



# Living Letters

## *Thoughts for Christian Living*

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Recently, a Huntington preacher asked, “What do you know about sin?” That is a good question. Unfortunately, many false and unbiblical ideas about sin exist today.

Some folks believe that sin is something you get from your father, through biological reproductive processes. As strange as that sounds, many Bible believing people buy into this notion of sin.

The Bible tells us that “sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). Sin is defined literally as to “miss the mark, be in error.” Wrong-doing is the basic definition of sin in the Bible. We may sin by transgressing or breaking the law. And, we may sin by omitting or failing to do what is right (James 4:17). However big or small the transgression may seem to be, it is still sin.

As much as I’d like to lay the blame for my sin at my father’s feet—or Adam’s feet—my sin is mine alone. God’s prophet said, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son” (Ezekiel 18:20). All have sinned (Romans 3:23). Paul says, “And you, being dead in your sins” (Colossians

2:13). Physical death passed from Adam to all men as a consequence of Adam’s sin (Romans 5:12). Spiritual death is the result of one’s personal sin, however (Isaiah 59:1-2).

We do not sin because we are born in sin, with a sinful nature, by “ordinary generation” (Philadelphia Confession of Faith, p. 24; see Matthew 19:14). The Bible teaches that we receive physical attributes from our parents, but our life force (Acts 17:28) and eternal spirit come from God (Hebrews 12:9; Zechariah 12:1). God cannot be charged with creating evil (James 1:13).

So, why do men sin? Solomon says, “God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions” (Ecclesiastes 7:29). James says, “But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:14-15). Our spiritual death does not create lust and sin, but our lust creates sin and spiritual death (See also Romans 6:23).

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