

Did God Make Me Sinful?

Ezekiel 18:1-4

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

Some think that God made us the way we are and we can't _____. Did God make us _____? Can we change? The Bible answers these questions and gives us _____. Occasionally people who are struggling with a _____ problem ask, "Did God make me this way?" Many people are convinced that our DNA makes us the way we are and we can't change our _____. Others believe that man is incapable of change on his _____. Flip Wilson used to say, "The Devil made me do it"; but some people, instead of blaming the devil, blame _____ for making them do the things they do. They believe we're all _____ sinners, totally depraved, and completely unable to _____ what is good. They say our sinful _____ is utterly incapable of choosing or even desiring God. They go even farther by saying some people are predestined to be _____, while others are predestined to be _____. They believe God arbitrarily makes the choice for us, and we have no _____. They say we can't change our ways or our eternal _____.

Without a doubt all people _____ with temptation and sin throughout their lives. What tempts you may differ from what tempts me, but we both face the struggle to live righteously. The apostle Peter urged Christians to "abstain from the passions of the _____, which wage _____ against your soul" (1 Peter 2:11). Did God _____ us sinful and unable to resist temptation? Are we _____ in sin with no hope of salvation? What can we do? We'll look into the Scriptures because they contain the _____ of eternal life. They have the _____ to our problems.

Our reading today comes from the inspired prophet Ezekiel 18:1-4.

The Scriptures teach that man is _____ of choosing between good and evil, and he is _____ to choose between God and Satan. Romans 6:17-18 says, "Though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were committed. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness." This passage clearly teaches that lost people _____ from the heart the gospel teaching and _____ from being a slave to sin to being a slave of righteousness.

After preaching to the Jews on the Day of Pentecost about their sin of crucifying the Lord Jesus Christ and their need to _____ and be _____ for the forgiveness of their sins, the apostle Peter, speaking by the power of the Holy Spirit, said, "Save yourselves from this perverse generation" (Acts 2:40). What does that mean, "Save yourselves"? Are we suggesting that a person can _____ his way to heaven? No! We're not saying that. We're saying a person must _____ to God's gracious gift. God does the saving, but He puts qualifications on _____ can be saved. We must

respond to His _____. One must repent and be baptized out of faith and love to meet God's _____.

Read what the Bible says in 1 Peter 1:22-23. People purify their souls when they _____ and _____ the gospel truth. They're born again, not through some miraculous movement of God but by _____ to the preaching of the Word of God. It's the _____ that saves (Romans 1:16). Paul said, "For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the _____ preached to save those who believe" (1 Corinthians 1:21). This was God's choice of _____ to save people, giving them a gospel and saving them through that message.

That man has freewill either to _____ the gospel or to _____ it is also clear in the Scriptures. Have you thought about that golden passage that you _____ as a child? The Lord Jesus said, "For God so _____ the world, that He _____ His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "Whoever" means "anyone." God will save people who believe, but those who refuse to believe shall _____. Our choices matter; we can freely choose. "Whoever believes in the Son has _____ life, but whoever does not obey the Son will not see life, for God's _____ remains on him" (John 3:36). Faith and obedience matter to our _____. God expects us to _____ to believe and obey in order to have eternal life.

Throughout history, people have chosen whether they will _____ God or not. **Read Joshua 24:14-15.** Joshua knew that people had to choose which god they would serve, whether the God of Heaven or some other god. They had _____. Many years later the prophet Elijah _____ 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the Asherah on Mount Carmel. The God of Heaven completely overcame the prophets of Baal when the fire came down and consumed Elijah's _____. Before the challenge, Elijah asked the people, "How long will you _____ between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him" (1 Kings 18:21). Of course, Baal was just an _____ and was never anything but a figment of the people's imagination. The God of Heaven was _____ and sent fire down from heaven, which convinced the people to kill the prophets of Baal. When the people _____ the evidence, they chose God and rejected Baal.

They had _____. So do you! Revelation 22:17 says, "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost." God _____ us to believe and to obey!

Let's reason together. Jesus said, "unless you _____, you too will all perish" (Luke 13:5). Why would Jesus Christ condemn people for a _____ to repent if they're incapable of repenting or doing any good toward their own salvation? Wouldn't that make God into a _____?

Hebrews 11:6 says, "without faith it's impossible to _____ Him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he _____ and that he _____ those who seek him." Why would God _____ faith from us if He knows that people are incapable of believing? God won't _____ of us something that we're not capable of doing.

The apostle Paul encouraged people to “be _____ to God” (2 Corinthians 5:18-20). Why would God _____ men to be reconciled if they weren’t capable of _____ anything by which they could be reconciled? Let’s think together. The word “reconcile” implies that there is a separation and a reunion; reconciliation means “to bring back into _____.” A reconciled husband and wife were once in harmony, then they separated, and then later that harmony was restored. If an infant is _____ in sin, he cannot be reconciled because he was _____ in harmony with the Lord at the beginning. Infants aren’t born in sin but born pure; they _____ from God when they’re old enough and responsible enough to sin on their own. They are reconciled to God by _____ and _____ to the gospel. In obedience to the gospel one is _____ from sin and _____ again into the family of God.

