

Systematic Theology for the Local Church

#76-77—Hamartiology—II-III¹

Total Depravity

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Helpful for the studies in hamartiology are House, sections 50-52, and Reymond, 431-458.

1. The Nature of sin

What is sin? We have already discussed its origins, and in so doing have uncovered many of its properties. Can we give a comprehensive description?

Some have simply dismissed the idea of sin as being any kind of problem for humanity. Many philosophers and psychologists have done this, as well as the adherents of Christian Science, who assert that sin is an illusion. Such an approach is enmeshed with Christian Science's pantheistic (or monistic) view of the world, and we would have to say that it clearly does not match reality, if we are at all honest with our condition in life.

Those who have suggested that sin is disobedience to the Law of Moses fail to provide a definition for sin outside the period of the law. Further, any description of sin as a violation of God's law in general, though correct as far as it goes, fails to deal with all the manifestations of sin, such as sin that is resident within us and acts of sin that do not violate a specific prohibition from God.

Those who say that sin is acting in independence from God are also partly correct, as we saw in our description of the fall in the previous study. Every act of sin has this component to it. But we need a more encompassing definition.

Any definition of sin must actually begin with God's holiness, which cannot be defined by comparison with anything that we know in this life. Since God is unique, in a sense he is the standard for himself. Anything that does not correspond to the nature of God is sin. Sin draws its essential character of sinfulness from the fact that it is unlike God. So here is a definition of sin:

Sin is anything that is unlike God himself.

We will see that this enables us to view sin as having the same qualities whether we are thinking about acts of sin or the nature that every human being possesses that leads to those acts. In the latter case, there is a part of us that is confirmed in being unlike God and that comes from the fall (as exemplified by the fact that Adam and Eve were no longer fit for God's presence and were thrust from the Garden). This kind of definition enables us to identify as sin those things that are not mentioned in specific biblical prohibitions and helps us to see how there can be a part of each of us that wants to sin. Since the fall we want to be unlike God—as exemplified by Satan's words in Isa. 14:13-14: "I will . . . I will . . . I will . . . I will . . . I will." We are the same. Isn't the comment of the seaman prior to the maiden and only voyage of the Titanic a perfect example: "God Himself could not sink this ship."

We get a good idea how awful sin is—because it is offensive to God—from the details of His provisions for salvation. The error that suggests that God could or would save out of generosity overlooks

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completely the biblical teaching that sin is antithetical to God. It is not just a minor deviation, an error, a false step. It is gross aberration from God's original purpose for all created rational beings, angelic and human alike. Lewis Sperry Chafer has cogently observed,²

Too little, indeed, is it realized by many who attempt to preach the gospel, that the grace of God which saves the lost is not mere big-heartedness or generosity of God's part. He could have saved souls without the sacrifice of his Son had that been the case. The death of his Son as a sacrifice is required only because God cannot compromise his holy character by making light of sin

Romans 3:25-26 describes how important it was for God to deal with sin in the right way, and this in turn shows how evil sin is.

²⁵ God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—²⁶ he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

Paul's argument is that those before the cross could have called God into question for not remedying sin with an adequate penalty. The sacrifices under the law could not take away sin (see also Heb. 10:4), so how could God allow anyone into His presence? That He did so seemed to indicate that He wasn't a just God, since sin and a holy God were not compatible, and an effective removal had to be made. That the cross finally accomplished that is for Paul a point to be published abroad ('presented him'), announcing to the world that finally something strong enough to match sin had come on the scene, and that God was just in the way he provided the solution.

2. The relations that sin has to the human race

There are at least three significant ways in which sin touches our lives or is connected with us. As we think about these we need to keep in mind that sin, as that which is unlike God, is always sin no matter where we find it.

a. Personal sin or sinful acts

The manifestation of sin that is easiest to understand and recognize is personal sin. Here is a definition:

Personal sin is what occurs when we do something that is unlike what God would do.

This is exemplified by 1 Jn. 1:10: "If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives." In this manifestation of sin, the inward bent toward being unlike God comes to the surface and includes the kinds of things described in Gal. 5:19:

The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like.

The counteracting provision for sin of this kind is found in 1 Jn. 1:9: confession brings forgiveness.

b. Imputed sin

² Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 8 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981) 2:257.

This is the direct guilt we have directly because of what Adam did in the Garden. We will treat this in detail in future studies.

c. Inherited sin

A relation that sin has to us that is more difficult to grasp is the inherited pollution we have from our first parents, that inward bent already mentioned above. This is sometimes called inherited sin, the sinful nature or the sin nature. It is always present and evokes our acts of sin—personal sins—yet we try to minimize it, as described in 1 Jn. 1:8: “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.”

