



Specific Sins, Scriptural References

The Word of God has much to say about the specific sins that pose certain and varied problems to the believer. In a day when so much communication is relative, the absolute authoritative declarations of the text of Scripture are necessary.

Believers in Jesus Christ are to make themselves available to the categorical teaching of the Word of God that describes specific sins and how they relate to the Christian way of life. For decades, even centuries, there has been much confusion as to the difference between taboos, stated sins, and “questionable things.” Many believers have had problems knowing where they had liberty, what exactly does the Bible call sin, and which sins seem to have the most attention given them in Scripture.

Within this study, over 200 specific sins are dealt with from their meaning in the Greek and in the context in which they occur. Careful study will result in the realization that exegetical categorical study has an even more clear concept of the biblical teaching on sin than often those who make sins the champion of their cause.

Principles Derived from Study of Specific Sins

Sins fall into different contexts in the Scripture where they play different roles in the lives of people they affect. Sins basically fall into three categories - mental attitude sins, sins of the tongue and overt sins.

Sins may be initiatory in their make-up. They may be the thing that starts a chain reaction. Sins may be resultant meaning the product of a foregoing condition. Specific sins will result in producing certain “sinful states of being” or a status quo condition, such as carnality.

Specific sins may also result in a “progressive sinful state of being,” the condition of reversionism as an example. Specific sins may result in the believer being controlled by an “inherited sinful state.” By inherited we mean a state or condition prevailing in the make-up of your own old sin nature. Examples of these trends are lasciviousness or asceticism. These are constant characteristic sinful principles always abiding in your old sin nature and express themselves when you are out of fellowship.

There is a parallelism between committing a sin and the sinful state of being and the principle of confessing sin biblically and being spiritual. Therefore we can conclude that when you commit a specific sin, it puts you into a certain specific “sinful state of being.”

There is a relationship between the growth level of the believer and the “sinful state of being” that they become ensnared in. The growth capacity of the believer allows them greater depths of sinful pursuits. A baby in human life can cause problems, a teenager can get into more complex problems, but it takes an adult to really get strung up in the life process.

Specific sins always begin as mental sins. Mental attitude sins injure the believer having them before they have any outward expression. Others are injured by your mental attitude sins where they become verbal or overt.

It is possible to injure someone by your mental attitude even without doing anything. This can be accomplished when you are reflecting upon your “stand” on an issue in the audience of some “legalistic” believer who has a taboo for the thing that you are positive to in your own mental attitude.

Scriptural References for Specific Sins



Psalms 19:13: Presumptuous sins. The areas of life involved are thought life and volitional life. In Psalms 19, the sins fall into the context of those things which man “fails to get full information on.” Presumptuous sins are those of making premature conclusions based upon incomplete evidence.

“Also keep back Your servant from presumptuous sins; Let them not rule over me; Then I will be blameless, And I shall be acquitted of great transgression.” (Psalms 19:13, NASB)

Proverbs 6:17-18: pride, lying, personal-injury type, wicked imaginations, eager mischief, lies regarding others, discord. The areas of life involved are thought life, vocabulary life, and relationships to people.

“Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that run rapidly to evil,” (Proverbs 6:17-18, NASB)

Matthew: Judging, unjustified divorce, remarriage to former wife having married in the meantime (Deut.), self-advancement, failure to pray, injustice to others, unbelief in Jesus Christ. Matt. 19:27; Matt. 20:20. The areas of life involved are thought life, family life, married life, ministry life, relationships to others, and relationship to Christ. In Matthew, sins are found within the context of “abuses in the application of the Law system.” They define and describe the human inaccuracy and inability to rightly follow the responsibility laid down by God for them. They could be said to be sins “coming short of the glory of God.”

“Then Peter said to Him, “Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?”” (Matthew 19:27, NASB)

“Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with her sons, bowing down and making a request of Him.” (Matthew 20:20, NASB)

John: Unbelief, failure to understand Scripture previously known, false worship, misunderstanding of the person of Christ, desiring a sign as proof for the word of Christ, murmuring, unbelief, adultery, attempting to enter the plan of God by other means, or adding to the plan of God, failure to understand cleansing, betraying another, decisions based on expediency.

