

# Study Guide and Commentary

## ACIM<sup>®</sup> Text, Chapter 19, Section II

### *Sin versus Error*

**Legend:**

Sans serif text = Material from ACIM 3rd edition (FIP)

*Italic sans serif text* = words emphasized in all caps in Urtext

**Bold sans serif text** = alternate or omitted material from the Urtext

Typewriter text = editorial comments

~~strike through sans serif text~~ = Not in Urtext, in FIP edition

### Overview of the Section

This section begins a discussion of “sin” that continues in Section III, “The Unreality of Sin.” Things to notice: the distinction between “sin” and “error;” the fact that we have never sinned; the ego’s addiction to making sin true; the vital importance to forgiveness of the fact that error can be corrected, while sin cannot.

The previous section urged us to have faith, to realize “there is nothing faith cannot forgive” (14:4). This section is building on that by showing us *why* there is nothing that cannot be forgiven—because there is no sin, only error.

### Paragraph 1

1. <sup>1</sup>It is *essential* that error be not confused with sin [**“sin”**], and it is this distinction that makes salvation possible. <sup>2</sup>For error can be corrected, and the wrong made right. <sup>3</sup>But sin, were it possible, *would* be irreversible. <sup>4</sup>The belief in sin is necessarily based on the firm conviction that minds, *not* bodies, can attack. <sup>5</sup>And thus the mind *is* guilty, and will forever so remain unless a mind *not* part of it can give it absolution. <sup>6</sup>Sin calls for punishment as error for correction, and the belief that punishment *is* correction is clearly insane.

## • Study Question •

1. *There is a clear implication here that minds cannot attack, which is stated clearly elsewhere. Yet the Course often speaks of our “attack thoughts,” a phrase that seems to imply that minds can and do attack. How can this apparent disagreement be explained?*
  - A. *The minds that appear to attack are not our real mind, but a delusional self-concept.*
  - B. *The Course is contradicting itself.*
  - C. *Minds really do attack, and therefore sin is real.*
  - D. *Another explanation: explain in your own words.*

Sentence 1:1 is, perhaps, the summary idea for this whole section: the distinction between sin and error is what “makes salvation possible.”

The Urtext puts quotation marks around the word *sin*. Often, in the Course, the meaning of quotes is as if it read “so-called ...,” and implies that there really is no such thing. Making this distinction, he says, is “*essential*.” It’s the only way that salvation—by which we can understand “forgiveness”—is possible, because “error can be corrected.” Lesson 134 tells us, “The major difficulty that you find in genuine forgiveness on your part is that you still believe you must forgive the truth, and not illusions” (W-pI.134.3:1). In other words, we believe that “sin” is real, and more than “just” an error. “Sin” means real damage has been done; “error” implies that correction, or undoing, is possible.

Why does it make forgiveness possible when we do *not* confuse error and “sin”? Because, “...error can be corrected, and the wrong made right. But sin, we it possible, *would be irreversible*” (1:2–3). We will understand better why “sin” would be irreversible after we study the rest of the section, particularly Paragraph 2. For now, take it as given: If sin were real it *could not be undone*. Clearly, if it cannot be undone—reversed—there is no way to truly forgive it. Again, referring to Lesson 134:

“Because you think your sins are real, you look on pardon as deception. For it is impossible to think of sin as true and not believe forgiveness is a lie. Thus is forgiveness really but a sin, like all the rest. It says the truth is false, and smiles on the corrupt as if they were as blameless as the grass; as white as snow. It is delusional in what it thinks it can accomplish. It would see as right the plainly wrong; the loathsome as the good.

“Pardon is no escape in such a view. It merely is a further sign that sin is unforgivable, at best to be concealed, denied or called another name, for pardon is a treachery to truth. Guilt cannot be forgiven. If you sin, your guilt is everlasting. Those who are forgiven from the view their sins are real are pitifully mocked and twice condemned; first, by themselves for what they think they did, and once again by those who pardon them.

“It is sin's unreality that makes forgiveness natural and wholly sane” (W-pI.134.4:1-6:1).

