

## 7 Most Twisted Scripture Groups for Sin (All Scriptures are NKJV, some emphasis added)

Below is a list of the 7 most twisted scripture groups close brothers, sisters and I in our walk with Christ have personally heard the uninformed, uneducated, and/or wicked believe and teach to justify sin and make excuses for their own iniquity and lack of faith in the kingdom gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (I will refer to them as false teachers). Some are paired together as they often are quoted together and have a strong connection in some way, shape, or form. Some of the quotes I have even captured from acquaintances; the explanations are what we believe God has revealed to us on the truth about such scriptures in their clear context.

**#1): 1John 1:8, 10** *“If we say that we **have no sin**, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us”, “If we say that we **have not sinned**, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”*

By far, these two verses, specifically verse 8, have been used above any text I’ve ever seen to justify constant sin in the life of a Christian. Many fail to understand John’s intended audience, his use of the term “we”, his use of the term “sin” as a noun in verse 8, and most obviously, the context of verses 5-10, and verses 1-6 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter. So many read these verses as if they were written: “If we say we **do not sin**, we deceive ourselves...” This would not only contradict John’s meaning in 1 John 5:18, 3:4-9 and 2:1-4, but also 1:6-7; the verses right before it. “*Have no sin*” or “*Have not sinned*” are totally different than “*Does not sin.*” I **have sin** (**thing/noun**), thousands of sins actually, **in my past** during this life or **my former record**, and thus I **have sinned** (**past verb/action**) in the distant past. This never implies I **am sinning** (**present tense verb/action**) or **do sin** (**continuous present verb/action**) or **will sin** (**future tense verb/action**) again. Because Christ has cleansed me from or forgiven me of all sin or unrighteousness through walking in the light, His blood, and my confession, the sin I have in my past is no longer held against me (verses 6, 7, and 9). **If** I should sin again in the future, I must **stop** walking in darkness (repent), **confess** that sin, and walk in the light (practice righteousness and restore fellowship with Him), and be cleansed **again** from my sin through Jesus’ blood.

It is a complete contradiction to teach John (or Jesus for that matter) expects us to walk in light and keep His commands while constantly sinning. It’s also ludicrous to teach none can say “*we have not sinned*” in the past second, minute, hour, day, week, month, or year. Most false teachers will twist these verses to justify continuous sin; some will confusingly attempt to create a category of sin as if it is a substance existing inside us that we always have. Many fail to understand John wrote this epistle not only to **encourage believers**, but to warn them **against Gnosticism** and its beliefs. The Gnostics (gnosis = knowledge) claimed a special knowledge of God for their salvation, regardless of their acts of sin or wickedness. They reasoned all matter was evil (and thus all flesh or bodies), but the soul or spirit trapped in matter remained pure regardless of the deeds of the body. Like a pile of dung that couldn’t taint a pure gold ring inside it, they justified their acts of sin as fleshy evil matter from their bodies that couldn’t taint their souls or spirits inside which attained this special “*knowledge.*” Therefore they argued Jesus didn’t have a body or “*flesh*” as John warns (1 John 4:2-3). Does this not sound nearly identical to what false teachers say about “*inherited sin*” in our flesh which somehow “*Jesus didn’t inherit but we did*” and “*continuous sin we’ll have and do but we are always forgiven?*”

Finally, John’s use of the term “we” confuses people. False teachers usually come to one conclusion: “*John’s use of ‘we’ means John includes himself as a Christian who is always sinning*” somehow or another. There are at least 3 other options. John could be using the royal we, or could be including himself and all who claim the title of Christian or “child of God” (since the Gnostics claimed these titles and professed Christ as well) to clearly state none making such false claims were in the truth (similar to Paul saying “*if we or an angel from heaven teach any other gospel...*” in Galatians 1:8). A third option could be the uses of projection or plural second-person such as “are we feeling alright” instead of “are you feeling alright” or “we need to fix this” instead of “you need to fix this.” So do **we** really think John wrote this epistle so **we** may not sin (2:1), or did he write to justify constant sin in a believer?

