Paraklete will draw alongside His willing pupils and instruct us concerning this fundamental matter of why we sin, as well as the more advanced topic of "Things to Come". "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all Truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you Things to Come" (John 16:13). The LORD Jesus only requires us to be willing to put into practice the Father's will, if we are to be taught by His Spirit. "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself" (7:17). Ours is to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1Thessalonians 5:21), "comparing spiritual things with Spiritual" (1Corinthians 2:13), by prayerfully measuring all things by the Infallible Word of God, for "Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). "To the Law and to the Testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them" (Isaiah 8:20).

Sin is first an act of the will, then, and only then, is it a description of one's nature. Only *after we sin*, is it proper to say that we have a sinful nature. But, when we walk in faith, then we are partakers of the Divine nature. "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Ephesians 2:3). The Apostle Paul affirmed to the Ephesians that their "conversation" or manner of living was "**in times past** in the lusts of [their] flesh", then as a result and that secondarily, they were most aptly described, "by nature [as] the children of wrath" (2:3). Both "willingness" and "refusal" are first, acts of the will; while "obedient" and "rebellious" are consequently, descriptions of the nature of a Godly man, and then an ungodly man. Isaiah instructed Judah and Jerusalem with the understanding that their "willingness" or "refusal" would be evidenced by their "obedience" or "rebellion". "19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: 20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it" (Isaiah 1:19-20). Blaming sin upon one's nature and not upon one's will, is *disavowing personal responsibility for sin*. But, the truly penitent David placed the blame squarely on himself-- not his nature. "2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me" (Psalm 51:2-3).

Sin, like faith, is an act of the will, but in opposition to and to the exclusion of faith.

"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23). It is an impossibility to be both holy and sinful *at the same time*, just as it is impossible to be dwelling in faith and sin *in the same moment*, e.g., Charles G. Finney labelled this concept, the Unity of Moral Action. [Please read "[Unity of Moral Action](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Unity.of.Moral.Action.html)" -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Unity.of.Moral.Action.html> -- by Charles G. Finney] "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the One, and love the other; or else he will hold to the One, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke 16:13). When the Philippian jailer cried out in despair, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30), Paul and Silas instructed him to first perform the act of the will that confides in the LORD Jesus Christ as its Complete and Only Saviour, i.e., "**Believe** on the LORD Jesus Christ" (16:31). The resulting condition of that act of faith is that "thou shalt be saved" (16:31). Our transformation,

or metamorphosis, from being formerly "by nature the children of wrath" (Ephesians 2:3), i.e., "And be not conformed to this world: but **be ye** transformed [Greek, metamorphoo] by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2), results in the opposite nature or condition of being "partakers of the Divine Nature" (2Peter 1:4). In fact, the ordained principle of the Almighty is that your actions determine His treatment of you as either the "children of wrath" (Ephesians 2:3) or as "partakers of the Divine Nature" (2Peter 1:4). The exercise of your faith in the Exceeding Great And Precious Promises of God causes you to escape the corruption of the world, as well as transforms your very nature into that of His, "Who knew no sin" (2Corinthians 5:21). "Whereby are given unto us Exceeding Great And Precious Promises: that by These ye might be partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2Peter 1:4).

Sin, like all moral action, requires first that we know what we ought or ought not to do.

"To him that **knoweth** to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). If it was possible for you to sin without knowing what you are supposed to be doing or not doing, then sin would be merely an unfortunate and untimely happenstance-- hardly a calculated or criminal act. But, the Judge of All the Earth has promised the most stern treatment of those who sin against Him. "And the LORD said unto Moses, **Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My Book**" (Exodus 32:33). The LORD keeps careful account of all who are physically alive, but He pays especial attention to those He numbers among the Righteous, as opposed to those who are the Wicked. "Let them be **blotted out of the Book of the Living**, and not be written with the Righteous" (Psalm 69:28).