Sentence 1:4 says that a belief in sin is based on the conviction “that minds, not bodies, can attack.” You might think that the reverse is true: that if the attack is “merely”

mental, no harm is done, but if it gets physical there may be real damage. But the Course's understanding goes to motive. The idea is that if the mind can *actually* attack, it must be *truly* guilty, and therefore can only be absolved through punishment. The mind has been corrupted by "sin," and can only be "fixed" by the intervention of "a mind *not* part of it" (1:5). Of course, there *is* no mind that is not part of your mind; all are one.

"Sin" (were it possible) deserves to be punished; error cries out to be corrected (1:6). And don't make the mistake of thinking that punishment can bring about correction! (To me, that is the biggest mistake of most penal systems, and of some people's parenting methods.) Jesus dismisses that idea forcefully, saying it "is clearly insane" (1:6).

For your optional study, here are some other references on the subject of the mind and attack:

T-7.VIII.4:3	T-8.VII.1:1	T-12.III.10:1	T-12.V.1:3
T-18.VI.3:1-7	T-18.VI.4:1-4	T-24.IV.3:5	T-26.VII.12:1-2f
W-pI.26.2:1-4	W-pI.136.19:2, 20:6	W-pI.161.6:1, 6:6	

## Paragraph 2

2. <sup>1</sup>Sin is not an error, for sin entails an arrogance which the idea of error lacks. <sup>2</sup>To sin would be to violate reality, *and to succeed*. <sup>3</sup>Sin is the proclamation that attack is real and guilt is *justified*. <sup>4</sup>It assumes the Son of God *is* guilty, and has thus *succeeded* in losing his innocence and making himself what God created *not*. <sup>5</sup>Thus is creation seen as *not* eternal, and the Will of God open to opposition *and defeat*. <sup>6</sup>Sin is the **grand illusion** [**"grand illusion"**] underlying all the ego's grandiosity. <sup>7</sup>For by it God *Himself* is changed, and rendered incomplete.

### • Study Question •

2. *What about the idea of sin makes it an impossible, "grand illusion?"*
  - A. *If true it would alter reality.*
  - B. *If true it would mean that God's creation has become something God did not create.*
  - C. *If true it would mean that God's Will has been successfully opposed and defeated.*
  - D. *All of the above.*

•

To call any form of attack a "sin" is the height of arrogance. It would imply that you have attempted to "violate reality" and *have succeeded* (2:1-2). Whether you apply the term "sin" to another person or to yourself, it is an assertion that a being created by God as wholly lovable and wholly loving, an extension of God's own love, has somehow succeeded in changing their nature, losing their innocence and becoming guilty. As Chapter 2 puts it:

"First, you believe that what God created can be changed by your own mind.

Second, you believe that what is perfect can be rendered imperfect or lacking.

Third, you believe that you can distort the creations of God, including yourself.

Fourth, you believe that you can create yourself, and that the direction of your own creation is up to you" (T-2.I.1:9-12).

Believing *that* is the height of arrogance!

Calling something "sin" asserts that "attack is real and guilt is *justified*" (2:3). It assumes that the person is a sinner and therefore guilty, which means that they have somehow managed to alter God's creation and to lose their innocence (2:4). That implies that "creation...[is] *not* eternal, and the Will of God [is] open to opposition *and defeat*" (2:5). In other words, the whole idea of "sin" requires that the ego's thought system has to be true: We really *can* oppose God's Will and succeed! The ego rules! We can attack God and *win* (2:7). This is true grandiosity, the hubris of the ego. And this is why "sin," if it were possible, would be irreversible. If we can change God and render Him incomplete, you can't go back. "All the king's horses and all the king's men, Couldn't put Humpty together again." If "sin" were real, it would mean reality has been altered. But reality *can't* be altered; therefore, there is no such thing as sin.

### Paragraph 3

3. <sup>1</sup>The Son of God *can* be mistaken; he *can* deceive himself; he can even turn the power of his mind *against* himself. <sup>2</sup>But he ~~cannot~~ [**can not**] sin. <sup>3</sup>There is *nothing* he can do that would *really* change his reality in *any* way, nor make him *really* guilty. <sup>4</sup>That is what sin *would* do, for such is its *purpose*. <sup>5</sup>Yet for all the wild insanity inherent in the whole idea of sin, *it is impossible*. <sup>6</sup>For the wages of sin *is* death, and how can the immortal die?