**#2): Romans 7:14-25 & 1 Timothy 1:15.** *“For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin...For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me...O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?”* and “*This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.*”

These two sections of scripture are a false teacher’s dream, for who would dare question the salvation of Paul? If a false teacher can easily twist and teach these verses as constant awful ugly sin in Paul’s life, surely they can

justify it in their own lives, and yours too! And this is exactly what they do with great success! They insist Paul in Romans 7 is speaking in the present tense as a Christian who is sold under sin (14), has sin dwelling inside of him (as a substance -17 & 18), and he practices evil (19), a miserable wretch (24)! So they consider themselves sold under sin which dwells inside them, as they practice evil and wail and bemoan their wretchedness. Is Paul speaking in the present tense here? Absolutely! The **historical** present tense! The narration of stories or events in the past becomes more vivid and real when using the historical present tense such as “*one time I was at the circus, and these elephants start splashing me, and now I am soaking wet. I get up and dry myself off, and here come the elephants again to spray me. I’m about to leave the circus I’m so drenched.*” People use the historical present tense more often than we’d think today, and it has been around for thousands of years. So many people miss the past tense Paul uses in verse 5 “*For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death*” and his transition in verses 13 and 14 to historical present tense. Can we see verse 5 as it is acted out in verses 14 through 24? Do these verses mention the Spirit at all? Didn’t Paul just state we are free from sin in Romans 6:15-23, then again in Romans 8:1-17?

As Peter warned, Paul’s epistles contain “*some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction*” (2 Pet 3:16). Cyril of Jerusalem (350-390AD) warns us “Listen not, to any one perversely interpreting the words, “*But if I do that which I would not*” (Rom 7:16) (Lecture IV, section 18). I hear people state how “comforted” Romans 7 (the false view) makes them feel because “it lets me know, as good as Paul was, he still struggled by falling in sin too.” Misery loves company – in their minds, a possible repeated practice of evil or slavery to sin by a highly esteemed apostle comforts them. Most will use verse 20 to blame the flesh or “sin nature” as some versions have poorly translated it, completely missing the metaphor. “*The devil made me do it*” or “*it wasn’t me, it was that sin in my flesh that did it*” or “*sin is in my body*” are the excuses we hear; more Gnostic teachings to tickle their itching ears. False teachers found a way to make themselves and all men slaves to sin and Christ, serving two masters, at the same time (which is impossible), and the excuse of a lifetime for their wickedness.

Paul’s saying to Timothy is used in similar fashion. He even stated in 1 Timothy 1:13 he “*was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.*” Then right after mentioning “*sinners, of whom I am chief*” he states in verse 16 “*However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.*” Note the past tense in 13, and 16, with the present tense in 15. Is he considering himself chief of sinners to recall his past deeds, keep him humble, and show the mercy Jesus had on him in his unbelief? Or is he claiming as a child of God, apostle, Christian, preacher, and more, he is currently committing the worst of sins? We would imagine Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, or some serial rapist of small children would fit the description today of “*chief of sinners.*” Does Paul claim the title because of his **former** unbelief, blasphemy, persecution of the church, and insolence? Or is it just all kinds of constant sin he committed (then currently) at the time of his letter? It doesn’t take a genius to figure this out, just a pure heart willing to fully obey God and Jesus, which the false teachers will not have or do, and will teach others they cannot do, because after all, “*if Paul was the chief of sinners as one of the greatest apostles*” they reason, “*of course you and I will be even worse.*”

### **#3): Romans 3:23** “*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*”

This verse is widely known by students of the bible, and random non-religious people on the street, quoted often. It is used as a ‘catch all’ for constant sin by many. One pastor insisted on quoting it three times in a row as “*all have sin and fall short of the glory of God*” to a brother who rebuked the pastor to say it correctly. The pastor finally said it right, and the brother asked “*what was preventing you from quoting that scripture correctly the first three times?*” We can probably guess; it was right after a discussion of holiness and living free from sin. I’ve heard people slightly change the verse in other ways. One man insisted this was a definition of sin. He claimed it meant anything we do at all that falls short of God’s glory is sin. A typo, bowel movement, lack of understanding, spilled milk, or a traffic jam could fall under this category as they “fall short” of God’s glory. Another man claimed the “all” in this verse even applied to a fetus in the womb. *Seriously?* Such ideas make a complete mockery of sin to numb hearers to what it truly is, and what its consequences truly are. Do we accuse Jesus of sin when he asks God to glorify them together with the glory Christ **had before** the world was (John 17:5)? Of course not! It is clear he hadn’t yet entered His full glory **yet** (Luke 24:26), which God **gave him after** raising him from the dead (1 Pet 1:21).