Sin cannot be attached to our actions when undertaken ignorantly; but, actions undertaken *with the understanding that they are forbidden by God*, are sinful. "Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth" (John 9:41). The LORD Jesus taught that knowledge is necessary for anyone to be judged guilty of committing sin. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin" (15:22). Paul reminded us that the world is judged guilty of sin before God and "without excuse" because the "invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are **clearly seen, being understood** by the things that are made, even His Eternal Power and Godhead" (Romans 1:20). Though honest ignorance may be accompanied with difficulty, the LORD judges us sinful only when there is previous "knowledge of the Truth". "For if we sin **wilfully** after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth, **there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins**" (Hebrews 10:26). Again, knowledge is necessary for an action to have any moral character, and sin requires that we first know what we ought or ought not to do. "For it had been better for them not to have known the Way of Righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the Holy Commandment delivered unto them" (2Peter 2:21).

Since knowledge is essential to all moral action, it becomes more apparent why the LORD has placed such a high premium upon our learning of His will and our teaching the same to the world. "19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen"

(Matthew 28:19-20). We cannot deceive God that we were honestly ignorant of the Truth, if we have *purposefully avoided learning that Truth*. "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the Commandments of the LORD concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them..." (Leviticus 4:2). Also, we are not to take lightly the knowledge that the Holy Spirit presents to us, as if we could take it up again later, if we chose not to receive it now. "Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, **from him shall be taken** even that which he seemeth to have" (Luke 8:18).

Sin is a criminal act of the will, and not an unavoidable calamity of one's nature. "Sin is the transgression of the Law" (1John 3:4). Even in modern usage, breaking the law is accounted as a criminal act, "for where no law is, there is no transgression" (Romans 4:15). And, for law to be of any value, there must be knowledge of its injunctions coupled with appropriate punishment for its transgressions. "47 And that servant, which knew his lord's will [that is, he had knowledge of specific instructions, over and above the general knowledge of his fellow servants], and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with **many** stripes. 48 But he that knew not [those more specific instructions], and did commit things worthy of stripes [he did have general knowledge of his lord's will], shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" (Luke 12:47-48). God would be altogether unjust to punish those who had absolutely no knowledge of His will. "That be far from Thee to do after this manner, to slay the Righteous with the Wicked: and that the Righteous should be as the Wicked, that be far from Thee: Shall not the Judge of All the Earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25).

Sin is a moral choice, which is an obstinate refusal of not only obedience to the Almighty, but a rejection of Love to and a withholding of confidence in the LORD Jesus Christ. "All unrighteousness is sin" (1John 5:17). If Scripture interprets Scripture, then another portion of the First Epistle of John must clarify the statement that "**all unrighteousness is sin**" (5:17). "If we confess our sins, He is Faithful and Just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from **all unrighteousness**" (1:9). If "all unrighteousness is sin" (5:17), then it would be correct to say, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from [sin]". And, contextually, to be cleansed from "sin" means to be cleansed "from all sin" (1:7). "But if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son **cleanseth us from all sin**" (1:7). So then, "all unrighteousness" (5:17), which is sin, is removed and cleansed by the "blood of Jesus Christ" (1:7), Who is "Faithful and Just" (1:9) to do so, on the condition of, and in response to, "if we confess our sins" (1:9).

That sin is a **moral choice** of disobedience to the Almighty, is plain. "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry" (1Samuel 15:23). "14 But if ye will not hearken unto Me, and will not do all these Commandments; 15 And if ye shall despise My Statutes, or if your soul abhor My Judgments, so that ye will not **do** all My Commandments, but that ye break My Covenant: 16 I also will **do** this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of

heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. 17 And I will set My face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you. 18 And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins" (Leviticus 26:14-18).