If sin is present in me, where is it? What part of me is it? Of course the Bible views human beings as more than electrical impulses running through and between cells. As creatures made in the image and likeness of God, we have spiritual, rational and emotional capacities. The Bible does not really tell us exactly which parts have been affected by the fall, but it is very explicit in declaring that there has been a permanent change in our constitution, centered in the spiritual part of us and affecting all the other parts of us. Eve’s act altered her makeup, that of Adam and that of every one of their offspring. We are permanently bent out of shape as far as godliness is concerned. To be sure, the Bible does not tell us how that one act introduced a permanent condition in Eve, nor how that state could be continued through subsequent generations. But the fact of this *is* taught: “Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me” (Ps. 51:5). We are not being overly literal if we point out on the basis of that verse that such internal pollution begins its relation to an individual not at the first act of sin, not even at birth, but from the moment in time he or she begins to exist. In short, the nature of every human being has been damaged by what Eve and Adam did in Eden. Here is a definition of inherited sin:

Inherited sin is the pollution we have from our first parents, the inward bent toward sin. This is sometimes called the sinful nature or the sin nature.

3. Original sin

Original sin is the term used to describe that fact that all human beings have been affected by the fall. This means that sin is not something that originates with each human being (however sin may be defined). What Adam and Eve did affects everyone who ever lives.

4. Total depravity

Total depravity is often used in connection with our sinfulness. The term sounds too harsh to some, seeming to suggest that we are all raving beasts of some kind. But it actually describes the extent of the result of our possessing a sinful nature—every part of a person is affected by sin. Here is the definition:

Total depravity describes the extent of the result of our possessing a sinful nature—every part of a person is affected by sin.

Here are some scriptures that show the extent of sin’s effect on us:

Gen. 6:5

The LORD saw how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.

Ps. 51:5

Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

Ps. 58:3

Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies.

Eccl. 7:20

There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins.

Jer. 13:23

Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil.

Jer. 17:9

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

Mk. 7:21-23

²¹ For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²² greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. ²³ All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean.'

Jn. 3:19

This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

Jn. 8:34

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.

Rom. 3:10-18

As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; ¹¹ there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. ¹² All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." ¹³ "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." ¹⁴ "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." ¹⁵ "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶ ruin and misery mark their ways, ¹⁷ and the way of peace they do not know." ¹⁸ "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Rom. 8:7-8

⁷ the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. ⁸ Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

1 Cor. 2:14

The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Eph. 2:1-3

2 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

Ephesians 2:1-3 shows us that this condition fosters a complete style of living that enjoys participation in Satan's own world system. The result is universal condemnation—everyone is headed for judgment by God and eternal separation from Him (v. 3). It isn't the specific acts of sin that bring this, although they are enough to do it. It's the internal condition. It cannot be reformed, cleaned up, mollified or covered over. It is in every way hostile to a righteous God. The only remedy is a new capacity to please God. And that is just what our gracious God provides at salvation. This was what Nicodemus needed to hear about, and in Jn. 3 our Lord showed him that he needed an infusion of spiritual life (v. 6). God's work of regeneration is what brings this new capacity into a life, although the old nature is still present.

Total depravity must be described with reference to the holiness of God. Here is John Piper on this:³

The terrible condition of man's heart will never be recognized by people who assess it only in relation to other men. Romans 14:23 makes plain that depravity is our condition in relation to God primarily, and only secondarily in relation to man. Unless we start here we will never grasp the totality of our natural depravity.

Every part of our being is in rebellion against God—our minds, hearts and wills. R. C. Sproul has a good description of this:⁴

Perhaps "radical corruption" is a better term to describe our fallen condition than "total depravity." I am using the word "radical" not so much to mean "extreme," but to lean more heavily on its original meaning. "Radical" comes from the Latin word for "root" or "core." Our problem with sin is that it is rooted in the core of our being. It permeates our hearts. It is because sin is at our core and not merely at the exterior of our lives that the Bible says: "There is none righteous, no not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one." Romans 3:10-12

While the unsaved person can do things that appear to be good and beneficial in the sight of human beings, in the sight of God they are worthless. Further, no one commits all the sins they possible could, yet the potential for committing any sin exists in everyone. Here is Piper again:

There is no doubt that man could perform more evil acts toward his fellow man than he does. But if he is restrained from performing more evil acts by motives that are not owing to his glad submission to God, then even his "virtue" is evil in the sight of God.

