

Getting Rid of Sin

If all this talk about sin is getting you depressed – GOOD! It is supposed to. In fact, it's supposed to make you feel guilty and even terrified. Sin isn't a good thing. It hurts others. It hurts our God who hates sin. It hurts us by separating us from Him and bringing death upon us.

The question, then, is how do we get rid of sin. There are only two answers to that question. The first answer is for YOU to try to stop sinning. Don't tell anymore lies. Don't say anything bad about another person. Don't be prideful. Don't have any lustful thoughts. Oh, yeah, you also have to start being completely loving all the time no matter what anyone else says or does to you. We're just barely getting started. And by the way, we haven't even begun to mention what you are supposed to do for God.

The point is that you will never get rid of sin in this way. You are going to fail, and you are going to sin. In fact, you won't even make it to the bottom of this column before you sin again. It's hopeless!

Not quite! There is hope for you and for me and for everyone else. JESUS is our hope! That's because Jesus came into the world to get rid of our sin for us. He did it in a most amazing way: He took our sin on Himself and He died for our sin. This is why the Bible calls Him...

**The Lamb of God who
Takes away the sin of the world!**



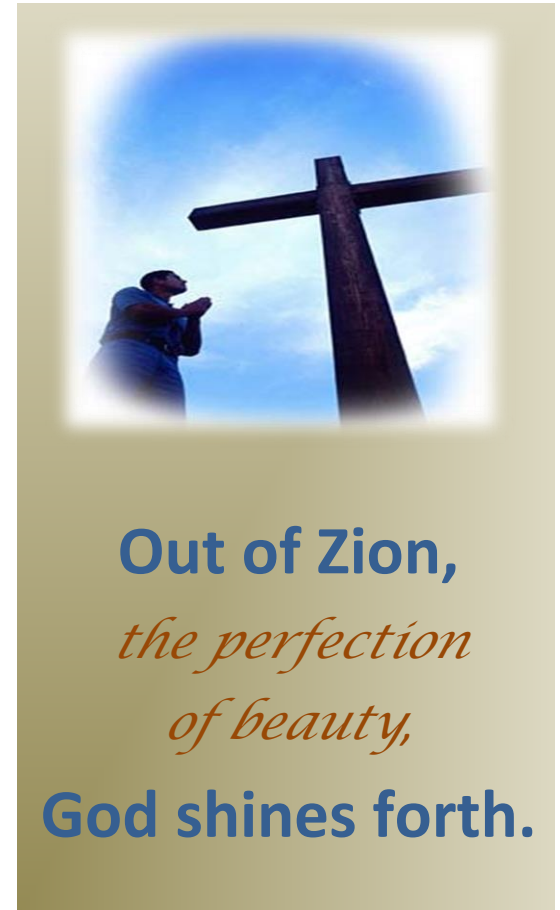
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

6170 Center Hill Church Rd.
Loganville, GA 30052

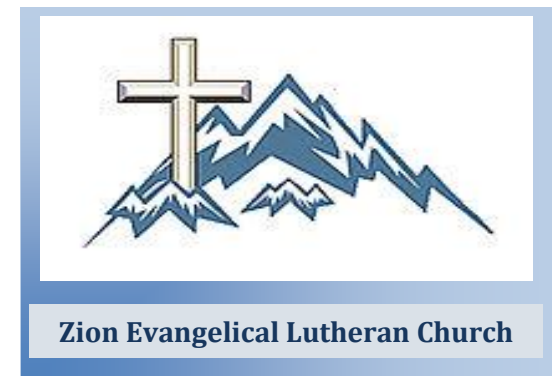
Phone: 470-214-3401
Email: zionlutheran@zelcloganville.com

www.zelcloganville.com

#5 - SIN



**Out of Zion,
*the perfection
of beauty,*
God shines forth.**



What is Sin?

The word “sin” literally means “to miss the mark.” The picture behind the word is that of a marksman attempting to hit a target with his weapon. If he hits the target, then it’s a good shot. If he misses the target, it’s a bad shot – it’s sin.

When the Bible uses the word sin, it’s in reference to the target God has set for us in regards to our behavior, our speech, our thoughts, and even our inner being. The Bible teaches that sin involves a condition in which the heart (not the organ, but that inner part that makes us who we are) is corrupted and inclined toward evil. The concept of sin doesn’t have to be complex, so long as we keep in mind that sin is being the opposite of what God is.



So, what is God? Well, the Bible tells us that God is holy. In fact, when God gave His Law, He accompanied it with this instruction: You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. (Leviticus 19:2) But what does it mean to be holy? Here’s where we may feel like we are caught in a loop. Sin is the opposite of holy, and to be holy means to be without sin. So, we struggle to really understand sin because we have nothing in the world that is truly holy.

The Bible helps us out here when it teaches us that, ultimately, “God is love.” (1 John 4:8) Love is always doing what is right and good for and toward another. Jesus summarized the Law of God in this way: You

shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength... You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

Going back to the target idea, sin is not only when we miss that target and not only direct love inwardly toward ourselves, but also the very fact that we are spiritually inclined to direct love toward ourselves first and foremost.

Where is Sin?

If you want to see specific examples of sin, that’s easy. Just watch the evening news. People are hurting and harming other people all the time. People break into other people’s homes and steal their possessions. People get into fights and physically assault others. People even go so far as to kill other people, what the Bible refers to as murder.

However, you don’t have to turn on a TV, a radio, or a YouTube podcast to see evidence of sin. All you have to do is pay attention to what’s going on around you. Oh, and especially pay attention to what’s going on inside of you. It’s not just other people that are committing sin – we all are. If you don’t obey those who have authority over you, you are sinning. If you brag about your accomplishments, and maybe even embellish them a bit, you are sinning. If you forget to pray to God during the week, you are sinning. If you tell a lie to get out of trouble, you are sinning. And if you think something mean or angrily toward another person, you are sinning.

Where is sin? It’s everywhere, but it’s especially inside of us. The Bible says, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” (1 John 1:8)

What’s the Big Deal?

OK! So we tell a little fib once in a while, and maybe even get overly angry and say mean things. What’s the big deal? I’m not actually hurting anyone. At least I’m not killing anyone.

That’s the way most people think about sin. Unfortunately, it’s not the right way to think about sin. First of all, it’s simply not true. When you sin, you are hurting someone. It may not be a big hurt, but it’s still hurting someone. If you tell a lie about someone, you are hurting that person’s reputation. If you take something that doesn’t belong to you, you are hurting another person’s livelihood. If you think lustful thoughts you are hurting that person’s purity in your own mind. There’s no end to the hurt we cause through sin.

But there’s always another person that is hurt through sin, and that’s yourself. Sin is what separates us from God, as we read in Isaiah 59:2, “*Your iniquities (another word for sin) have made a separation between you and your God.*” As mentioned earlier, God created us to be holy as He is holy. The reason for that is that He desires to have a relationship of love with us. When we commit sin, and however we commit sin, we are breaking that relationship. That hurts us.

The worst hurt that comes through sin is death. Again, in the Bible, we read: *Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.* (Romans 5:12. Do you want to know how big of a deal sin is? Then think about how afraid you are to die.

Oh, yes! Sin is a BIG DEAL!