The areas of life involved are spiritual life, knowledge life, worship life, faith life, thought life, and volitional life. In John, the sins would fall into the context of negativism to the plan of God. This expresses itself toward Christ in unbelief, toward people in murmuring, adultery, betrayal of friends, toward decision in misusing the principle of expediency.

Romans 1:21-32: rejecting natural revelation of God, worshipping created things, lesbianism, homosexuality, unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful, have pleasure in others’ sin.

The areas of life involved are sex life, worship life, thought life, family life, social life, and overt life. The Romans list basically relates to sins that are a result of negative volition at the point of God consciousness. The basic initiatory sin in Romans 1 is that of being negative to natural revelation.

“For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.” (Romans 1:21-24,



NASB)

1 Corinthians 3:3-4: jealousy, strife. The areas of life involved are church life and fellowship life. The Corinthian context is that of believers in the church who are carnal with all of its expressions as a result of a lack of spiritual growth. Another factor involving sin in the Corinthian context was that of misusing Truth or the wrong application of it.

“for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men? For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not mere men?” (1 Corinthians 3:3-4, NASB)

1 Corinthians 8:9-10: Misuse of the law of liberty is sin. The areas of life involved are responsibilities in life, giving, and personal relationships.

“But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if someone sees you, who have knowledge, dining in an idol’s temple, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be strengthened to eat things sacrificed to idols?” (1 Corinthians 8:9-10, NASB)

2 Corinthians: Giving out of necessity, practice of comparative spirituality, judging things on the outward appearance, challenging the authority of those over you, failure to recognize God’s measure of ministry for you. The areas of life involved are giving life, spiritual life, relationships to others, station in life under authority, ministry life. In 2 Corinthians, sins find themselves in the context of “improper approach to spiritual evaluation,” wrong appraisal of giving, wrong principle of evaluating spiritual consistency, wrong basis and criteria for approval, and wrong view of authority.

Galatians 5:19-21: Immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, and carousing. The areas of life involved are moral life, worship life, thought life, and social life.

In the Galatian context, the major problem is that of the Mosaic Law versus grace. This is carried over with the maximum expression of the “human good” concept. Against this background the Apostle Paul sets forth the specific sins as the product of the “sinful flesh.” The context for the sin list in Galatians is that of the old sinful nature and its products.

“Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Galatians 5:19-21, NASB)

Ephesians: Failure to mature, developing of scar tissue on the soul, becoming promiscuous, failure to isolate anger, providing the opportunity to be tempted, stealing, failure to provide things honestly, corrupt communication, bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking, malice, fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, filthiness, foolish talking, jesting, being deceived by the enemy, being partakers of the evil of others, fellowshiping with the works of darkness, sleeping when you should be redeeming the time, being drunk with wine, provoking your children to wrath, serving to gain the applause of man, showing respect of persons.

The areas of life involved are growth life, moral life, thought life, spiritual life, relationships to others, legal life, social life, family life, and communication life. In Ephesians, specific sins find themselves in the context of being the ingredients or ammunition used by the old sin nature to frustrate the maturity process of the believer. They stand as the evidence of not yet gained maturity and the thorns which keep the believer from maximum benefit in the believer’s living.



Philippians: Preaching Christ in envy and strife, being terrified by your adversaries, wrong attitude toward suffering, murmurings, disputes. The areas of life involved are ministry life, thought life, physical life, and verbal life. In Philippians, sins are found in the context of those things forbidden for the believer in being a living example of the person of Christ being formed in you. The sins mentioned are descriptive of those attitudes which are not compatible with spiritual maturity in Christ.

Colossians: Being spoiled through philosophy and traditions, asceticism, false humility, neglecting of the body, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil sexual desires, covetousness, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication, lying, failure to forgive, being bitter to your wife, provoking your children, failing to love your husband. The areas of life involved are thought life, relationships to others, physical life, moral life, sex life, verbal life, and family life. In Colossians, the sins fall into the context of being products of cultish believers who are practicing in the local church. Sophisticated systems are coupled with the regular expressions of the old sin nature to distort Bible doctrine and the accurate communication of it.