³ John Piper, "Total Depravity," available at <http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/piper/depravity.html>

⁴ R. C. Sproul, "Human Depravity," available at <http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/sproul/depravity.html>

Of course, this is true of every unsaved person. Outside of Christ no one submits to God.

5. Total inability

Total inability is a second consequence of having a sinful nature: no one is able or willing to please God. The Westminster Confession describes total inability this way:⁵

Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being altogether averse from good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.

Here is my definition:

Total inability means that in his unregenerate state no one is able to do anything that pleases God, to seek him or turn to him in response to the Gospel.

Here are some scriptures that describe this:

Mt. 7:18

A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.

Jn. 3:3, 5

³ In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." ⁴ "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" ⁵ Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.

Jn . 6:44

"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Jn. 6:65

He went on to say, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him."

Jn. 14:17

the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

Rom. 3:10-18

As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one;" ¹¹ there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. ¹² All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." ¹³ "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice

⁵ Ch. IX, sec. III.

deceit.” “The poison of vipers is on their lips.”¹⁴ “Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”¹⁵ “Their feet are swift to shed blood;¹⁶ ruin and misery mark their ways,¹⁷ and the way of peace they do not know.”¹⁸ “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

None of us can do anything that helps us get access to God, and that is what is at issue. If we could, it might be possible for someone to be good enough to be accepted on his or her own merits by God. Of course, that would take a sinless life. But we only have to take one look at Rom. 3:10-18 to realize that God’s evaluation is that no one is able to do that. Not only is there no one who is sufficient in himself to match God’s expectation (no one is righteous, v. 10; no one does good, v. 12), as a matter of fact, everyone is running from God (v. 11). The specific sins listed in vv. 13-18 are an outworking of this spiritual pollution and resulting hostility toward God. Total inability, then, is our lack of ability to seek or respond to God.

Rom. 8:7-8

⁷ the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. ⁸ Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

1 Cor. 2:14

The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

1 Cor. 12:3

Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

Jas. 3:8

but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

Rev. 14:3

And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.

At the heart of total inability is the condition of our wills. I quote extensively from Loraine Boettner’s article “Total Depravity” for a rich description of the relation of the will to total inability:⁶

It is in this sense that man since the fall “is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil.” He possesses a fixed bias of the will against God, and instinctively and willingly turns to evil. He is an alien by birth, and a sinner by choice. The inability under which he labors is not an inability to exercise volitions, but an inability to be willing to exercise holy volitions. And it is this phase of it which led Luther to declare that “Free-will is an empty term, whose reality is lost. And a lost liberty, according to my grammar, is no liberty at all.”⁷ In matters pertaining to his salvation, the unregenerate man is not at liberty to choose between good and evil, but only to choose between greater and lesser evil, which is not

⁶ Available at http://www.the-highway.com/depravity_Boettner.html

⁷ *Bondage of the Will*, p. 125.

properly free will. The fact that fallen man still has ability to do certain acts morally good in themselves does not prove that he can do acts meriting salvation, for his motives may be wholly wrong.

Man is a free agent but he cannot originate the love of God in his heart. His will is free in the sense that it is not controlled by any force outside of himself. As the bird with a broken wing is “free” to fly but not able, so the natural man is free to come to God but not able. How can he repent of his sin when he loves it? How can he come to God when he hates Him? This is the inability of the will under which man labors. Jesus said, “And this is the judgment, that light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil,” John 3:19; and again, “Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life,” John 5:40. Man’s ruin lies mainly in his own perverse will. He cannot come because he will not. Help enough is provided if he were only willing to accept it. Paul tells us, “The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be. So they that are in the flesh cannot please God,” Rom. 8:7.

To assume that because man has ability to love he therefore has ability to love God, is about as wise as to assume that since water has the ability to flow, it therefore has the ability to flow up hill; or to reason that because a man has power to cast himself from the top of a precipice to the bottom, he therefore has equal power to transport himself from the bottom to the top.

Fallen man sees nothing desirable in “the One who is altogether lovely, the fairest among ten thousand.” He may admire Jesus as a man, but he wants nothing to do with Him as God, and he resists the outward holy influences of the Spirit with all his power. Sin, and not righteousness, has become his natural element so that he has no desire for salvation.

Man’s fallen nature gives rise to a most obdurate blindness, stupidity, and opposition concerning the things of God. His will is under the control of a darkened understanding, which puts sweet for bitter, and bitter for sweet, good for evil, and evil for good. So far as his relations with God are concerned, he wills only that which is evil, although he wills it freely. Spontaneity and enslavement actually exist together.

