

What Does The Bible Say About Sin?

July 3, 2022

Good morning CrossWinds! If you are a visitor, my name is Kurt. I am one of the pastors. I have the privilege of filling in for Pastor Jordan while he is on Sabbatical.

We are in a series called, "What Does The Bible Say?" This morning I will be answering the question, "What does the Bible say about sin?"

Has anyone noticed that things have gone terribly wrong in this world? Why is the news all bad news? There is a war between Russia and Ukraine in Europe. The stock market is down. The price of fuel and food is up. A shooter gunned down people in a July 4 parade in Illinois when he sprayed the crowd with bullets. Doesn't it feel like life should be better than this?

The Bible says all the problems in the world and all this pain in the world come from one source. That is the problem of sin. Let's look at it this morning.

What is sin?

And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.
Genesis 1:31 (ESV)

When God created the world, he looked at everything he made. It was good, very good. When God made the world, there was no sin in the world. This state of perfect beauty in all things is described in the Old Testament in Hebrew as shalom. Sometimes we think shalom simply means the presence of peace and the absence of war. In Hebrew, the state of shalom means much more than that. Shalom means everything is as it should be. All things are beautiful. In all of our relationships, there is honor, love, and reconciliation. There are no wars.

There is no famine, no disease, and no death. There are no more tears, no suffering, no loss, no sadness, no funerals. Shalom means everything is perfect, beautiful, and just right. When sin came into the world, it destroyed the state of shalom in the world. Sin introduced sickness, suffering, death, hatred, war, and rape.

Since sin came into the world and ruined the state of shalom in all things, we have spent an amazing amount of money and time trying to hold back the effects. When sin came into the world, it changed everything. For example, why do we have locks on our doors, cars, and smartphones? It is because of sin and trying to stop other people's sin against us. Why do we have police officers, jails, and a military? It is because of sin. If we didn't have a military to protect our country and police to protect our streets sinful people would overrun us with their sinful choices. Why do we have hospitals and doctors? It is because of sin. All of the sickness and suffering in the world is caused by sin.

Let me give you a functional definition of sin.

Sin is both commission and omission.

A sin of commission is when we intentionally choose to do what is wrong. This is the way we typically think of sin. Someone premeditates and plans the shooting of people in a July 4 parade from a rooftop. That is intentionally going out of one's way to choose to do what is wrong. It is a sin of commission.

A sin of omission is also a sin. While a sin of commission is choosing to do what is wrong, a sin of omission is failing to do what is right. Here is what the Bible says about sins of omission.

So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin. James 4:17 (ESV)

Let me give you an example. Let's say you drop your child off at daycare. It turns out that one of the people working at the daycare center is a sicko child molester. He victimizes some of the children. The sicko child molester committed sins of commission. He intentionally chose to do what was evil. There is more sin in this incident. The worker at the daycare who was in charge of the hiring process and failed to do a background check on that employee committed a sin of omission. He knew the right thing to do to protect the children in his care. He failed to take measures to protect the children. It ended up in the molestation of children. So the child molester committed a sin of commission by choosing to do what was wrong. The worker at the daycare who neglected to do a background check committed a sin of omission. That person also bears responsibility for the sins done against the molested children.

Once we realize sin is not just actively choosing to do wrong but passively failing to do what is right, we start to see lots of sin in this world and our lives.

In the Old Testament, when they built houses, they typically had a flat roof. In the evening, people would relax in the cool breeze while on the roof. If someone built a house and did not put a railing on the flat roof and then someone fell off, it meant the owner of the house was liable for the injury or death. The owner of the home committed a sin of omission by not taking reasonable steps to protect people on his property from injury.

Sin is in our thoughts, not just our actions.

Sin is more than our actions. It includes the things we think in our minds.

But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Matthew 5:28 (ESV)

So many times people say there is nothing wrong with what we think about another person. We can think about a person lustfully and as long as we haven't acted on those thoughts, we have not sinned. This verse tells us that is not true. Sin begins in our hearts. Sin begins in our thought lives before it is expressed in our real lives. God calls it sin when we are thinking about another person lustfully, not just when we are acting on those thoughts.

Some of us are thankful we don't struggle with lust. Do you struggle with anger? What do you think about those people who get under your skin? How do you talk about the people who annoy you in your thought life and in your private life? Are you murdering them in your mind? You may not have sinned against them in real life but God calls it sin when you sin against them in your thought life.

Sin is ignoring God.