Consider the setting at the time of this verse. In Romans, Paul writes to Jews and Gentiles to share the condemnation mankind has fallen under historically, how the Jewish nation and non-Jewish nations have not lived up to God's standard, and how both now share the same hope by faith they all have in Christ Jesus. Before Paul wrote Romans 3:10-18 or 3:23, he made several key points emphasizing application to the Jew and also the Greek (1:16), Jew and also the Gentile (2:9 and 10), those who had sinned without law (non-Jews), and those in the law (Jews) (2:12). He compared and contrasted Gentiles not having the law, and Jews resting in the law (2:14 and 17), in addition to outward circumcision of the flesh with inward circumcision of the heart (2:28 and 29). He explains how advantages still existed to the Jew and in circumcision (3:1), but this in no way makes "we better than they" for "we have previously charged **both Jews and Greeks** that they are **all under sin**" (3:9). He shows "all are under sin" or as verse 3:23 states "all have sinned" even following such statements with Him being the God of Jews and Gentiles also (3:29). His purpose is the same after verses 10-18, in what he states in verse 19 "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." So we can see the crux of his argument is Jews and non-Jews; Paul in no way attempts to imply every single human being at every moment of every day is under the power of sin or is continuously sinning (Nor was he implying infants "have sinned" because "all have sinned").

Those in the Jewish nation and Gentile nations needed to recognize both had fallen short of God's glory whether they sinned in the law or sinned without the law (against their conscience, as Rom 2:15 shows). In both nations however, through Jesus' blood, one who has faith in Jesus can have previously committed sins "passed over" by God (Rom 3:24-26). Without faith in Jesus by which I am **now justified** (Rom 3:24-26), I "have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23). This is a fact which in no way implies I've sinned recently, am sinning now, nor currently **still** fall short of God's glory **with Christ in me**. If Paul were attempting to prove every human being or fetus that ever lived is constantly under sin's power, it would mean Jesus and God have effectively freed no one. Again, Romans 3:19 makes 3:10-18 clear: Who are these things spoken to? Those who are under the law; if we have come to Christ, and are not under the law, verses 10-18 do not apply to us. Do you seek God? Is your throat an open tomb? Is your mouth full of poison, cursing, and bitterness? Are you swift to shedding blood? Is your way destruction and misery? Have you not known the way of peace? Is there no fear of God in your eyes? If you do not seek God, and answer yes to the rest of these questions, you are clearly not a Christian/child of God, despite what some pastor or friend tells you, or how you feel.

**#4: 1 Kings 8:46, 2 Chronicles 6:36, & Eccl 7:20** "When they sin against You (for there is no one who does not sin), and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they take them captive to the land of the enemy far or near;" and "For there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin."

Many false teachers absolutely love Solomon's generalizations here because they believe it directly contradicts John's writings. 'Aha!' They think, or even say and teach, "See, there is no one who does not sin" even though 1 John 3:9 and 1 John 5:18 teach whoever is born or has been born of God does not sin. In their minds, Solomon not only contradicts John, but these generalizations completely trump any teaching on even the possibility of ceasing from sin. For the two nearly identical records in Kings and Chronicles, most translations render "if" rather than "when" for the first word as the Hebrew and the Greek Septuagint render it, indicating the **possibility** or **probability** of sin occurring rather than it occurring as a given fact. Most people **in their minds add** to Solomon's words in this prayer as if he spoke "for there is no one who does not sin...**every hour and day**" or "...**all the time**" rather than "...**at some point in life**." In the Hebrew and Greek Septuagint, "at some point in life" is more conveyed or implied, although none of these words exist in the original text. What was Solomon's point in praying this God-honored prayer? Was it a promise from God that no human being is ever capable of righteous action even with God's help, or that we are incapable of ever ceasing from sin even with God's and His Messiah's Spirit in us?