In other words, fallen man is so morally blind that he uniformly prefers and chooses evil instead of good, as do the fallen angels or demons. When the Christian is completely sanctified he reaches a state in which he uniformly prefers and chooses good, as do the holy angels. Both of these states are consistent with freedom and responsibility of moral agents.

Yet while fallen man acts thus uniformly he is never compelled to sin, but does it freely and delights in it. His dispositions and desires are so inclined, and he acts knowingly and willingly from the spontaneous motion of the heart. This natural bias or appetite for that which is evil is characteristic of man’s fallen and corrupt nature, so that, as Job says, he “drinketh iniquity like water,” 15:16.

We will see in our next study—on the topic of Pelagianism—that many have rejected this biblical picture of the extent of our sinfulness and our inability to please or respond to God. In our studies on God’s work in salvation we will see that our position on total depravity and inability determines how we interpret the Cross and what God is doing in saving souls. A biblical view of the extent and effects of sin is crucial for arriving at a biblical view of the Cross.

Questions for Further Study

1. What is the difference between personal sin and inherited sin?
2. What does Eph. 2 tell us about what God does to counteract our sinful nature? Does it say the sinful nature is removed? See also Col. 3:1-14.
3. According to Rom. 6:1-14, what kind of relationship does sin have to us before salvation? Afterward?
4. What is original sin, what is total depravity and how are they different?
5. What is total inability and how is it different from total depravity? How does total inability relate to God's work in salvation?

Running compilation of key definitions

1. Systematic theology: The organized presentation of all that the Bible teaches about God and His works.
2. Exegesis: The actual practice of studying or interpreting a document or other message to determine its meaning.
3. Context: Context in a document or utterance is the surroundings of a portion of a word, a word, or a group of words.
4. Bibliology: The doctrinal study of the nature of the Bible.
5. Biblical authority: The quality inherent in Scripture by virtue of which human beings are completely answerable to its content.
6. Revelation: The information about Himself given by God to human beings.
7. General revelation: God's disclosure of Himself, available directly to everyone, given through means other than dreams, visions, direct words and Christ Himself.
8. Special revelation: The disclosure of information from God that is not available directly to all human beings.
9. Inspiration: A term applied to the Bible denoting that it is the product of God's creative activity, figuratively breathed out from Him (2 Tim. 3:16); applies to the process of recording Scripture, not specifically to the people involved; actually, *expiration* would be a better term to reflect the concept of 2 Tim. 3:16; the result is *inerrancy*.
10. Textual criticism: The science and art of attempting to discover the original text of a literary work for which the original document does not exist. It is especially important for biblical studies, and the foundational endeavor to all subsequent investigation of the Scriptures.
11. Canon: Transliterated from a Greek Word meaning 'standard'; as used of the Bible, it refers to books authenticated as possessing divine origin and therefore authoritative; the Jewish canon consists of thirty-nine books, the Protestant of sixty-six and the Catholic of eighty (including apocryphal books).
12. Inerrancy is a term applied to the Bible, although not specifically found in it; it denotes that the Bible, as originally written, possessed no humanly induced deviations from the message God intended to be recorded and that it is true in every respect; 2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Cor. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:19.
13. Infallibility: Although some assert that this term has a different meaning from inerrancy, the two terms are, for purposes of biblical study, synonymous; the Bible is infallible because inerrant, and inerrant because infallible.
14. Illumination is the teaching ministry of the Spirit of God that imparts understanding of the message of Scripture to the believer; not to be confused with inspiration, which in the Bible is used of the work of God in giving Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16); 1 Jn. 2:20; Jn. 16:13.
15. Spirituality: God is not physical, but immaterial, incorporeal, invisible and alive.
16. Self-existence/Aseity: God exists independently of anything else. He is self-existent.
17. Immensity: God is infinite in relation to space.
18. Eternality: God is infinite with regard to time.
19. Simplicity: God is not a plurality and cannot be looked at as divisible into parts.
20. Pure actuality: There is nothing about God that is potential. He is not unfinished in any way.
21. Necessity: God is uncaused and exists because he must exist.
22. Immutability: God is unchanging and unchangeable.
23. Impassibility: God is incapable of being changed or disturbed by what he experiences and is incapable of suffering.
24. Transcendence: God and the world are distinct; he is not part of the world, and the world is not part of him.
25. Immanence: God is present in the world.
26. Infinity: There are no limits to God's person and his perfections.
27. Omnipotence: God can do whatever he wills.
28. Omniscience: God knows everything there is to know.
29. Omnipresence: God is present everywhere in his creation

