

Theology Simply Explained — WSC14 “Understanding Sin, Before God, Since the Garden”

Pastor walks his children through Westminster Shorter Catechism question 14—especially explaining how sin is a violation of the applications to ourselves of the implications of Who God is.

Q14. What is sin? ***Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.***

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

The catechism question this week. Number 14, what is sin? Soon as any want of conformity unto or transgression of the law of god. When we come into the portion of the catechism, that asks, what duty god requires a man and find. It's obedience to his moral law and Um, the moral law is Summarized in the ten commandments and 10 commandments comes in two label, two tables.

Which are summarized in. Uh, Love for god with. Love for god with all the heart. Soul, mind and strength. And then, Uh, loving your neighbor as yourself.

One of the things then that will find as we go through the Um, The ten commandments specifically one at a time. Is that the ten commandments teach us the Applications. Of the implications. Upon us. Of who God is and whom he has made us. To be unto him. And unto his creation.

And unto one, another as made in the image of god. And these realities exist already, of course, in the garden. These realities exist at the end of day, six of the creation and then especially on day seven and in which the lord Consecrates blesses, the seventh day and hallows at consecrates it to himself as holy so that we might know that he is the ultimate reality the reason for our reality.

And the reason for our specialness In all of the creation being made in his image. As on the evening before on the The afternoon before late in the sixth day. He had taught Adam and Eve. Uh much about being a covenant head being a provider for others. Every creature having its place, and his creation is being the one who allots to each one its place.

And it's possessions And especially how. We are to love god above all the creature creatures and man. Above all the rest of the creatures as being made in. In the image of god. And so all of that which later gets summarized in the moral law, much of it in a very Um, Distinct way, that is related to our being sinners at the time of exodus, 20 and Deuteronomy 5.

And so, the ten commandments Are full of thou shalt not negatives that go against the sin into which we had fallen and Which dwelt in us at the time, but the moral law that ends up getting summarized that way later, all of that already exists. Because of who God is because of who we are in his creation, What we are to do with his creation and especially with what we are to do with one another, all of these realities exist during the covenant of life.

Or the covenant of works if we use one of its other Um, other names. And so, Uh, the implications of the applications of who god is. Uh, who we are? Uh, whom he has made us to be to ourselves. And to others. And then he gives Of adam and the woman.

A particular commandment that belongs to the covenantal relationship. It's Not just the Uh, the applications of the implications of great realities. But now it is a Positive prescription of statute. Uh, an instruction a commandment, the terms. Of god's binding himself to them in a covenant with the implied promise of eternal life if in The probationary period which only god can know.

How long that was or would have been? Of whether or not, they would keep the instruction not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And so they would choose god and they would choose life rather, than choosing themselves and Their own way. And choosing death in the day that you eat of it.

You shall surely die. Um, the woman of course being deceived but many things that That adam did and even her herself. Although she was deceived, she ought to have known better. Uh, but there is a willfulness especially on her husband's part who is not deceived Who was willing to listen to?

This, the serpent's proposal. Uh, that what god had said was? Uh, was not all that. There was that. Um, that adam being a Uh, free creature and the great creature on the earth. Uh, might Uh, choose his own way. And using then, his wife has something of a guinea pig in that failing.

To be ahead over her who corrects failing to create correct. The mistakes that she makes and she's answering the serpent failing to intervene to go between her and the serpent. Uh, failing to Um, To lead and to teach as. As genesis 2 had implied desiring. That he would actually be god unto himself not like god an imaging god, but that he would get to know good and evil in the way that God alone does that he would get to determine for himself.

What is good that he would get to determine for himself? What is evil? And so the man and the woman fall and in very different ways, The man. Incidentally, as you can probably hear in the way that we were just describing it. Uh, falling in very similar fashion to how lucifer himself did.

Uh, the greatest of the angels, the greatest of the heavenly beings, Uh, wanting to be his own god and put himself on god's level. And now man the greatest of the earthly creature who has the greatest responsibilities, He is worshiper in chief overall. Of the creatures of this world.