But, sin is also a rejection of love to and a withholding of confidence in the LORD Jesus Christ. "Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the Propitiation for our sins" (1John 4:10). So much is love a factor in our obedience that the Apostle John was inspired to write, "For this is the Love of God, that we keep His Commandments: and His Commandments are not grievous [burdensome or impossible to keep]" (5:3). Conversely, our disobedience is so reprehensible and hateful to God, that He inspired John to write, "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His Commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him" (2:4). A "faith which worketh by love" (Galatians 5:6) is a confidence in the LORD Jesus Christ that is motivated by a love in us that began "because He first loved us" (1John 4:19). And, shamefully, our disobedience merely demonstrates that we did not trust God. "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of Me; and that cover with a covering, but not of My Spirit, that they may add sin to sin" (Isaiah 30:1). "24 Therefore will I scatter them as the stubble that passeth away by the wind of the wilderness. 25 This is thy lot, the portion of thy measures from Me, saith the LORD; because thou hast forgotten Me, and trusted in falsehood" (Jeremiah 13:24-25). But, "in the fear of the LORD is strong confidence: and His children shall have a place of Refuge" (Proverbs 14:26).

Objections Answered

For an attempt to answer objections, which have not been addressed in this article, against the position that I am espousing-- that sin is **only** an act of the will against God, and not a calamity of our nature-- please read the

- "Back to the Basics: The Principles of the Doctrine of Christ"-- [http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/Exposition.Perfection.html#Back to basics](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/Exposition.Perfection.html#Back%20to%20basics) -- and
- "Christian Perfection: 'Almost Thou Persuadest Me'?"-- [http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/Exposition.Perfection.html#Almost Thou Persuadest Me](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/Exposition.Perfection.html#Almost%20Thou%20Persuadest%20Me) -- sections of my article,
- "An Urgent Call to Christian Perfection"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/Exposition.Perfection.html> -- ,

where Christian Perfection or Entire Sanctification is our necessity for Godly living. Also, a more lengthy and definitive attempt to answer objections will be found in Charles G. Finney's

- "Lectures on Systematic Theology"-- <http://whatsaiththescripture.com/Voice/Systematic.Theology.html> -- on
- "Moral Depravity"-- Lectures XXXVIII (38) through XLI (41)-- [http://whatsaiththescripture.com/Voice/Systematic.Theology.html#LECTURE 38](http://whatsaiththescripture.com/Voice/Systematic.Theology.html#LECTURE%2038) -- , especially

- Lecture XLI (41)-- [http://whatsaiththescripture.com/Voice/Systematic.Theology.html#LECTURE 41](http://whatsaiththescripture.com/Voice/Systematic.Theology.html#LECTURE%2041) --

Keep in mind that Finney wrote about a century and a half ago, and that much of the weight for his reasoning would be found in the *previous thirty-seven lectures* of his "Systematic Theology". But, as always, "to the Law and to the Testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). And, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17).

Why We Sin

When We Sin, We Are Desperately Wicked. If we can see that sin is a moral act of our will against God, i.e., "sin is the transgression of the Law" (1John 3:4), and not a calamity of our nature, then we can become better equipped to understand why we sin. "9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? 10 I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings. 14 Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for Thou art my praise" (Jeremiah 17:9-10,14). The LORD understands how desperately wicked we are **when** we sin, and yet He graciously offers forgiveness and healing, **if** we would but repent. "Return unto Me, and **I will return unto you**, saith the LORD of Hosts" (Malachi 3:7).

No Man Ever Yet Hated His Own Flesh. At one time, Satan was known as "Lucifer", or light bearer, the "son of the morning" (Isaiah 14:12). He was the "anointed cherub that covereth [literally, guards]" (Ezekiel 28:14), before he committed the original or first sin, which was an ultimate commitment to himself in opposition to God. "13 For thou hast said in thine heart, **I will** ascend into Heaven, **I will** exalt my throne above the stars of God: **I will** sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14 **I will** ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I will** be like the Most High" (Isaiah 14:13-14). Though Lucifer did not have a fleshly body, as we know it, he was tempted by the desire to be just as good as and better than the Creator, i.e., which defines the "pride of life" (1John 2:16). Sadly, that "pride of life" had to emanate from the fact that all of God's creatures were properly created to have a certain amount of self-interest or self-preservation to exist, i.e., "no man ever yet hated his own flesh" (Ephesians 5:29).

