Sin

What a great topic. To be fair, sin is not a big word. However, the response to this word has been huge. Sin is a word that invokes fear and loathing. The word sin comes from old English that means an offence against religious or moral law. Throughout history, humankind has argued over morality. Exactly what is sin? I have heard of sins against God. Sins against the church. There are sexual sins and sins against humanity. Yet, this word is not particularly defined in the Bible. There is no defined list of sins.

However, that does not mean sin is nothing. The first verse using the word sin is an interesting one of God talking to Cain. Genesis 4:7 "*If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.*" Before this verse we have no mention of sin. In fact, there are no commandments at all except to not eat of a certain tree in the garden. Yet, (the verse above) I am sure Cain knew what sin was. Adam and Eve on the other hand did not (in my way of thinking) know sin. The tree they ate from was called the knowledge of good and evil. I think that without that knowledge it would be pretty hard to sin. Yet, somehow, they did find a way.

Some people like to claim that sin does not exist because of the absence of a list. Further to that, they claim that sin is subjective. Certainly, through the years sin has become strange fruit. One church says its "this" and another group claims it is "that." The problem is in defining "this'

and 'that." The Catholic church adopted a massive list of sins. Dante's inferno lists seven deadly

sins. For me, I like to say that sin is anything you do to others or to yourself that causes harm.

That might include murder, drinking, sex and a host of others. So, sex and drinking are sins? In

moderation no, but in the wrong way, yes. Through the years the church has frowned upon

smoking for instance. It causes harm to you and others. However, it's not a sin to smoke in

essence. It's a sin to knowingly put you or another in harms way. Sexual disease is as harmful as

adultery. We tend to focus on the sin rather than the ramifications and actions.

I did a brief reading on sin theology. Oh boy, here he goes! Settle down, I was just

researching different views within history. Most views on sin do not give specific verses. Why?

It's because the definition of sin is vague in the Bible. The wages of sin are death. What sin? All

have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. What sin? So, what we have is concepts of sin.

I'll give an example. Sin is the gateway from evil to grace. I'd have to think about that one. Yet,

off the top I'd say that falling from grace and into evil could lead back to repentance (or grace).

Through the years, Biblical and non-Biblical scholars have had different interpretations

of sin. Some people believe we have the ability to be holy. Leviticus 11:44 "*Be holy because I

(the Lord) am holy.*" Others reject that notion (Romans 3:23 "all have sinned and fallen short").

What is clear is the word sin. But you just said...? We all know what a tree is. Yet, there are

different kinds of trees. We all know what sin looks like. The trouble starts when we begin to put

sin in the wrong place. All types of people have an opinion on this non-defined word called sin.

Some claim it's terrible while others believe it's nonsensical. I would however, lean towards

knowing sin. psalm 32:5 "*I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I did not hide; I said,

"I will confess my transgressions to the Lord"; And You forgave the guilt of my sin*.

I would agree that sin is a gateway. We go from love to pride. From want and desires to cheating and stealing. People will take or add something. That action is only to benefit you and not them. It's usually done in secret. It's done with intent to harm or deceive. Sin is objectified by defining it as sex or smoking. Jesus mentioned that we commit adultery in our mind by lusting over what we cannot have. Lusting is not an object but an action towards an object. I'll leave you with this great definition of sin by James.

James 1:13-15 "*When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14 but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.*"

Yes, death of good character by willfully doing what you know in your heart is wrong. That is sin.