#### • Study Question •

3. Which of the following is not a reason given here to prove the impossibility of sin?
- A. The Son of God was created immortal and cannot die.
  - B. The Son of God cannot turn his mind against himself.
  - C. The Son of God cannot change his own reality.
  - D. The Son of God was created innocent and cannot become guilty.
  - E. None of the above.

Sin, if real, changes God's creation and even God Himself. Error is possible; sin—justifying guilt and meriting punishment—is not possible. There is no statement more emphatic in the Course than 3:1–2! Mistakes? Yes, we can do that. Self-deception? Yes, we do that. Use our own mind *against* ourselves (which is downright crazy)? Yes, that, too. But we "can *not* sin"! Jesus then takes a couple of factors that would be required to make sin real and denies that they are possible. There is absolutely nothing we can do that would really change our reality *in any way*. There is nothing we can do that would make us truly *guilty* (3:3). Sin would do that—change our reality and make us guilty. That's

sin's purpose (3:4)! As crazy and scary sounding as it is, "*it is impossible*" (3:5). Why? Because if "sin" were real it truly would merit death, and the Son of God was created by God as immortal. He cannot die (3:6). Therefore, he cannot sin!

One of the things that always bothered me about the traditional view of sin and salvation was the whole issue of how on earth we, or anyone (including the devil) could successfully oppose God. It made no sense to me that God would create the human race and then lose the majority of it to the devil and hell. The Course teaches that the belief that we, or anything, can derail the Will of God in creation is the height of arrogance. It just cannot happen!

## Paragraph 4

4. <sup>1</sup>A major tenet in the ego's insane religion is that sin is *not* error but *truth*, and it is *innocence* that would deceive. <sup>2</sup>Purity is seen as arrogance, and the acceptance of the self as *sinful* is perceived as holiness. <sup>3</sup>And it is this doctrine that *replaces* the reality of the Son of God as his Father created him, and willed that he be forever. <sup>4</sup>Is this humility? <sup>5</sup>Or is it, rather, an attempt to wrest creation *away* from truth, and keep it separate?

### • Study Question •

4. Describe one or two religious concepts you have heard that could be considered part of the ego's religion, based on this paragraph.

It was the ego's insanity that crucified Jesus because he claimed to be innocent, to be in a loving relationship with God instead of cringing in fear because of his sinfulness. "The ego's insane religion" is reflected in many forms of Christianity and other religions that harp on our wickedness and guilt—anything that is founded on the idea that "sin is *not* error but *truth*" (4:1). Consider this prayer from the *Book of Common Prayer*, a standard in the Anglican and Episcopal Churches:

Almighty God,

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

maker of all things, judge of all men:

We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness,

which we from time to time most grievously have committed,

by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty,

provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us.

We do earnestly repent,

and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings;

the remembrance of them is grievous unto us,

the burden of them is intolerable.

In the view of the Course, a prayer like that is insane.

To claim to be innocent or sinless in such a religion is arrogance, even blasphemy (4:2), and perhaps it seems that way to *you*. Try it. Say, out loud, “I am sinless.” Imagine saying that to a friend; how does it make you feel? Or try, “I have no guilt.” I suspect that you will notice some discomfort with either of those sayings, which is indicative of a deeply rooted belief that “sin is *not* error, but *truth*.” It may not be conscious, but it exists, and needs to be undone. Belief in sin’s reality is part of our embedded theology. You don’t have to have been raised as a Catholic, a fundamentalist Christian, or as anything; it’s in the culture, it’s in the air. It is an unquestioned assumption in nearly everyone’s mind.

Then there is the inverse idea, that accepting yourself as sinful is a holy thing (4:2). And let’s face it: Even the Bible promotes this notion!

“He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: ‘Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.’” (Luke 18:9–14 ESV)

The man who calls himself a sinner “went down to his house justified.” This is given as an example of humility. I think we would still condemn the self-righteousness of the Pharisee and his contempt for the tax collector. But the Course would not praise the tax collector’s view of himself as a sinner, despite the fact that (according to the Gospel of Luke) this parable was told by Jesus. The core of the parable, I think, lies in the introduction: It was spoken “to some who *trusted in themselves* that they were righteous.” Our sinlessness (according to Lesson 93) is “guaranteed by God” (W-pI.93.5:1-6:1), not by ourselves. Furthermore, since innocence is a gift given by God *to everyone*, there is no trace of superiority in claiming it. We are *all* innocent and sinless.