The Bible teaches that God is no _____ of persons (Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11-12; and 1 Peter 1:17). God hasn’t arbitrarily _____ some folks to be saved and others to be lost, as some people teach. Rather the blood of Jesus was shed for _____ people and the gospel is offered to _____. The apostle Paul said that God “desires all people to be _____ and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4). God didn’t make people just to _____ them. That is a _____ and _____ doctrine. The apostle Peter said, “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is _____ toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3: 9). That is what God wants, for you to repent and to be right with Him and live with Him forever.

If we have no choice as to our eternal destiny, why would we need to beware of the _____? The apostle Peter warned, “Be of sober spirit, be on the _____, because your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring _____, seeking someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8). Such language is _____ if we have no freewill. Temptation _____ whether we will choose to do right or give in to what’s wrong. That’s freewill. We are not puppets or robots; we’re made in God’s _____ and God made us a free moral agent.

The Bible says, “Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am being tempted by God’; for God _____ be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But _____ is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own _____. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth _____” (James 1:13-15). God is not the _____ of our sinful behavior. He tests our faith, but doesn’t _____ us into moral failure and sin. How could a holy God lead anyone into behavior that totally contradicts His own _____?

We do admit that man is often _____ to sin, but being weak to sin isn’t the same thing as being incapable of resisting sin. Many Bible characters resisted the _____ to sin. Joseph said “no” to the continual _____ of Potiphar’s wife. Joshua said “no” to serving _____ gods. Daniel as a young man said “no” to _____ the unlawful foods at the Babylonian king’s table. As an old man, Daniel said “no” to the law that forbade him to _____ to the God of heaven. When the Sanhedrin told Peter and John not to preach the name of Jesus, they chose the moral high ground rather than give into the Council (Acts 4:19-20).

The Lord Jesus describes the _____ of man in Matthew 26:41. Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane with Peter, James, and John. He was praying in agony, and they kept falling _____. Jesus said, “Watch and pray that you may not _____ into temptation. The spirit indeed is _____, but the flesh is _____.” This shows that man does have some _____ inclinations within. He is not all _____. We all _____ weakness to sin. This is why we must be _____ and _____, so that we can overcome the temptation. Jesus didn’t accept the notion that men must give in to the _____. We can resist temptation, and we can repent of our past sins.

Some people think there’s something in their physical makeup that makes their character inherently _____. Some speak of people being born alcoholics or born drug addicts. Others think that our sexual orientation is determined and cannot be _____. But millions of alcoholics have given up _____ altogether. Millions have _____ of sexual misdeeds in order to live a godly life. Sin is a _____ behavior, not a foregone conclusion. The hope of the gospel is that men _____ and will repent. Jesus died on the cross to give us that opportunity. The Bible always assumes that people can change their lives.

So don’t let anyone deceive you. Refuse to _____ any doctrine that says that you have no hope of changing your ways or of overcoming sin. God can and will _____ you overcome the sins of your life. Free will is yours, and you must make your choice _____. You have to decide what you love most. You have to give your _____ to the Lord. Please choose to follow the Lord whatever the _____. I hope today that you have that desire in your heart. Follow Jesus and do it today

Someone asks, “Well Phil, what about Psalm 51:5?” Psalm 51:5 is a penitential Psalm after David had committed _____ with Bathsheba. In agony and guilt he says, “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in _____ did my mother conceive me.” Some say this passage teaches that we’re _____ in sin. David said he was born into an evil and sinful _____ which is different from saying that he was born sinful. Sin is an _____, a transgression of God’s law (1 John 3:4). Sin isn’t inherited; it’s a _____ behavior. A person _____ English because he was born where they _____ English. The apostles spoke miraculously in tongues to people from _____ nations. The people said, “How is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were _____?” (Acts 2:7-8). How is one born into a language? One _____ a language by being born in a place that speaks it. One learns _____ by being born into a world that practices it. **Read what David said in Psalm 22:9-10.** This isn’t a baby born in sin but a baby born into a sinful world, yet still able to _____ God.

Sin is serious business. Unforgiven sin will cost you your _____. We need the _____ of Jesus to be saved. How do we come into _____ with that blood? We contact that blood by choosing to _____ in Christ, choosing to _____ of our sins, and by choosing to be _____. When we’re baptized into the _____ of Christ, we come into contact with His shed blood according to Romans 6:3. In baptism God, _____ the blood of Jesus to our souls. That’s the time that our sins are washed away (Acts 22:16). Be saved from this corrupt generation!