If we view the context of the prayer, it is quite clear. Similar to God's blessings and curses on obedience and disobedience in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 through Moses, Solomon in the prayer asks for mercy and forgiveness of similar sin, but mostly that God hear the prayers of Israel. In 1 Kings 8, starting in verse 28, in nearly every other verse Solomon asks God to "hear in heaven" their prayers and supplications. He mentions people sinning through oaths (31), and sin resulting in defeat in battle (33), no rain (35), or captivity (46-50). This is **not daily constant unavoidable sin**, but key specific historic occurrences seen in the Old Testament. If it was constant sin, why would he mention justifying the righteous (32), turning back (33), turning from their sin (35), returning to Him with all their heart and soul (48)? Can one do such things while sinning at the same time? False teachers answer "well, yes, it's inevitable; we are all going to sin." He even closes his prayers by

exhorting hearts to be loyal, walking in God's statutes and commandments (61). In 1 Kings 9:3-9 (and 2 Chr 7:12-22), God answers him, exhorting loyalty and faithfulness, with similar promises on obedience, and punishments on disobedience. The last few verses God even states making Israel and the temple a proverb and byword if they forsake Him.

In Ecclesiastes, we rarely hear 3:18 taken out of context to justify evolution, or 3:22 used to justify there is absolutely nothing better than rejoicing in one's own works; neither do many claim it is better to never have existed than to be either alive or dead (4:3). False teachers hardly give 4:15 a notice where Solomon claims to have seen "**all the living who walk under the sun**", but they'll jump straight to 7:20 to prove text constant sin, and that no one is ever just or does good; they'll give these to their disciples also, to keep them in bondage and send them to argue with us against truth. Did Solomon really see **all living** that walk under the sun? How could he know there wasn't a just man on the **entire earth**? Many instantly say "*the Bible said it, so I believe it, and that settles it*" failing to realize context and Solomon's intent. If there is not a just (Hebrew – righteous) man on earth who does good, why did he just mention five verses back in 7:15 "*there is a **just man** who perishes in **his righteousness***" (just = same Hebrew word – righteous)? Why did he later say in 8:14 and 9:20 there **were** just/righteous men, and good using the **same** Hebrew words? Was he confused or crazy, or was he simply trying to generalize and say "*I've seen it all man!*" Could it be he was making this generalization of "*I have seen everything in my days of vanity*" (7:15)? Literally everything, or is this akin to us today saying "*I've been around a while, and seen a lot of stuff*"? As I've shared with others, 7:15-20 is like one saying to me: "*Man Matt, I've seen it all, righteous people mistreated and killed, and wicked people being allowed to live. People need to fear God, but no one does good. No one stops sinning.*" It's not a biblical doctrinal statement but my general observation of the majority of mankind. Finally, an honorable mention to Proverbs 20:9 which I conclude **only God** could make my heart clean (with my cooperation), not "I" alone.

**#5): Romans 14:23 & James 4:17** "*But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin*" and "*Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.*"

These two are commonly thrown into the category of "sins of omission" by many false teachers. Grammatically speaking, the concept of sinning by not doing something would be by "omission", but this word doesn't appear in scripture. The problem is when false teachers teach these sins constantly occur in all people daily or nearly as often. Satan and his ministers apply "*whatever is not from faith*" to any and every feeling, emotion, or desire, to every single thing we do during our day, like stepping out of bed, flipping on a light-switch, pouring a bowl of cereal (some claim we must ask God's permission to perform such tasks). It could be easily argued we faithfully expect to be able to step out of bed, a light to come on, and cereal to be poured as we do them and thus we do them "in faith", but Paul wasn't really speaking of such things. His context in the entire chapter of Romans 14 is avoiding offense, judgment, or disputes between those in the faith (weak or otherwise) over "*doubtful things*" (verse 1) by one's reasoning or thoughts, mostly regarding foods (or drink) and observances of days (verses 2-3, 5-6, 14-15, 20-23). Paul exhorts others to not despise/show contempt (14:3, 10), put stumbling blocks (14:13), or cause offense/grief because of such things; one disregarding this exhortation is indeed not walking in love but evil (14:15, 20). To help understand verse 23 which refers to one condemned by eating or not eating from **faith**, note phrases for food and days such as "*let each be fully **convinced in his own mind***" (14:5), "*so then each of us shall give **account of himself** to God*" (14:12), "*but to **him** who considers anything to be unclean, **to him it is unclean***" (14:14), "*happy is he who does not **condemn himself** in what he approves*" (14:22), and "***he who doubts is condemned** if he eats, because he does not eat from faith*" (14:23).