30. Holiness: God is morally pure and separated from all moral evil and sin.
31. Goodness: A quality that describes or includes his love, benevolence, mercy and grace
32. Truth: God's person, actions, knowledge and revelations correspond to reality
33. Love: God's continual communication of himself to his creatures.
34. Benevolence: God's goodness toward his creatures.
35. Mercy: God's goodness toward those who are helpless.
36. Grace: God's goodness toward sinners.
37. Glory: The greatness of God's perfections.
38. Trinity: There is only one true God, existing as a single Being comprised of three Persons who are equal in every way, yet distinct in their tasks and relations to humanity.
39. God's decree: The decree of God is his plan for the universe that includes all things and is certain to come to pass.
40. Providence: God's care for and upholding of his creation.
41. Sovereignty: God's control over his universe.
42. Christology: The study of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.
43. Incarnation: The joining of deity and humanity in one person forever. The word is based on the Latin word for flesh: the Lord Jesus Christ is God joined with human flesh.
44. Pre-existence: Used of the Son, it means that he existed before Bethlehem.
45. Theophany: An appearance of God.
46. Christophany: An appearance of Christ.
47. Priesthood: The system that God established to remedy the problem of alienation between a holy God and sinful human beings.
48. Son of God: A name for Jesus that describes his deity and his approval by the Father at the resurrection.
49. Son of Man: A messianic name for Jesus that emphasizes his humanity backed by deity and his role of taking humans to God through suffering and humiliation.
50. Messiah: A transliteration of a Hebrew word meaning 'anointed one'; used of the expected national deliverer of Israel; the linguistic equivalent of Greek *christos*, 'Christ'.
51. Efficacious grace: Efficacious grace is the working of God in an individual that cannot be thwarted and that leads that person to faith in Christ. It is also described as effective calling and irresistible grace.
52. Regeneration: Regeneration is the unseen and unfelt work of the Holy Spirit that overcomes depravity and brings spiritual life and the capacity to please God and exercise faith.
53. Spirit baptism is the nonphysical act of the Spirit of God that places a believer in the Body of Christ and makes him a partaker, along with all other believers, of the work and merits of Christ; should be distinguished from filling, sealing, and indwelling; cannot be felt or noticed, and hence must be appropriated by faith; there is no warrant in Scripture for assuming a second act of God for power, a 'baptism,' after salvation.
54. Sealing is a guarantee that the believer will persevere in Christ all the way to entrance into heaven, when God completes his work of purchasing the individual. It begins at the moment of salvation when the Father places the Holy Spirit in the believer for permanent indwelling. It is unseen and unfelt and should result in praise and obedience to the Spirit.
55. Indwelling is the spiritual presence of the Holy Spirit in every individual who has placed personal trust in Christ as Savior. Described in Jn. 14:17, this is the basis of His other ministries to the believer, such as sealing, anointing and filling and establishes the believer as a part of the spiritual temple that God is building today.
56. The filling of the Spirit is 1) A constant characteristic of a believer's life that consists of regular control by the Spirit that produces Christlikeness through Scripture; 2) A special enablement at particular times for service during the first century.
57. A spiritual gift is a God-given ability for service.

58. A cessationist (with regard to spiritual gifts) is a person who holds that the miraculous gifts are not present in the Church today as part of God's plan.
59. A continualist (with regard to spiritual gifts) is a person who holds that the miraculous gifts are present in the Church today as part of God's plan.
60. An angel is an individual, personal spirit being originally created by God to assist him in his plan for saving the elect.
61. The cosmos is Satan's organized spiritual system, in rebellion against God.
62. A demon is a fallen angel that is free to assist in carrying out Satan's plan of opposition to God.
63. Biblical anthropology is the study of what the Bible teaches about the nature and purpose of human beings.
64. Hamartiology is the study of sin and its consequences.
65. Sin is anything that is unlike God himself.
66. Personal sin is what occurs when we do something that is unlike what God would do.
67. Inherited sin is the pollution we have from our first parents, the inward bent toward sin. This is sometimes called the sinful nature or the sin nature.
68. Original sin means that all human beings have been affected by the fall.
69. Total depravity describes the extent of the result of our possessing a sinful nature—every part of a person is affected by sin.
70. Total inability means that in his unregenerate state no one is able to do anything that pleases God or seek God or turn to him in response to the Gospel.