

**Study Aids**  
Discussion Questions and Suggested Reading  
For “What’s the Message?” Lessons

Lesson 102

Comment:

Do you use the words, “sin” and “sins” interchangeably? Many people, and some churches do. But there is an important distinction to be made. “Sin” describes our human nature after the Fall. “Sins” are the actions that come out of that fallen nature. So the nature of sin comes first, and the actions of sins follow as a result of that nature.

Questions:

In Leviticus 11:44, God tells us that we shall be holy because He is holy. That is the standard of perfection that God requires. But can we keep His Law perfectly? No, not since Adam, our earthly father, failed. So perfection is beyond our capability. Does that mean we are doomed to a life of failure and regret? Why, or why not?

Is it necessary that we admit our failure, and come to God seeking His forgiveness? I have frequently made the statement that we should put a sign at the doors of our church saying: “For sinners only, all others stay out!” Does that statement apply here?

The lesson refers to one of the men in the Air Force who thought that “compared to others” he was pretty good. He had never killed anyone, and hardly ever exceeded the speed limit. He felt that he merited a reward in heaven – if there is a heaven. Does God judge on this same scale?

Suggested reading for further study:

You may enjoy reading **The Gospel According to Peanuts**, by Robert Short, published by John Knox Press. It is a brief book, and amply illustrated with reprints of cartoons by Charles Schulz, but it may have to be ordered through Amazon or one of the major book stores.