Uh, which is why when he sins, not only as he cursed, but especially the ground, the earth Is cursed. And so, What we see in the commandments themselves. Uh, very particularly and the moral law, more generally. Is that there are Uh, there are two things that must be done first and foremost man must conform to the law of god.

Man's character. Must. And man's conduct must be shaped by and image. The perfect. Holy righteous character of god. For whose worship man was made and in whose image men was made. Anything that falls short of that is an infinitely. Great offense. Against the glorious, god, who is and who made all things and who made us in his image.

So it is actually these sins of a mission. Uh, that are That are so great sins of emission sins of not conforming. Uh to god and especially conforming to the law of god things that we ought to have done. And and not do because of who God is and because if whom he made us to be unto himself, so that when the scripture says for him, who knows what he ought to do but does not do it.

That is sin. Um, it's not just saying, Make sure that whenever you have a godly or righteous impulse, you follow it. I mean that much is true. Uh whenever we have an impulse or a thought about something that is righteous and holy and good that we ought to do.

We know that that is not coming from the world and that is not coming from the devil and it is not coming from our flesh. The the impulse to call jesus the lord,

and mean by that, that he is Jehovah. The, the one true and living God, who is he has being in himself that only comes from the Holy Spirit, the apostle tells The Corinthians and similarly the impulse to honor your mother or obey your father that's not coming from your flesh, that's not coming.

Um, that's not coming from the world or from The devil. So it's true that you know, when you know what is right to do and you don't do it, that is sin. Uh, but the scripture there touches on something even deeper than than what we've just been describing Um, last minute or two.

It's reminding us that the right thing to do is right. Because God, Is God and all of reality corresponds to him. And we exist for his glory. So that when, you know, Romans 3:23 says, for all have sinned and fallen short to the glory of God, it's not saying Um yeah, everyone has just barely missed being what they ought to have been.

No, it's saying all of our sins. Are lacking conformity to our wants of conformity to the law of God, so that we are pushing down upon the glory of God. In our unrighteousness. That we know who he is by what he's what we see in the creation and even more, we know what he is and who he is by the knowledge of himself that he has put into us.

And yet, we are refusing to glorify him. We are refusing to give thanks to him. And so sin. As they want of conformity unto him. Is as heinous. As evil. As God is glorious. So, in our catechism, question following up on Did our first parents continue know, they fell from the estate.

Um, by sending against God. And we in them, we're about to find out. We fell in their first sin Uh, and then it follows with what is sin? And we hear, Want of conformity to the law of God. What we should hear is something as As. Immense. In its evil.

As God's glory is immense. And so the want of conformity. For the law of God, these are the, the great ones. Um, That we should. That we should love the Lord. Our God with all our heart soul, mind and strength. But we should keep his day. Holy. Because that day has been built into his design for us that we would have all of our dependence upon him and all of our delight in him and learn all of our duty from him.

And that in everything we do, we would be devoted to him. And and the first three commandments as well in that first table of the law. But and you want of conformity to the law of God. But then also, Any transgression of The law of God whenever we transgress his law, We are declaring ourselves to be God.

We are saying. That what God has commanded is inferior to How i would like for the universe to be for the creation to be. Um, and for how i would like my life. Uh, to be ruled and motivated and What the purpose that i want. For myself. And so, since God alone, I can decide what is right and wrong when i transgress his law.

When i break his law. Uh, i am inherently calling, good evil. And evil good. Now, we live in a culture in which That has become the actual standard in many cases in the nation and in the church. And we see that and And we grieve and we are warned and cautioned not to think and feel and desire and and live for and live live for the purpose of and live.

According to the principles of what we see in the nation. And what we see in the churches. And that's all good and well. But, Whenever we transgress the law of God, we are doing the same thing. We are calling what he called. Evil good. And what he called, good.

Evil. And so the two correspond to each other. Um, What we sin? Uh, when we sin in lack of conformity to the law of God, That's always taking place when we stand in transgressing, the law of God because now we're denying God. As the ultimate reality, we are making ourselves to be God.

So again, the catechism question this week, what is sin?

And the answer is sin as any want of conformity unto Or transgression of The law of God.