The Deceitfulness of Sin. But, when Lucifer stumbled over this homeostatic (tendency to maintain an internal equilibrium), creaturely need for self-preservation, he sinned by substituting that end in place of the worship of the Creator, Who is "God blessed for ever. Amen" (Romans 9:5). Lucifer accomplished all of this while residing in Heaven and without the baggage of a physical body, as we know it; therefore, we need to have the proper respect for the subtlety and power of sin, i.e., the "deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:13). But, "thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our LORD Jesus Christ" (1Corinthians 15:57), we do not need to repeat Lucifer's fatal mistake. "1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; 2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of

men, but to the will of God" (1Peter 4:1-2).

Sin Is Possible, But Unlikely, to Even Those Who Are Holy. Scripture reveals to us that Adam and Eve were the first humans to sin. "And unto Adam [the LORD God] said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life" (Genesis 3:17). If Lucifer gave in to temptation while in Heaven, then it is not far-fetched that the Garden of Eden could be the locale of man's original sin. "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden [literally, pleasure] to dress it and to keep it" (2:15). The anatomy of their first sin follows the outline that the Apostle John gave to his Little Children in the First Epistle of John. "For all that is in the world,

[1] the lust of the flesh, and

[2] the lust of the eyes, and

[3] the pride of life,

is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1John 2:16).

No Need to Repeat Our First Parents' Mistake. Eve was tempted by Satan through his absolute denial of Adam and Eve's necessity to obey God, in the name of becoming "as gods, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:5), which was the same sin he had previously committed. "And when the woman saw that the tree was

[1] good for food ['lust of the flesh' (1John 2:16)],

[2] and that it was pleasant to the eyes ['lust of the eyes' (2:16)],

[3] and a tree to be desired to make one wise ['pride of life' (2:16)],

she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (Genesis 3:6). But, again, we have no need to repeat the mistake of our first parents, because "there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is Faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1Corinthians 10:13).

What happened when Adam and Eve sinned, is of vital importance to the explanation of why we sin, at this late point in the history of the Church. "6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should **not lust** after evil things, as they also lusted. 7 **Neither be ye idolaters**, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. 8 **Neither let us commit fornication**, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. 9 **Neither let us tempt Christ**, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. 10 **Neither murmur ye**, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. 11 **Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come"**

(1Corinthians 10:6-11). And, it is not mysterious how God intends for us to overcome sin and sinning-- through confidence in Him to keep us. "2 Blessed are they that keep His Testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart. 3 They also **do no iniquity**: they walk in His ways" (Psalm 119:2-3).

Adam's Sin Brought About Our Physical Depravity, And Only Indirectly Our Moral Depravity. The LORD promised Adam and Eve that "of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17). Both spiritually and physically Adam and Eve died that day. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all **have sinned**" (Romans 5:12). But, before we enjoin that Adam passed on to all his offspring a sinful nature, i.e., which is the mistake of the Doctrine of Sin Nature or Original Sin, we need to consider the context of the Apostle Paul's inspired statement. "15 But **not** as the offence, so also is the free Gift. For **if** through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the Gift by grace, which is by One Man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. 16 And **not** as it was by one that sinned, so is the Gift: for the judgment was **by one to condemnation**, but the free Gift is of many offences unto justification. 17 For **if** by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the Gift of righteousness shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free Gift came upon all men unto justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous" (5:15-19).

This packed and weighty portion of Scripture can be quickly read, but *it takes time to digest*. Here is a summary:

(1) Adam's transgression, or "offence", is compared to Christ's "free Gift". , i.e., "But not as the offence, so also is the free Gift [a comparison]. For if through the offence of one [Adam] many be dead [Adam's sin, which is **moral** depravity brought about the resulting physical death, which is the **physical** depravity visited upon all succeeding generations of mankind], much more the grace of God, and the Gift by grace [the Gift of God is Eternal Life (Romans 6:23)], which is by One Man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many [through faith]" (Romans 5:15).