It is clear the offense to one's own (or another's) conscience is the sin "not from faith" here, as Paul also speaks elsewhere (Rom 13:5, 1 Cor 8:7-13, 10:25-33). If you know you'll later condemn yourself for an action, or you'll cause another to stumble by an action (food, observances, or otherwise), then with God and Jesus' help, refrain from such action! But don't accuse all of constantly sinning by broadening the category of sin to any random action throughout the day where one fails to have a detailed conversation with God for His permission to perform it.

James covers many topics in his epistle both before and after 4:17, from joy in trials, when temptation turns to sin, being doers of the word, avoiding favoritism, ensuring faith is accompanied by works, taming the tongue, avoiding strife, judgment and boasting, healing, turning sinners back, to many other categories. He gives many examples of sin, but two verses summarize its definition: James 1:15, and 4:17 - when desires conceive and one **knows** the good but fails to do it. A desire conceiving (by Greek definition) is when **I give aid** or **help** to an

enticing **thought** or **feeling**, allowing it to **capture** or **seize** me, and **knowing** good but failing to do it is when I actually **in my mind** have **knowledge** from either my own **conscience** or a **command** from God upon my heart to do something good (or not do something bad). Note this has to do with knowledge. Knowing good, failing to do it, "to him" it is sin ("to him" being God may write a law on one person's heart He has not written on another's); similar to Paul's points in Romans 14, we **refrain** from **what we know** to be **wrong**. These may be moral issues or matters of conscience. It's not "*I gave in to my desire to eat a piece of bread*", or "*I failed to wash hands and know I should have*", failed to pick up every piece of trash I saw, or didn't feed the poor every weekend of my life, or didn't preach the gospel to every human being I saw. This last one is very common as we hear people say "*I wasn't as diligent as I could have been when sharing the gospel*" or "*I didn't take every opportunity I could have to share it*" as if God expected us to even cast our pearls among swine. If we examine the life of Jesus closely, he at times ordered disciples to tell no one He was the Messiah (Matt 16:20), at times did not perform many miracles certain places (Matt 13:58), did not go openly to some places but stayed secluded (Mark 1:45). Paul exhorts to pray without ceasing (2Thess5:17), yet Jesus ceased from praying in Luke 11:1. Many condemn others or themselves thinking they are sinning by "omission" constantly due to a lack of understanding of such verses. We must not make a mockery of sin or of obedience in things of faith.

**#6): James 3:2 & 1 John 5:16** "*For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body*" and "*If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that.*"

These verses are used usually (though not always) together after a false teacher cannot convince someone of the previous verses listed, and nearly always in attempt to counter the fact that children of God led by the Spirit do not sin. They become excited as if to say "*aha! See, James includes himself as a Christian with all others stumbling in many ways, and John even calls people brothers who are committing sin!*" Sadly, this false understanding gives them great comfort. But neither of these verses teaches "*everybody sins, even Christians.*" For James, he clearly speaks in the context of taming the tongue as the first twelve verses of the chapter show, adding a **warning** about the stricter judgment of **teachers**; how ironic so many **teach** these verses as if sin were a norm for the Christian just one verse after this warning. It is also worth noting the word 'stumble' here is not *hamartia* or *hamartano* (Greek words for sin) but *patio* (meaning offend, err, fall, stumble, or possibly sin). Even if we assume James meant to convey this word as "sin" is he stating every Christian does it all the time? Or is he more likely saying something like our language today "*there are many things that trip us*" as if to say there are many dangers, obstacles, pitfalls, and offenses we all must avoid? Does he not state in the very same verse a **perfect man does not stumble** in word but is able to also keep his whole body in check?

Many conclude it is impossible to bridle the tongue and be perfect because of verse 8, yet James' analogies of horses and ships (verses 3-4), along with blessings, curses, fresh and bitter water springs, fig trees and grapevines (10-12) teach the exact opposite. He explains the power of the tongue, then contrasts each item to show how "*these things ought not to be so*" (10) regarding good and evil coming from the same mouth, just as Jesus declared "*a good tree cannot bear bad fruit*" (Matt 7:18) and John the Baptist before Jesus preached trees not bearing good fruit would be cut down and thrown into the fire (Matt 3:10). But false teachers take and give comfort concluding "*we bear good and bad fruit, we curse and praise, because no man can tame the tongue for we all stumble.*" James' precise purpose was to show how ridiculous such a concept is. He takes sin so seriously that later in the same epistle he speaks to "brethren" of one **among** them wandering from the truth, and one turning him back saving his soul from death, referring to the wanderer as a **sinner** (5:19-20). Unfortunately the wicked assume this to be nothing, since James already called his audience adulterers and sinners in 4:4-8, as if he said this only to Christians. His teaching and exhortation in chapter 3, like his rebuke in chapter 4 apply to **anyone** not bridling the tongue or **anyone** lusting, murdering, coveting, and befriending the world (4:2-4), not one truly following Jesus.

