





Romans
3:23

For **all** have **sinned** and **fall short** of the **glory** of God.

Matthew
5:48

Be **perfect** as your heavenly **father** is **perfect**.







Cornelius
Plantinga

(Not the Way It's
Supposed to Be: a
Breviary of Sin)

"Sin is disruption of created harmony and then resistance to divine restoration of that harmony....God hates sin not just because it violates his law but, more substantively, because it violates shalom, because it breaks the peace, because it interferes with the way things are supposed to be. (Indeed, that is why God has laws against a good deal of sin.)



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God is for shalom and therefore against sin. In fact, we may safely describe evil as any spoiling of shalom, whether physically (e.g., by disease), morally, spiritually, or otherwise.

In sum, shalom is God's design for creation and redemption; sin is blamable human vandalism of these great realities and therefore an affront to their architect and builder."

**How do we escape the
vicious cycles of sin?**





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Isaiah 59:2-4, 7

But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear. For your hands are stained with blood, your fingers with guilt. Your lips have spoken falsely, and your tongue mutters wicked things. No one calls for justice; no one pleads a case with integrity. They rely on empty arguments, they utter lies; they conceive trouble and give birth to evil...their feet rush into sin; they are swift to shed innocent blood. They pursue evil schemes; acts of violence mark their ways.

Isa 59:
8-9, 14-15

The way of peace they do not know; there is no justice in their paths. They have turned them into crooked roads; no one who walks along them will know peace. So justice is far from us, and righteousness does not reach us. We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows....so justice is driven back, and righteousness stands at a distance; truth has stumbled in the streets, honesty cannot enter. Truth is nowhere to be found, and whoever shuns evil becomes a prey. The Lord looked and was displeased that there was no justice.



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"The great writing prophets of the Bible were unafraid to diagnose sin as the oldest and deepest human problem. They talked about it all the time, often in contexts in which they protested injustice in the land.

The prophets knew that sin has a thousand faces. They knew how many ways human life can go wrong because they knew how many ways human life can go right. (You need the concept of a straight line to tell when one is crooked.)

These prophets kept dreaming of a time when God would put things right again. They dreamed of a new age in which human crookedness would straighten out. The foolish would be made wise, and the wise made humble.



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"They dreamed of a time when the deserts would bloom, the mountains would run with wine, people would stop weeping and be able to sleep without a weapon under their pillow. People would work in peace and work to fruitful effect. A lamb could lie down with a wolf because the wolf had lost its appetite. All nature would be fruitful, benign, and filled with wonder upon wonder. All humans would be knit together in brotherhood and sisterhood; and all nature and all humans would look to God, lean toward God, and delight in God.

Shouts of joy and recognition would well up from women in streets and from men at sea. The webbing together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment, and delight is what the Hebrew prophets call shalom."

Mt 3:1-3

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, "Repent, for **the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**" For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his **paths straight.**' "

Isa 40:3-5

In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God ... every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain."





PHARISEES (self-disciplined and religiously motivated)

ZEALOTS (justice-driven and politically motivated)

SADDUCEES (secular and financially motivated)

ESSENES (secluded and fear motivated)



PHARISEES (self-disciplined and religiously motivated)

“Forgive us our trespasses...”

ZEALOTS (justice-driven and politically motivated)

“yours is the kingdom and power and glory forever”

SADDUCEES (secular and financially motivated)

“lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil”

ESSENES (secluded and fear motivated)

“your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven”

Luke
6:27-30,
35-36

"But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back...but love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

The apostle Paul

"I am the least of the apostles" (1 Cor 15:9; ~56 AD)

"I am the very least of all the saints" (Eph 3:8; ~60AD)

"I...the worst of sinners" (1 Tim 1:16; ~62AD)

Rom 12:9-15

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

Rom 12:17-21

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Rom
13:8-10

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to a neighbor. **Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.**

God has called us to step into the brokenness of this world and bring His restorative power into it through the way we love as He loved us.