1 Thessalonians: Unruly, rendering evil for evil, failure to abstain from all appearances or forms of evil. The areas of life involved are relationships to others, relationship to evil things, thought and overt life. In 1 Thessalonians, sins fall into the context of personal response to the expression of sin, whether that of others or just some evil.

2 Thessalonians: Failure to withdraw yourself from disorderly brethren, opposing God, exalting self, deceiving others. The areas of life involved are relationship to apostates or disorderly brethren, thought life, and verbal life. In 2 Thessalonians, sins fall into the context of improperly conducting one's self, especially with regard to disorderly brethren, self-exaltation, and deception.

1 Timothy: Giving heed to legalistic systems, swerve from doctrine, turn aside from Word of God, become void of power, woman usurping the authority of a man, imposing legalistic taboos on others, neglecting your spiritual gift in development and application, limiting or squeezing the financial remuneration of the one ministering, love for money, pride, doting on unworthy question, disputing with men of corrupt minds.

The areas of life involved are apostacy and thought life, marital life, ministry life, financial life, relationships to apostates. In Timothy, the basic context for the sins mentioned is that of the work of the church and its ministry. Much is said as to the people in the ministry, the conducting of the ministry, the subjects of the ministry, the error and misuses of the ministry, the trends in the ministry.

2 Timothy: Self-lover, covetous, boaster, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those who are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures, having a ritual of godliness, always learning but not discerning, failure to study and prepare adequately, failure to avoid unlearned questions.

The areas of life involved are thought life, family life, relationships to others' possessions and pleasures life, and study life. In 2 Timothy, sins are within a context of time or related to specific periods. They are seen as the characteristics of the last days, for example. They are seen in particular as describing the personal characteristics of individuals living in certain periods of time, namely, the last days of the Church and that also of the Tribulation prior to the coming of the Lord.

Titus: Not blameless, self-willed, angry, wino, acquiring monetary gain by false pretext, inhospitable, unjust, unholy, intemperate, vain talkers, women failing to love husband and children, women disobedient to their husbands, indiscreet, unchaste, accusers, purloining, serving to please mankind, failing to respond to admonition to return to sound doctrine, continuing to badger a heretic.



The areas of life involved are thought life, financial life, social life, family life, ministry life, work-a-day world, and relationship to heretics. In Titus, the sins listed here find themselves within the context of “personal characteristics not compatible with functioning in a local church,” thus having the leadership in mind and the proper function of the relationship of all people in the church.

Hebrews: Failure to endure chastening, fainting in the mind, failing to isolate sin, failure to be hospitable, disobedience to them that have the rule over you, failure to share in financial responsibility as a believer, being dull of hearing, being slothful, failure to mix promises and doctrines with faith.

The areas of life involved are growth life, thought life, social life, life under principle of authority, faith-rest life, study life, and giving life. In Hebrews, sins are related to the context of maturity. Many things are shown as hindering spiritual growth, maturity, etc. The basic characteristics of the sin list for Hebrews has a continuity of “restraining the believer from his full potential in the Christian life” as illustrated by the wilderness generation.

James: Being a double-minded man, being a hearer of the Word only, having respect of persons, failing to bridle the tongue, wars, fighting, lusts, improper motivations, knowing to do good and going negative, grudging, impatience, failing to confess. The areas of life involved are thought life, growth, communication, motivations, relationships with others, and physical illness.

In the James context, the sins relate to matters of practical living. They fall into the context of the every-day-living world and the matters of wisdom, learning, enduring, talking, dealing with people, etc. They are related to the believers, but unbelievers are used for illustration.

1 Peter: Failing to submit to the ordinance of man, misusing liberty as a cover-up for your maliciousness, insubordination of wives to husbands, improper marital relationship, getting even, passive attitude toward evil, suffering for evil doing, being proud, serving out of duty rather than by positive volition, serving for what one gets out of it personally.

The areas of life involved are civil life, thought life, family life, marital life, relationships to evil surrounding you, physical life, and ministry life. In 1 Peter, sins fall into the category or context of improper relationship to people. Sins here are labelled as failing in something, misusing something or self-induced difficulties.

