

## Harmartiology - What is it?

Hamartiology comes from the Greek word *hamartos* meaning sin. Hamartiology, therefore, is the study of sin. From a biblical perspective, the study includes how sin was introduced into the world, how it impacts the world today, the solution to the sin problem of humanity, the judgment of sin, and the removal of sin at the end of time.

Before delving into the various aspects of sin, Hamartiology first works to provide a biblical definition of sin. In short, sin is defined as "missing the mark" of God's righteousness, through transgression of His laws or rebellion against His rule. The Bible clearly states that all humans (except Jesus Christ as both human and divine) have sinned and fall short of God's glory (Romans 3:23). While some people sin more than others, "there is no one righteous, not even one" (Romans 3:10 NIV).

Another important area of study is the sin nature. This is the question of original sin and whether every person is born a sinner. The Bible teaches this is the case: "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned" (Romans 5:12). David acknowledged inborn sin, writing, "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalms 51:5).

Further, there is the important question of value placed upon individual sins. In other words, are all sins equal to God? The short answer is that all sin is equal before God in terms of separating people from Him. Apart from the saving work of Christ all sin leads to eternal condemnation (Romans 6:23). However, different sins and amounts of sin have more severe consequences in this lifetime than others. For example, murder

results in much difficulty for everyone who knows the victim and the one who committed the crime, in addition to the punishment the criminal receives. Angry words, on the other hand, do not have such severe consequences. However both murder and anger are sins before God. Jesus taught, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire" ([Matthew 5:21-22](#)).

Another consideration regarding Hamartiology is [judgment for sin](#). All deserve judgment, yet Christ saves those who trust in Him for eternal life and forgiveness of sins ([John 3:16](#)). Believers who sin may be judged by the Lord, yet do not lose the free gift of salvation ([Romans 8:37-39](#); [Ephesians 2:8-9](#)). Those who do not trust in Christ receive eternal punishment in the afterlife ([Matthew 25:46](#); Thessalonians 1:9).

In the end, God will remove the curse and the existence of sin will end. [Revelation 22:3](#) teaches, "No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him."

Ultimately, sin separates people from God, yet God has provided access to Him and forgiveness of sin through His Son Jesus Christ. The solution to the human problem of sin is redemption through Christ ([Romans 5:12-21](#); [Romans 7:21-25](#); [Colossians 2:13-15](#)). Sin will continue to exist until the end, at which time judgment will occur ([Revelation 21](#)) and the curse of sin will be removed as God's children experience eternal joy in the presence of the Lord.