As the Course goes on to teach us, asserting that we are sinners *is not humility* (2:4). Instead, it is an arrogant assertion that we, somehow, have torn God’s creation away from him and kept it separate, replacing the reality of the Son of God as God created him and willed that he be eternally with the image of a miserable sinner (2:3,5). That’s not humility; it is arrogant hubris of the worst sort.

The next time you are feeling like a spiritual failure, notice what you are thinking: “I’m much too weak and sinful; I’m outside the reach of the Atonement. I’m beyond God’s power to heal and make whole.” And realize how arrogant that sounds, and let it go.

One of my favorite authors in my traditional Christian days, Oswald Chambers, actually saw the same lesson in this parable as the Course:

Pride is the sin of making “self” our god. And some of us today do this, not like the Pharisee, but like the tax collector (see Luke 18:9-14). For you to say, “Oh, I’m no saint,” is acceptable by human standards of pride, but it is unconscious blasphemy against God. You defy God to make you a saint, as if to say, “I am too weak and hopeless and outside the reach of the atonement by the Cross of Christ.” Why aren’t you a saint? It is either that you do not want to be a saint, or that you do not believe that God can make you into one. (*My Utmost for His Highest*, June 12 reading).

## Paragraph 5

5. <sup>1</sup>Any attempt to reinterpret sin as error is always indefensible to the ego. <sup>2</sup>The *idea* of sin is *wholly* sacrosanct to its thought system, and quite unapproachable except with reverence and awe. <sup>3</sup>It is the most “holy” concept in the ego’s system; lovely and powerful, wholly true, and *necessarily* protected with every defense at its disposal. <sup>4</sup>For here lies its “best” defense, which all the others serve. <sup>5</sup>Here is its armor, its protection, and the fundamental purpose of the special relationship in its interpretation.

### • Study Question •

5. *Attempt to explain how the purpose of the special relationship is keeping the idea of sin intact (5:4). (Look at your own experience; where else but a special relationship does sin seem so real?)*

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Evangelical and Catholic Christian denunciation of New Thought or the Course often centers on the issue of sin:

According to the Bible, God freely pardons, or forgives, a believer’s sins on the basis of Jesus Christ’s atonement. “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives” (1 John 1:8-10). Denying the reality of sin, the *Course* rejects this central biblical teaching, just as it rejects the biblical concept of the Atonement. For the *Course*, “forgiveness” merely involves the realization that there never were any sins to pardon. Likewise, “sinners” do not exist, because sin is an illusion.

As a result of this distorted theology, the *Course’s* approach to “salvation” lies in understanding that no one requires salvation in the biblical sense because all men and women are already divine. “Salvation” is merely accepting one’s “true”

identity as one essence with God. Therefore, we need nothing *from* God because each person's true nature *is* God.<sup>1</sup>

At least they give a fairly accurate account of what the Course *does* teach!

But lest we feel righteous and superior, let's remember that the thought system under scrutiny by the Course is not that of traditional Christianity, although their theology is a good example of what is being discussed. The thought system in focus is the *ego's* thought system (5:1–2), and that is something we *all* share. We are especially prone to object when anyone tries to reinterpret as merely an error the actions of a person we are actively judging.

The reason the ego is so quick to defend the reality of sin, the reason the concept is its most “holy” concept, lovely and powerful—the reason it is *necessary* for the ego to protect it—is that the concept of sin is the ego's “best” defense,” “its armor, its protection” (5:4–5). Our belief in sin keeps us separate from one another and from God, thus preserving the ego. And to top it off, in the ego's interpretation things, reinforcing the “reality” of sin is the “fundamental purpose” of our special relationships (5:5).