For 1 John, it is worth noting his use of the term "brother" in 2:9-10 regarding loving or hating one, in 3:15 regarding hating one and being a murderer, in 3:17 regarding one in need of the world's goods, in 4:20-21 again regarding loving or hating "whom he has seen", and finally in 5:16 regarding sinning a sin not unto death. Is John referring to us loving and not hating but sharing our goods with **only** a true Christian "brother" or is he using the term in the general sense to all of mankind? If the latter, why would we assume the "brother" in 5:16 must be a Christian or child of God? Even Peter spoke to the unconverted in Acts 2:29 as "men and **brethren**" who replied to he and the apostles inquiring of salvation as "men and **brethren**" (Acts 2:37). John's use of sin

**not to death**, yet asking for God to **give life** should cause us to ask; if it is not to death, why ask God to give life? Are there at least two possible meanings for the words ‘life’ and ‘death’ here? Death could be physical (as in Num 16:29-33, or Acts 5:5, 10), temporary spiritual death, or even permanent spiritual death (such as blasphemy of the Holy Spirit – Mark 3:29), just as life could be physical, eternal spiritual life or even life more abundant as we apply the life Jesus lived to ours (John 10:10, Rom 5:10). If “*the soul who sins shall die*” (Eze 18:4, 20), “*the wages of sin is death*” (Rom 6:23), and yet “*sin when it is full-grown brings forth death*” (Jas 1:15), is it possible 1 John 5:16 speaks of one sinning who still has hope of repentance because the sin is not full-grown or entirely complete? Some use the verse to suggest certain sins cause spiritual death and others do not. Whichever the answers may be, I am convinced this verse is not to be understood as one woman saw it as if we all sin, laughing as she read it aloud to a group exclaiming “*I mean, come on, is there **anyone** who **does not** see his brother sinning a sin?*” One man had such a hard time when I refused to call him a brother in Christ while he admitted he was sinning, he used this verse in an attempt to prove one could walk with Christ and be sinning at the same time because John used the term “brother.” As John made crystal clear in his entire epistle, and especially in 1 John 2:29-3:10, a child of God does not sin.

**#7): General and Broad Sin and Wickedness Verses: Genesis 6:5, 8:21, Job 15:14-16, Ps 51:5, 58:3, Isa 64:6, Jer 17:9, Rom 5:12, 1 Cor 2:14, Eph 2:3, 8-9, Titus 3:5**

This is a vast group, and false teachers will use these to accuse all of mankind of constant sin as a “catch all” when they cannot convincingly twist the verses mentioned previously. Sometimes they use these as a last resort, but other times to explain the previously mentioned verses to create another category of sin they can claim all are guilty of – Adam’s. It would take many more pages to fully explain each scripture, but I will touch on each with a sentence or two, as all are used to either justify some general sin false teachers claim all humans have and inherit from birth (except Jesus of course), or they justify how all mankind’s hearts are constantly wicked and sinful, incapable of any righteousness, even with God and Jesus’ help.

God seeing the “*wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*” and “*the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth*” in Genesis 6:5 and 8:21 is a general statement on mankind. This has been most of mankind historically, and Noah (6:9-12, 7:1) was a clear exception to this statement, and “*from his youth*” (8:21) means from a young age, not birth. Job’s friend Eliphaz asked “*what is man that he could be pure? And he who is born of a woman, that he could be righteous*” as he declares “*God puts no trust in His saints*” and man is “*abominable and filthy, who drinks iniquity like water*” is not to be taken as sound doctrine at all (Job 15:14-16). At the end of the entire discourse, God rebuked Eliphaz twice with “*My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has*” (Job 42:7-8). It is additionally folly to suggest David in Psalm 51:5 or 58:3 was establishing a doctrine that all human beings are born sinfully wicked. Technically, the subject of the sin in 51:5 is his mother “*in sin my **mother** conceived me*”, and 58:3 refers to the **wicked** being “*estranged from the womb*” not all human beings. However, David used hyperbole or metaphor to exaggerate his own sin he is broken over in Psalm 51, and to exaggerate how soon the wicked begin their wickedness in Psalm 58. Hyperbole is exaggerated and not meant to be taken literally, and these figures of speech he applies are exactly what metaphors are meant to convey.

