

# **Innocence Lost**

## *The Fall of Humanity and How it Affects us Today*

Because of the ubiquity of technology and the fact that cyberspace is a smut superhighway, more and more young children are being exposed to porn. Unsurprisingly, early exposure predicts more sexually violent tendencies. Porn is warping our children and damaging our world.<sup>1</sup>

Anti-pornography organization Fight the New Drug has, in recent years, mightily and persistently educated away from pornography. In regards to the fact that children are being exposed at earlier and earlier ages to more and more violent types of porn, they say:

Limiting access to porn is much more difficult than it's ever been. Even if the home computer and family mobile devices are safeguarded, there's always a friend with a smartphone or unchecked internet access, and not even the most diligent parents can be 24/7 watchdogs. With the way things are right now, early exposure to porn is almost impossible to control completely. But, it's not all bad news . . . We live in a time where there is less of a deafening silence around this issue, and anyone can get help who might need it.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, early exposure to sin spread instantly among God's children, threatening to ruin us all. And because He ordained free will, God Himself couldn't shelter us from it. Like an epidemic, rapid transmission quickly spread as, down to our DNA, human beings profoundly and pervasively changed.

### **Our Beginnings**

The destructiveness of a fall depends upon the height preceding it. According to Genesis 1:26-28, God created humans with the stamp of heaven, the divine image.

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Notice that this short passage mentions "dominion" twice. God designed us for benevolent preeminence over our world. He created us to be bosses!

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<sup>1</sup> <https://studyfinds.org/porn-pornography-boys-women/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://fightthenewdrug.org/real-average-age-of-first-exposure/>

What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands, You have put all things under his feet. Psalm 8:1-6

And yet, look at the state of things. We have fallen from our benevolent preeminence. We have eaten the fruit. We have seen our nakedness and tried to cover it with fig leaves—righteousness of our own manufacturing. God has come into the garden crying out for our love, and we have hidden in fear. He has woefully pronounced judgment on us—women will have pain and toil in childbearing and be ruled over, and men will sweat under a burden of labor. We, humanity, have fallen, and that oh, so miserably.

But the story continues. God’s first sermon—preached to Satan, no less—proclaims, “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel” (Genesis 3:15). The devil would bruise the heel of the “Seed,” referring to Jesus’ bruised body on the Cross. But the Seed would bruise the devil’s head, effectively wielding a death blow. Preach it, God! He said, in essence: “You may injure the Seed, Satan, but the Seed will kill you!” Adam and Eve listening on saw that God had a plan forward from the mess they’d made.

A short time later God clothed the semi-naked pair in hefty garments of skin. This show-and-tell awakened their understanding of how the Messiah would, through death, cover their nakedness. Compare these two sentences:

“They sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings” (Genesis 3:7b).

“The Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them” (Genesis 3:21b).

*They* made false coverings, and *they* put them on.

*God* made true coverings, and *God* put them on.

This sermon-in-action constituted the first justification by faith sermon ever preached. We may try to manufacture our own righteousness, but we will remain uncovered until God clothes us.

We cannot fully appreciate the good news of God’s righteousness if we don’t take a long, hard look at the problem of sin. Thus this study. Sin is a multi-layered muddle. Its damage—and its solution—can be seen in legal, moral, medical, relational, and economic terms.

## Legal

The Apostle Paul said that Adam’s sin brought condemnation to the entire human race (See Rom. 5:16-18; 8:1; 2 Cor. 3:9). The word used here, *katakrima*, means “judgment handed down.” Envision a judge handing down a sentence of death.

In sending Jesus, God reversed this sentence: “Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift

came to all men, resulting in justification of life” (Romans 5:18). Sin’s condemnation fell upon the human race through the first Adam, but God sent a second Adam, a new representative, the “last Adam” (See 1 Cor. 15:45). He dispersed justification even more freely than the first Adam dispersed condemnation.

### **Moral**

Morality is, at its core, harmony with God’s law. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual morality. This idea can be expressed as purity and defilement. The Levitical laws declared such things as incest, adultery, and the occult practices as causing defilement (Lev. 21:11, 18:20, 19:31), thus all the washings of the temple ritual. The early church disallowed things “polluted by idols” and sexual immorality (Acts 15:20, 29), and Paul condemned sexual immorality as well (1 Cor. 6:13, 18, 7:2 & 10:8).

Thank God for the prayer of David, who pled, “Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow” (Psalm 51:2, 7). God touched Isaiah’s mouth with a coal and said, “Your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is purged” (Isaiah 6:7). In Jesus we stand pure as a newborn baby and whiter than newly-fallen snow.

### **Medical**

Sin impacts our health as well. In fact, it makes us sick! Isaiah said, “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faints. There is nothing in it but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment” (1:5b-6). We could say that sin is a type of insanity, deranging the mind with lies, weakening our ability to grasp reality. Sin also possesses an addictive power to which we become enslaved (See Rom. 6:16).

It was to show His power to free and restore our souls that Jesus performed so many healings. The blind eyes, feeble limbs, and even dead bodies of the Great Physician’s patients metaphorize our psychological and spiritual disorders. He Who died of a medical condition caused by the crushing weight of sin upon His soul “heals all your diseases” and “redeems your life from destruction” (Psalm 103:3b-4a). He promises, “But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings; and you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves” (Malachi 4:2).

### **Relational**

As the result of sin, humanity has become “alienated from the life of God” (Ephesians 4:18). As Adam and Eve hid from the One they’d once welcomed with open arms, they demonstrated the post-sin God-alienation affecting us all. This alienation extends to our relationships with each other. “For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and

pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another” (Titus 3:3). Our default mode since the fall is *hateful*.