## Paragraph 6

6. <sup>1</sup>It can indeed be said the ego *made* its world on sin. <sup>2</sup>Only in such a world *could* everything be upside down. <sup>3</sup>This *is* the strange illusion that makes the clouds of guilt seem heavy and impenetrable. <sup>4</sup>The solidness that this world's foundation *seems* to have is *found* in this. <sup>5</sup>For sin has changed creation from an Idea of God to an *ideal* the ego wants; a world *it* rules, made up of bodies, mindless and capable of *complete* corruption and decay. <sup>6</sup>If this is a *mistake*, it can be undone easily by truth. <sup>7</sup>*Any* mistake can be corrected, if *truth* be left to judge it. <sup>8</sup>But if the mistake is given the *status* of truth, to what *can* it be brought? <sup>9</sup>The “holiness” of sin is kept in place by just this strange device. <sup>10</sup>As *truth* it *is* inviolate, and everything is brought to *it* for judgment. <sup>11</sup>As a *mistake*, it must be brought to truth. <sup>12</sup>It is impossible to have faith in sin, for sin *is* faithlessness. <sup>13</sup>Yet it *is* possible to have faith that a *mistake* can be corrected.

### • Study Question •

6. Consider: “This is the strange illusion that makes the clouds of guilt seem heavy and impenetrable. The solidness that this world's foundation seems to have is found in this” (6:3–4). What is the “strange illusion;” what makes the world seem solid and real? (See also T-23.II.13:4–5.)
- A. Our belief in the reality of sin.
  - B. The fact that everything in this world is upside down.
  - C. The special relationship.

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<sup>1</sup> Christian Research Institute, <http://www.equip.org/article/a-course-in-miracles/>.



“It can indeed be said the ego *made* its world on sin” (6:1). Now *there’s* a statement! It may be the source of Ken Wapnick’s line, “The world is crystallized guilt.” But consider how true it is. If sin is real, then everyone is separate, and most people are only looking out for themselves, doing things that deserve guilt and punishment and eventually death. The world *does* appear that way. There are horrors all around us, and the general consensus is that the evil-doers should be wiped off the face of the earth.

But the Course insists that in this picture, everything is upside down (6:2). Guilt, as insubstantial as a cloud, seems solid as a rock. The physical world of separate bodies, ruled by the ego, “mindless and capable of *complete* corruption and decay, which is the ego’s ideal world, seems to be the reality; the original Idea of God, which is perfect, formless unity and innocence, seems to have been destroyed (6:4–5). Fear, not love, wins.

Here is where the distinction between sin and error becomes crucial. If all this insane world of sin is just a *mistake*, it can easily be undone *by truth* (6:6). Mistakes can be corrected by the corresponding *truth* (6:7). But if this world of sin *is* the truth, we’re stuck; there is no opposing truth to which to bring it (6:8). Making sin into truth is the key to protecting it (6:9). If *sin is the truth*, it cannot be altered, and everything else is judged by its standard (6:10). But if sin is a *mistake*, we can bring it to the truth for correction.

To be honest, I’m not exactly sure what Sentence 12 means, or why it is here: “It is impossible to have faith in sin, for sin *is* faithlessness.” One idea that it brings to my mind is that I cannot really have faith in anyone in whom I believe sin to be the truth. But if I perceive their behavior as a *mistake* rather than a *sin*, then I *can* have faith that their mistake can be corrected (6:13).

## Paragraph 7

7. <sup>1</sup>There is no stone in all the ego’s embattled citadel that is more heavily defended than the idea that sin is real; the *natural* expression of what the Son of God has *made* himself to be, *and what he is*. <sup>2</sup>To the ego, *this is no mistake*. <sup>3</sup>For this *is* its reality; this is the “truth” from which escape *will always* be impossible. <sup>4</sup>This is his past, his present and his future. <sup>5</sup>For he has somehow managed to corrupt his Father, and change His Mind *completely*. <sup>6</sup>Mourn, then, the death of God, Whom sin has killed! <sup>7</sup>And this *would* be the ego’s wish, which in its madness it believes it has *accomplished*.

### • Study Question •

7. *The ego wishes the death of God and believes it has accomplished it (7:6–7). How does the belief that sin is real lead to the idea that God is dead?*

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As he did in paragraph 6, Jesus again emphasizes that “the idea that sin is real” is absolutely *core* to the ego’s thought system. We (“the Son of God”) have made ourselves into sin; it is what we are (7:1)! And “to the ego” this isn’t some mistake! This is real, this

is what we are, the “truth” about us, and there is no escape from it (7:2–3). It’s an idea that has become the unseen foundation of all of our thinking.