(2) Adam's sin resulted in condemnation, while Christ's Gift resulted in Justification, i.e., "And not as it was by one that sinned [Adam's transgression], so is the Gift [Christ's Atonement]: for the judgment was by one [offence] to condemnation [Adam's sin resulted in the curse of death and dying], but the free Gift [of Christ] is of many offences [the sins of all mankind] unto justification [Christ's Atonement justifies all who believe]" (5:16).

(3) Death reigns by Adam's "offence", while Life reigns by Christ's "Gift", i.e., "For if by one man's offence [Adam's transgression] death reigned by one [Adam's moral depravity caused his physical depravity, which perpetuated moral depravity]; much more they [who believe] which receive abundance of grace and of the Gift of righteousness [justification by faith begins our walk of sanctification, which results in our final salvation] shall reign in Life [have dominion over sin] by One, Jesus Christ." (5:17).

(4) Judgment comes upon all men through Adam's sin, while the free Gift comes upon all men through Christ's righteousness, i.e., "Therefore as by the offence of one [Adam] judgment came upon all men to condemnation [they sinned and were condemned because they were drawn away by their physically depraved flesh]; even so by the righteousness of One [the Spotless Lamb of God] the free Gift [of Eternal Life] came upon all men [who believe] unto justification of Life" (5:18). And,

(5) By Adam's disobedience many were made sinners, while through Christ's obedience many shall be made righteous, i.e., "For as by one man's disobedience [Adam's transgression] many were made sinners [because Adam's sin produced the physical depravity through which many were drawn away to disobedience], so by the obedience of One [unto the death of the Cross] shall many be made righteous [if they repent and believe the Gospel]" (5:19).

Moral Depravity is Sinning, While Physical Depravity is Death and Dying. But, Adam's sin did not necessitate that everyone would be a sinner, anymore than did Christ's free Gift necessitates that everyone would be righteous, "for all men have not faith" (2Thessalonians 3:2). We need to define some terms:

- Moral depravity is the willful, volitional act of sinning. To be morally depraved is to be in sin.
- Physical depravity is the the non-moral, physical process of death and dying that occurs necessarily in cursed flesh and a cursed Earth. To be physically depraved is to be human.

Adam's sin, which is **moral** depravity brought about the resulting physical death, which is the **physical** depravity visited upon all succeeding generations of mankind until the New Heaven and New Earth see the Almighty remove the curse. "And there shall be no more curse: but the Throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him" (Revelation 22:3). What gravity there was in the Creator's warning that "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17)!

This Truth is seen throughout the Scriptures that man sins when he gives in to the temptation of fulfilling the desires of the flesh. "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap Life Everlasting" (Galatians 6:8). The damage to humanity through Adam's sin is great enough, because each successive human being is tempted by a progressively degenerating, depraved physical body, "to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Romans 13:14). "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (8:13). Physical depravity is sufficient to account for the relation between Adam's sin and the sin of his offspring, without necessitating man to possess a constitutionally sinful nature at birth, to account for his sinning. "5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the Earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: 6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience" (Colossians 3:5-6).

The Second Law of Thermodynamics Illustrates Physical Depravity. Physical depravity may be demonstrated in that the overall disorder of the physical universe, i.e., entropy, is increasing over time, as postulated from the Second Law of Thermodynamics. "For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth" (James 1:11). A copy of a copy, as when something has been photocopied, tends to give a more degraded image with each successive copy. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one" (Job 14:4). *Sin always becomes progressively worse, no doubt in part to the degeneration of physical depravity.* "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2Timothy 3:13). Though physical depravity, which is synonymous with a diseased, fallen, and dying physical system, is **not** sin itself, and does **not** account for why Lucifer or Adam sinned, it does connect the effects of Adam's sin with the remainder of his posterity, i.e., "as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners" (Romans 5:19).