As for Isaiah 64:6, many love to shout how “*we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags.*” Isaiah is broken over Israel and their sin, and any outward ordinances or ceremonial laws they kept meant nothing compared to their sin which he says of the whole nation “*in these ways we continue*” (verse 5). Although this was spoken of Israel, and could certainly apply to most of mankind, to declare it a **constant** state is to say there is **still no one** who calls on the God’s name, and His face is **always** hidden from us (verse 7). He in no way declares any and every righteous deed by anyone for all time is always a filthy rag, for why then would he state God “*meets him who rejoices and **does righteousness**, who remembers You in Your ways*” (verse 5)? He begins his entire letter with this concept, especially Isaiah 1:11-20. God uses the phrase “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?*” (Jer 17:9); just before this in verses 5 and 7, God begins with “*Cursed is the man...*” and “*Blessed is the man.*” He does so to contrast how those trusting in themselves versus those trusting in Him will be. He answers the question in verse 9 with verse 10: “*I the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.*” He doesn’t say “*because you all have a desperately wicked deceitful heart, none of you trust in Me nor are any of you blessed, therefore I’ll give every one of you punishment and calamity*”, yet this is how it would read if verse 9 applied to every human being at all times.

Finally, many of Paul's writings in the New Testament are a false teachers dream. They twist Romans 5:12 to read **sin spread** to all men instead of "**death spread** to all men", as Paul began the next 9 verses on how the condemnation of **death spread** through Adam's **one offense** and the gift of **eternal life spread** or "abounded to many" through Jesus' **righteous act**. Paul did not teach any inherited sin nature here, nor did he teach "because all sinned" means every human being was sinning in the loins of Adam as so many falsely teach. When he speaks of the natural man not receiving things of the Spirit of God in 1 Corinthians 2:14, he doesn't mean as an infant from birth, but those "*wise according to the flesh*" (1:26) or using "*human wisdom*" (2:4) comparing the "*wisdom of this age*" (2:6) with "*the wisdom of God*" (2:7). When he tells the Ephesians they were "*by nature children of wrath*" (2:3), it is not because they were born that way, but they "*were dead in trespasses and sins*" in which they "*once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air*" among whom they, and we "*all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh*" (2:1-3). Lastly, when he declares to them it is "*by grace you have been saved through faith, and not that of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast*" (Eph 2:8-9), or states elsewhere "*not by works of righteousness which we have done*" (Titus 3:5), he's sharing the mercy God has had on our past evil deeds which we could never cleanse ourselves of without God through faith (moral fidelity), echoing Isaiah's use of similar words to ensure all understand salvation is not of the outward ordinances and ceremonial or civil laws any Hebrew or Gentile living among them keeps.

I could go on, but scriptures false teachers twist are too numerous: chastening in Hebrews 12, the Lord's Prayer model of asking forgiveness and daily bread in Matthew 6, or the "judge not" verse in Matthew 7, etc. The untaught and unstable will continue to pervert Paul's writings and, as Peter said "*also the rest of the scriptures, to their own destruction*" (2 Pet 3:16).

You may be a recent convert to Christ, or you may have faithfully followed him for years. You may have been or may currently be a false convert deceived by your own sin, confused by unlearned or unstable men and their twisted interpretations from Satan of the above scriptures. You may be seeking to find God and Jesus but have not entered into a true relationship with them with power over all temptation and sin. Whichever the case, you have already heard, or certainly will hear the above scripture groups used by **false teachers** to **justify sin** as an **unavoidable common occurrence and condition**; they'll claim it is even the case in those led by the Spirit. You may have even falsely taught the above scriptures in an effort to mask your own sin, or in a confused but falsely perceived effort to somehow exalt God and lower others by lumping all humans (including faithful, obedient children of God) into the category of constant filthy, stinking, wretched, awful sinners who cannot ever please God, nor be acceptable to Him. I pray the above explanations may provide you clarity, and enable you to avoid false teachers and doctrine, seek all truth with diligence, tear down lies, and grow in God and Jesus in true righteousness and holiness. God Bless.