To the mind run by the ego, sin is our past, present, and future (7:4). Somehow we have managed to change God’s mind (7:5). Although God’s will in creating us was for us to live forever in a union of love with Him, now God has become angry and judgmental, ready to send all of us to hell unless we believe in the sacrificial death of Jesus. We have in effect killed God (7:6), which is exactly what the ego wants and, “in its madness believes it has *accomplished*” (7:7). The implications of our belief in sin are enormous, even cosmic! This is what is implied whenever I accept a feeling of guilt, or whenever I judge another person as sinful (rather than mistaken and calling for love).

Personally, I can testify to how deeply the reality of sin had taken over my mind. When I first began reading the Course I saw a lot of things I liked and understood, but when I ran into this teaching about the unreality of sin, I utterly rejected it. I could not make sense of it. It seemed to violate everything I knew about myself and the world, and it certainly contradicted the Bible, which was my primary spiritual sourcebook. That verse the Christian apologist quoted above makes the biblical position quite clear and unmistakable: “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us” (I John 1:8). Letting go of my belief in sin meant letting go of my belief in biblical authority. It took years for the Holy Spirit to shake that loose from my mind.

## Paragraph 8

8. <sup>1</sup>Would you not *rather* that all this be nothing more than a *mistake*, *entirely* correctable, and so easily escaped from that its whole correction is like walking through a mist into the sun? <sup>2</sup>For that is all it *is*. <sup>3</sup>Perhaps you would be tempted to *agree* with the ego that it is far better to be sinful than mistaken. <sup>4</sup>Yet think you carefully before you allow yourself to make this choice. <sup>5</sup>Approach it not lightly, for it *is* the choice of hell or Heaven.

### • Study Question •

8. *To choose between sin’s reality and sin’s unreality is to choose between Heaven and hell. What are some reasons why the ego thinks it is “far better to be sinful than mistaken” (8:3), and why we might be tempted to agree? Pick at least two of the following.*
- A. *Because the ego is attracted to guilt, and its existence depends on the reality of sin.*
  - B. *If we are mistaken, we are not who we think we are and think we want to be.*
  - C. *Being sinful is less embarrassing than being mistaken.*
  - D. *Being mistaken means we are responsible for correcting the mistake.*
  - E. *We are tempted to agree because it seems easier to give up our “vain” hope of holiness.*
-

Jesus is asking us to think about all this and to apply it to ourselves. Think of something you've done that left you feeling guilty, as though you have somehow done some real damage, as though you have sullied yourself somehow. Wouldn't you rather learn that what you have done is merely a *mistake, entirely correctable*? That escaping from the guilt is as easy as walking through a mist into the sun (8:1)? Because, whatever the circumstance, "that is all it *is*" (8:2).

Isn't this good news? What could cause you to think that being sinful is better than being mistaken (8:3)? Being sinful has a strange, perverse attraction. Somehow it distinguishes us from everyone else, and (to the ego at least) that feels good. If you believe in someone else's guilt you *want* them to suffer, and so you *want* to believe that your attack on them does real damage. And conversely, you do not want to believe that their "sin" is an easily correctible mistake that is *undeserving* of retribution. But "think carefully before you allow yourself to make this choice" (8:4). There may be short-term payoffs, "pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:8, KJV), but you are walking away from Heaven and into hell (8:5).

## Answer Key

1. A
2. D
3. B
4.
  - That it is arrogant to claim to be sinless.
  - True humility prays, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."
  - The nearer I get to God the more I realize my own sinfulness or unworthiness.
  - Only Jesus (and maybe Mary) are without sin.
5. Since the special relationship is set up to maintain guilt (while seeming to get rid of it through projection), in doing so it also perpetuates the idea of sin. The whole dynamic of special relationships is based on the reality of sin which has been done to us in the past, for which others, in the present, must now repay us.
6. A
7. If sin is real, it means we have somehow managed to oppose God's will and overthrow it. Furthermore we have convinced Him of the reality of our sin, and have caused Him to change from loving us to attacking us in punishment. We have corrupted Him and changed His Mind completely. God, as He originally was, is "dead;" He no longer exists.
8. All the answers could be taken as reasons.