Every Man is Tempted of His Own Desires. James, the half-brother of the LORD Jesus Christ, recorded the most succinct account of why we sin. "14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust [Greek, epithumia, meaning "desire" or "craving"], and enticed. 15 Then when lust [Greek, epithumia] hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14-15). Before we conclude that we sin because of an inborn, sinful lust; take into account that the desire or craving described by the Greek word "epithumia", is also used to describe a rightful desire:

(1) of the LORD Jesus, i.e., "And He said unto them, With desire [Greek, epithumia] I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer" (Luke 22:15),

(2) of the Apostle Paul to the Philippians, i.e., "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire [Greek, epithumia] to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Philippians 1:23),

(3) of one desiring the office of a bishop, i.e., "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth [Greek, epithumeo, also meaning "lusteth"] a good work" (1Timothy 3:1), and

(4) of the Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians, i.e., "But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire [Greek, epithumia]" (1Thessalonians 2:17).

Now, "every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust [Greek, epithumia meaning "desire"], and enticed" (James 1:14), relates that all moral beings are tempted by their own desires, as were both Lucifer in Heaven and Adam in the Garden of Eden, when both were yet in a sinless state. That desire may be compounded by the increasingly degenerative state of physical humanity, due to the effects of physical depravity. "Who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Romans 2:6). And, at what time that desire becomes the supreme preference of the moral agent-- as opposed to the supreme love of God and an equal love of our neighbour as ourself (Matthew 22:37-39)-- then the desire becomes sin. "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin" (James 1:15). The certain result of sin is always death. "And

sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (1:15). **Both physical and spiritual death result from sinning.** "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Therefore, we sin because we are tempted by our own desires, and most commonly by our physically depraved bodies. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (7:24). But, thanks be to God for the victory, for "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (8:1)!

How Not to Sin

The Word of God Keeps Us From Sinning. If the God about whom the seraphim declared, "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of Hosts" (Isaiah 6:3), values sinlessness, then it would be consistent for Him to divulge to His creation how not to sin. This He has done, to His eternal praise! "According as His Divine Power hath given unto us **all** things that pertain unto life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue" (2Peter 1:3). *Scripture is replete with the knowledge of how not to sin*, as evidenced by the Psalmist's praise of the excellency of the Word of God. "2 Blessed are they that keep His Testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart. 3 They also do no iniquity: they walk in His Ways" (Psalm 119:2-3). Since it is **impossible** to serve both "God and mammon" (Luke 16:13) **at the same time**-- Charles G. Finney called this principle, the Unity of Moral Action-- then the Psalmist is declaring that *it is impossible to be sinning while at the same time walking "in His Ways"* (Psalm 119:3). The Word of God is truly the means to make the "man of God [to] be perfect, throughly furnished unto **all** good works" (2Timothy 3:17). More than a statement from a theological creed, our LORD's prayer in Gethsemane teaches us that the sanctification that keeps us from sinning, comes from His Word. "Sanctify them through Thy Truth: Thy Word is Truth" (John 17:17).

Faith in God Keeps Us From Sinning. It is apparent from Scripture that man cannot achieve a condition of holiness without Divine intervention; but, man must lend his finite cooperation to the Almighty by trusting God. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1John 5:4). When our faith resides in the Omnipotent God, it overcomes the world and all those things therein that tempt us to sin, i.e., "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (2:16). By faith, we are born of God, and do not sin. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His Seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1John 3:9). Those who commit righteousness are "born of God". "If ye know that He is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth [literally, committeth] righteousness is born of Him" (2:29). And, the reason that they commit righteousness, is that God Himself works it in them; but, still they must believe Him for it. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). The "seed" that remains in those who are "born of God" (1John 3:9) is the Word of God. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of Incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1Peter 1:23). And, the "Seed is the Word of God" (Luke 8:11). **When we are committed to abiding in the Word of God, it is impossible to be sinning at the same time**, i.e., "His Seed remaineth [literally, abideth] in him: and he cannot sin" (1John 3:9).

