

Living in the Kingdom

Lesson 8: Sin

*Man preferred himself to God, and by that very act scorned him.
(CCC 398)*



CCC 386-387

1. Sin and evil are present in human history. Divine revelation helps us understand what sin is: man's rejection of God and opposition to him, an abuse of the freedom that He gives us so that we can love him and one another. Sin is missing the goal for which God has made us for.

CCC 374-375

2. God made a covenant with man at creation and gave him the gift of divine sonship. The first man was created in friendship with God, in harmony with himself and with the creation around him.

CCC 397-98

3. Man, tempted by the devil, let his trust in his Creator die in his heart and, abusing his freedom, disobeyed God's command. He wanted to "be like God," but "without God."

CCC 399-400

4. Adam and Eve lost the grace of divine sonship and original holiness and became afraid of God. The union of man and woman became subject to tensions, and their relations marked with lust and domination.

5. Harmony with creation was broken and subject to its bondage to decay. Suffering and death entered human history. Adam and Eve immediately died the spiritual death and became subject to physical death.

CCC 404
Rom 5:12

6. By the unity of the human race, all men are implicated in Adam's sin. Adam and Eve wounded the human nature and transmitted it in a *fallen state* to all mankind, deprived of divine grace and of eternal life.

CCC 405

7. Original sin is "contracted" and not "committed." It is a state, not an act, and not a personal fault. Human nature is wounded, subject to ignorance, suffering and death, and inclined to sin (concupiscence).

8. Concupiscence is a darkening of the intellect, the weakening of the will, and the disordering of the appetites. It is loving lesser goods instead of higher goods. It is not the same as original sin. Concupiscence is the result of original sin, the cause of actual sin, but not sin itself.

CCC 410
Gen 3:15

9. God did not abandon man after his fall but promised a victory over evil and man's restoration from his fall through the "seed of the woman."

CCC 613, 1846,
1851
Mt 1:21, Mk 2:5
Mt 26:28
Rom 5:20,
Rom 8:3-4

10. The Gospel is the revelation in Jesus Christ of God's mercy to sinners. In Jesus' Passion, sin most clearly shows its violence. Yet at this hour of darkness Jesus' sacrifice becomes the source of the forgiveness of sins: "*Where sin abounded, grace abounded all the more.*"

CCC 407-409
Heb 2:14
1 Jn 5:19

11. Through sin, the devil has acquired domination over man. Baptism, by imparting the life of Christ's grace, erases original sin and turns man back to God. But man remains weak and inclined to evil, and he is called to spiritual battle.

CCC 1849-50
Gal 5:19-21

12. What is sin? An offense against reason, truth and right conscience; a failure in loving God and neighbor caused by a perverse attachment to certain goods; a word, deed or desire contrary to God's law; an offense and revolt against God, where we try to be like God by deciding what is good and evil; "the love of oneself even to the contempt of God."

13. The effects of sin: The sinner wounds God's honor and love, his own

<p>CCC 1487-88 Mt 18:8-9</p>	<p>human dignity, and the spiritual well-being of the Church. No evil is greater than sin; nothing has worse consequences for sinners themselves, for the Church, and for the whole world.</p>
<p>CCC 1855-61 1 Jn 5:16-17</p>	<p>14. Mortal sin destroys charity in the heart of man by a grave violation of God's law and causes the loss of sanctifying grace. It requires a new initiative of God's mercy and conversion through the sacrament of reconciliation. If not redeemed by repentance and God's forgiveness, it causes exclusion from Christ's kingdom and the eternal death of hell.</p> <p>15. There are three conditions for a sin to be mortal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Grave matter</i> (cf. Ten Commandments); <i>Full knowledge</i> that the act, word or thought is sinful; <i>Deliberate consent</i> and personal choice to commit the act.
<p>CCC 1862-63</p>	<p>16. Venial sin allows charity to subsist but offends and wounds it. It is disobeying the moral law in a less serious matter, or in a grave matter without full knowledge or complete consent. Deliberate and unrepented venial sins may lead to mortal sin.</p>
<p>CCC 1864 Mt 12:31</p>	<p>17. There are no limits to the mercy of God, but anyone who refuses to accept his mercy by repenting rejects the forgiveness of his sins and his salvation. This is the sin against the Holy Spirit.</p>
<p>CCC 1865-68</p>	<p>18. Sin engenders vice by repetition of the same acts, resulting in perverse inclinations which cloud conscience. The seven capital sins: pride, avarice, envy, wrath, lust, gluttony, and sloth. We have a responsibility for the sins committed by others when we cooperate in them.</p>
<p>Gen 4:7</p>	<p>19. How temptation leads to sin: 1) drawing near; 2) listening to the desire; 3) yielding to the attraction; 4) falling into sin. Our conscience is a gift and help which leads us to conversion and repentance.</p>
<p>CCC 1472-73</p>	<p>20. Sin has a double consequence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Grave sin deprives us of communion with God and makes us incapable of eternal life ("eternal punishment"). Every sin entails an unhealthy attachment to creatures, which must be purified either on earth or in purgatory. This purification frees one from the "temporal punishment" of sin. <p>21. The forgiveness of sin grants us the remission of eternal punishment, but temporal punishment remains. We grow in holiness by patiently bearing sufferings and trials, by works of mercy and charity, by prayer and practices of penance.</p>
<p>1 Jn 1:8-9 CCC 1431-34, 1451</p>	<p>22. To receive God's mercy we must admit our faults and repent. Contrition must include a) sorrow for sin, and b) the resolution not to do it again. Repentance is a radical reorientation of our whole life, a conversion to God with all our heart, a turning away from evil with repugnance toward our evil actions. Interior conversion should be expressed in visible actions: Fasting, prayer, almsgiving, reconciliation with neighbor, tears of repentance, practice of charity.</p> <p>23. To be forgiven, we must forgive others. The sacrament of reconciliation is our key to forgiveness and to receiving God's new life in Christ.</p>

Questions for Discussion

1. What effect has sin on my soul? Can I feel that effect? How?
2. True or false: some smaller, private sins are of no consequence to the Church as long as they don't hurt anyone.