1 Peter 2:1: Malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander. The areas of life involved are thought life, growth life, and vocabulary life. In 1 Peter 2, the sins listed here fall into the context of the babe believer in specifics but are true of all. They fall in the context of growth and appear as things that must be removed for the spiritual growth process to have the most effectiveness.

“Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander,” (1 Peter 2:1, NASB)

1 John 2: Loving the world, hating a brother, failure to test the devil’s message against the Word before buying it, fear. The areas of life involved are thought life, relationships to the world, relationships to people, and relationship to false doctrine. In 1 John, the sins listed here fall within the context of fellowship with God. Sins here are seen as the evidence of being out of fellowship, the proof of broken fellowship. They relate certain areas of human living with the fellowship of the believer.

2 John: Giving your approval and blessings to those who are not true to the Word of God. The areas of life involved are relationships in life to apostates. In 2 John, sins are related to the actions of believers toward unbelievers or people in false doctrine or in apostacy.



3 John: Loving the preeminence among the brethren, badmouthing a church. The areas of life involved are motivations, ambitions, relationship to others, and church life. In 3 John, the sins here are related in a context of a local church as victim of malicious motivations of people within it. Therefore, the context for sins listed in 3 John is that of the harm to a local church and its potential when that sin or sins are allowed to go unchecked in that local church.

Revelation: Abandoning the first love, being neutralized by improper relationships and objectives, women leading churches leading into spiritual fornication, living out a reputation although empty and dead, being lukewarm. The areas of life involved are the spiritual life, motivations, church life, and relationships to others. In Revelation 2 and 3, the sins listed fall within the context of the “missing qualities of the local church,” or “what is wrong with the local church.” Specifically, they fall within a context of “securing the immediate judgment of Jesus Christ Himself.”

Areas of Life and Related Scripture

Ambitions: 3 John.

Church Life: 1 Corinthians 3, 3 John, Revelations.

Civil Life: 1 Peter, Ephesians.

Faith-Rest Life: Hebrews, John.

Family Life: Rom 1, 2 Timothy, Matthew, Titus, 1 Peter, Ephesians, Colossians.

Fellowship Life: 1 Corinthians 3.

Financial Life: 1 Timothy, Titus.

Giving Life: Hebrews, 2 Corinthians.

Growth: James, 1 Peter, Hebrews, Ephesians.

Knowledge: John.

Life under Authority: Hebrews, 2 Corinthians.

Married Life: 1 Timothy, Matthew, 1 Peter.

Ministry Life: 1 Timothy, Matthew, Titus, 1 Peter, 2 Corinthians, Philippians.

Moral Life: Galatians 5, Ephesians, Colossians.

Motivation: James, 3 John, Revelation.

Overt Life: Romans 1.

Personal Relationships: Prov 6, 1 Cor 8, James, 1 John, 3 John, 2 Timothy, Matthew, Revelation, 2 Cor, Eph, Col, 1 Thessalonians.

Physical Illness: James.

Physical Life: 1 Peter, Philippians, Colossians.

Pleasures: 2 Timothy.

Possessions: 2 Timothy.

Relationship to Apostates: 2 John, 1 Timothy, Titus, 2 Thessalonians.



Relationship to Christ: Matthew.

Relationship to the World: 1 John, 1 Peter, 1 Thessalonians.

Relationship to False Doctrine: 1 John, 1 Timothy.

Responsibilities in Life: 1 Corinthians 8.

Sex Life: Romans 1, Colossians.

Social Life: Rom 1, Gal 5, Hebrews, Titus, Ephesians.

Spiritual Life: Revelation, 2 Cor, Ephesians, John.

Study Life: Hebrews, 2 Timothy, Timothy, Matthew, Titus, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, John, Psalms 19:13, 1 Timothy.

Thought Life: Prov 6:17-18, Rom 1:21-32, Gal 5:19-21, James, 1 Peter 2:1, 1 John 2, Hebrews, 2

Vocabulary Life: Prov 6, James, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Peter 2.

Volitional Life: John, Psalms.

Worship Life: Rom 1, Gal 5, John.