Our Love for God Keeps Us From Sinning. Modern antinomianism is the concept of divorcing obedience from love, in the name of not being legalistic. But, Jesus said, "If ye love Me, keep My Commandments" (John 14:15). Jude, another half-brother of the LORD Jesus, by inspiration, commanded us to "keep [ourselves] in the love of God" (Jude 21). As those who believe that faith always actively engages in works, when given the opportunity, i.e., "shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works" (James 2:18), *the True Saints keep themselves in the love of God (and holiness) by continuously relying upon the Character, Promises, and Precepts of Him whose "Name is called The Word of God"* (Revelation 19:13). "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not" (1John 5:18). Satan, who is "that wicked one" (5:18) and the "tempter" (Matthew 4:3), cannot touch and tempt those who are keeping themselves by specially "watch[ing] and pray[ing], that [they] enter not into temptation" (Matthew 26:41). As our Rock and our Fortress, we trust the LORD to deliver us from the seduction of Satan and sinning. "The LORD is my Rock, and my Fortress, and my Deliverer; my God, my Strength, in Whom I will trust; my Buckler, and the Horn of my Salvation, and my High Tower" (Psalm 18:2). That the True Saint "sinneth not" (1John 5:18) is amazing; but, more importantly, it is a tribute to the Preserving Power of the Almighty. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved **blameless** unto the Coming of our LORD Jesus Christ" (1Thessalonians 5:23).

Praying That We Would Not Enter Into Temptation Keeps Us From Sinning. That Great Shepherd of the Sheep (Hebrews 13:20) carefully instructed His Sheep concerning this most important topic of how not to sin. In Christ's instructions to His disciples concerning the proper manner of prayer, He modeled the prayer, "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matthew 6:13). As the Word of Life (1John 1:1), the LORD Jesus Christ implicitly understands that we sin because we are tempted, primarily by our own desires, i.e., "every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust [literally, desire], and enticed" (James 1:14), and secondarily, by the world, the flesh, and the devil. Accordingly, He bulwarked His disciples against sin, by emphasizing our need to pray and trust God to not be led "into temptation" (Matthew 6:13). *Undoubtedly, there would be far less sinning, if there were more praying that we would not enter into temptation.* But, do we desire it as much as Jesus does? "And [Jesus] said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation" (Luke 22:46).

Suffering and Mortifying the Deeds of the Body Causes Us to Cease From Sinning. Because "no man ever yet hated his own flesh" (Ephesians 5:29), we are quite prone to avoid physical suffering. But, *Scripture reveals that the Divinely appointed and allowed suffering of our flesh, i.e., disease, physical infirmities, persecutions, etc., has a surprising and beneficial effect-- our sanctification.* "1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; 2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God" (1Peter 4:1-2). If we allow the LORD to permit the affliction of our flesh, in faith, we know that the "trying of [our] faith worketh patience" (James 1:3). By faith, even our tribulations are only a means by which our Christian experience sees the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. "1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our LORD Jesus Christ: 2 By Whom also we have access by faith into this

grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Romans 5:1-5). How can sin abide in such a formidably holy circumstance, if we "through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body" (Romans 8:13)?

The Hope That Our Present Moment of Sinlessness Will Multiply Into Continued Sinlessness Keeps Us From Sinning. *If it is possible for the True Saint to be without sin for even a moment, then the door is open for even longer.* "5 And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. 6 Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him" (1John 3:5-6). [Please see our article, "That Ye May Know That Ye Have Eternal Life"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/That.Ye.May.Know.That.Ye.html> -- , for an explanation of the Biblical Doctrine of the Assurance of Salvation, where only those who abide in Christ may know that they have Eternal Life.] Even the Old Covenant understood the concept of the Just walking, growing, and increasing in the Light. "But the path of the Just is as the shining Light, that shineth more and more unto the Perfect Day" (Proverbs 4:18). The LORD Jesus shocked Nicodemus with the concept that he "must be born again" (John 3:7); and yet, once, by faith, the sinner has put off the "old man", and put on the "new", "he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2Corinthians 5:17). "22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the Old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the New Man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:22-24). Though our change into the image of Christ progresses with our knowledge, faith, and experience, i.e., "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2Peter 3:18), it is a growth in greater and greater degrees of holiness, and not in shedding greater and greater amounts of inborn sin. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD" (2Corinthians 3:18).