Like the good relationship Mediator He is, Jesus stepped in to reconnect us with Him and each other. According to Ephesians 2:5-6, He “made us alive *together*” “raised us up *together*” and “made us sit *together*” with Him. Jesus not only desires peace and restored human relationships, but He supplies the basis for our peace in Himself. “For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation” (Ephesians 2:14).

### **Economic**

In the parable of the king and his servants, Jesus told how one of the king’s property managers was found to owe the equivalent of 10 million dollars. Although the king forgave him, the debtor thoughtlessly strangled his fellow servant for a comparatively tiny sum. In the end the king gave the man over “to the torturers” (Matthew 18:34). In this parable, Jesus conceptualizes sin as a debt.

But it’s a debt He has forgiven. Jesus’ model prayer says, “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors” (Matthew 6:12). The penalty for sin is the forfeited life of the sinner: “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). We could never pay that debt and yet live. Qualifying Himself to represent us by becoming one with us through the incarnation, Jesus took our humanity all the way to the Cross where He exhausted the penalty for sin in our behalf, His life for ours. Slaves sold to the hard taskmaster of sin, we could not dig ourselves out of the hole. He came along as our Kinsman-Redeemer (See Lev. 25:25) satisfying the terms of our contract, buying our freedom.

### **But . . .**

As the result of sin, we are legally condemned, morally defiled, medically terminal, relationally estranged, and economically indebted.

Because of Jesus, we are legally justified, morally pure, medically healthy, relationally connected, and economically free.

Like the slithering plague of pornography, made nearly ubiquitous today through technology, sin blights everything it touches, robbing us of innocence.

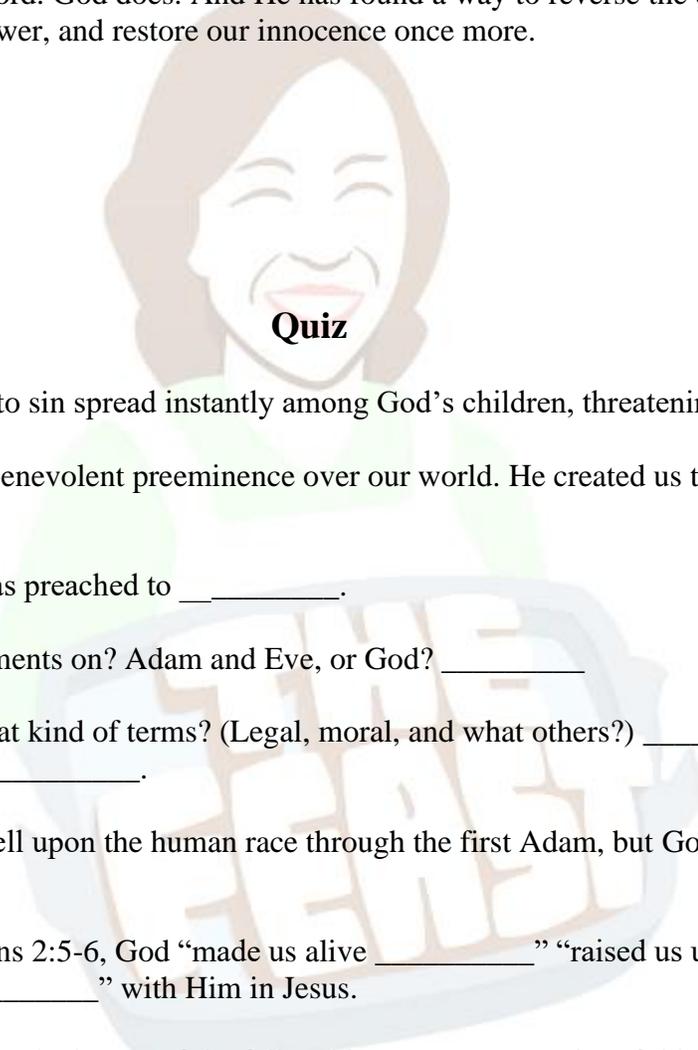
But while the Bible paints a sad, detailed picture of the effects of sin, it often follows those descriptions with “but.” In other words, while the Word admits the horror of the fall and its consequences, it unfolds to our understanding an even greater reality—that of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. And so let us end with just such a passage, found in Titus 3:3-7:

For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of

regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

### The Takeaway

It is true—we have lost our innocence. We ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We've been debased, corrupted, stricken, alienated, and indebted. Sin is big, and sin is bad. But it does not have the last word. God does. And He has found a way to reverse the effects of sin, take away its sting and its power, and restore our innocence once more.



### Quiz

1. Early \_\_\_\_\_ to sin spread instantly among God's children, threatening to ruin us all.
2. God designed us for benevolent preeminence over our world. He created us to be \_\_\_\_\_!
3. God's first sermon was preached to \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Who put the skin garments on? Adam and Eve, or God? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Sin can be seen in what kind of terms? (Legal, moral, and what others?) \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Sin's condemnation fell upon the human race through the first Adam, but God sent the \_\_\_\_\_ Adam.
7. According to Ephesians 2:5-6, God "made us alive \_\_\_\_\_" "raised us up \_\_\_\_\_" and "made us sit \_\_\_\_\_" with Him in Jesus.
8. While the Word admits the horror of the fall and its consequences, it unfolds to our understanding an even greater reality—that of the glorious \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus Christ.

## Answer Key

1. Exposure
2. Bosses
3. Satan
4. God
5. Medical, relational, economic
6. Last
7. Together, together, together
8. Gospel