The Promises of God Not Only Make Us to Be Like the LORD Jesus Christ, But Keep Us From Sinning. Perhaps *the most neglected of the weapons in the Saints' arsenal for overcoming sin, are the Promises of God.* "Whereby are given unto us Exceeding Great And Precious Promises: that by These ye might be partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2Peter 1:4). The Promises are Covenants made by the Living God, Whose Word "shall not return unto [Him] void, but It shall accomplish that which [He] please[th], and It shall prosper in the thing whereto [He] sent It" (Isaiah 55:11). If the Holy Jehovah has given His Word on anything, we may bank on it. "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19). In particular, if He has promised that He will give us a way to escape from sinning, then we are most grateful for such an illustrious escape! "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is Faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1Corinthians 10:13). In fact, if the LORD designs the Promise of escape from the pitfalls and judgments of the

Tribulation Week, e.g., a Pre-Tribulational Rapture, then we would, again, be most grateful! "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36).

Conclusion

Charles G. Finney made this interesting and helpful remark about the relation between sin and Christian sanctification.

"When we sin, it is because of our ignorance of Christ. That is, whenever temptation overcomes us, it is because we do not know and avail ourselves of the relation of Christ that would meet our necessities. One great thing that needs to be done is, to correct the developments of our sensibility. The appetites and passions are enormously developed in their relations to earthly objects. In relation to things of time and sense, our propensities are greatly developed and are alive; but in relation to spiritual truths and objects, and eternal realities, we are naturally as dead as stones.

"When first converted, if we knew enough of ourselves and of Christ thoroughly to develop and correct the action of the sensibility, and confirm our wills in a state of entire consecration, we should not fall. In proportion as the law-work preceding conversion has been thorough, and the revelation of Christ at, or immediately subsequent to, conversion, full and clear, just in that proportion do we witness stability in converts. In most, if not in all instances, however, the convert is too ignorant of himself, and of course knows too little about Christ, to be established in permanent obedience. He needs renewed conviction of sin, to be revealed to himself, and to have Christ revealed to him, and be formed in him the hope of glory, before he will be steadfast, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (from Charles G. Finney's "Lectures on Systematic Theology", Lecture LXIII (63) on "Sanctification"-- [http://whatsaiththescripture.com/Voice/Systematic.Theology.html#LECTURE 63 --](http://whatsaiththescripture.com/Voice/Systematic.Theology.html#LECTURE%2063))

All that we need to keep us from sinning, as well as to make us "to be conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8:29), is provided for us in learning of the LORD Jesus Christ. "28 Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30). The present, woeful ignorance of the Laodicean Church concerning the LORD Jesus Christ, has begotten a necessity to sin and to entertain all the worst sins of the world, while professing themselves to be "rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing" (Revelation 3:17).

This Doctrine of Sin Nature or Original Sin has become an indispensable article of faith to the modern Church, but it has been, and still is, a refuge and excuse for sin and sinning, an unbearable "yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5:1), and an impediment to any attempt to live apart from sin. "For it had been **better** for them **not** to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, **to turn** from the Holy Commandment delivered unto them" (2Peter 2:21).

"The dogma of constitutional moral depravity, is a part and parcel of the doctrine of a

necessitated will. It is a branch of a grossly false and heathenish philosophy. How infinitely absurd, dangerous, and unjust, then, to embody it in a standard of Christian doctrine, to give it the place of an indispensable article of faith, and denounce all who will not swallow its absurdities, as heretics. O, shame!" (from Charles G. Finney's "Lectures on Systematic Theology", Lecture XLI (41) on "Moral Depravity"-- <http://whatsaiththescripture.com/Voice/Systematic.Theology.html#LECTURE 41> --).

May the Merciful God allow you to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (Titus 2:10).

Amen, and Amen.

For more material related to this topic please see

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