Such are the paths of all who forget God; the hope of the godless shall perish. Job 8:13 (ESV)

Today we call this atheism. It is living as if God does not exist and pretending we are accountable to no one. It is thinking we came from nothing and will return to nothing. This is living a godless life. Atheism, which is godlessness, is sin in the Bible.

Ignoring God and pretending he doesn't exist so you are not accountable to him is a little like pretending you don't have cancer after the doctor tells you that you have cancer and you have six months to live. You can pretend cancer doesn't exist, but you will eventually be forced to realize the cancer is real. It is

the same way with God. You can pretend he doesn't exist. It won't do you much good. Eventually, everyone will be forced to recognize his existence. This is why atheism, which is called godlessness in the Bible, is sin.

Sin is idolatry.

Idolatry is giving yourself to something or someone more than Jesus. It is worshipping something created, not the creator. The problem with idolatry is it never satisfies. Maybe you have a classic car. You love your classic car. You wrap your life around your classic car. You sacrifice your family on the altar of the classic car. You ignore the Bible and church to spend time every weekend with your classic car. You spend all kinds of time polishing and buffing that car to make it shine like glass. The problem is, at the end of the day, your idol will fail you. All the car can do is rust. It does not love you. It cannot free you from your sin. It doesn't give anything to you. It can only take from you. Worshipping anything in creation as god instead of the creator as God the Bible calls sin.

Sin may be not necessarily a crime.

Some sin in this world is a crime but not all sin in this world is a crime. You can rob a store. That is a crime and a sin. You will get arrested and pay for your sin. If you commit adultery, that is not a crime in our culture. The police will not arrest you. In God's book, it is definitely sin.

Sin is breaking God's laws.

There are some things that God puts down as his rules, his laws. We may not agree with them. We may think they are out-of-date or don't apply to our

lives, but God says it is sin when we break God's laws, even the laws we don't think apply to us.

For example, the fifth commandment says we are to honor our fathers and mothers. It is a commandment with a promise, that it may go well with you. This means young children should honor their adult parents. It also means adult-age children need to honor and care for their aging parents.

Growing up, you may not have liked the way your father and mother treated you. Your father and mother may have made many errors. They may have treated you poorly, but God still tells you to still honor them. God still tells you to show respect to them, even if you are not comfortable with them. If we choose to ignore that commandment and pretend that God never said it, God promises it will not go well with us.

Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed. Romans 13:7 (ESV)

Paul told us to pay people what we owe them. Pay our taxes, even if the government doesn't spend our money wisely. Give respect to those who are in leadership over us. Give honor to those who should be honored. This past week Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh was run out of a restaurant by an unruly crowd that didn't like the way he ruled on Roe vs. Wade. The Bible says the way the crowd treated him was a sin. People may not agree with him, but as a justice on the Supreme Court, they need to respect his position and show honor to him.

This also applies to us. There are people in government whose policies we don't agree with. If we are around them, we are to honor and respect them even if we don't agree with them. To not honor and respect their position is a sin.

Sin is breaking the law of conscience.

Some sins do not involve breaking specific laws of the land or even breaking specific laws from God's Word. They involve breaking the law of conscience.

But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin. Romans 14:23 (ESV)

For example, if God has convicted your conscience about something, and you don't have peace about doing something different, that is the law you need to follow in your life until God frees your conscience.

For example, I have a friend who became a Christian a few years ago. He grew up a Seventh-Day Adventist. He is still wrestling with the whole Sunday worship deal instead of Saturday worship. He loves Jesus, but in his heart, Saturday still felt like the right day of worship because it was so ingrained in his head. He went to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church on Saturday and then came to CrossWinds on Sunday. For him, until he finished processing his convictions about Saturday worship, it would be wrong for him to stop attending Saturday worship if it violates his conscience. Eventually, he stopped attending Saturday worship and just attends church on Sunday, but that was a maturing process until Sunday instead of Saturday worship no longer violated his conscience.

Sin is taking something good and twisting it into something evil.

A good example of that is technology. You can use the Internet for so many good things. At church, we use it to send prayer requests and Bible verses. I get to send you 60-Second videos each week. We can text one another notes of encouragement. When my daughter is at college, I get to see her on

FaceTime. That is better than just hearing her voice. You can find all kinds of good Bible teaching on the Internet. On YouTube, you can find out how to fix almost anything.

The problem is much of the Internet has been twisted. Instead of being used for good, it is used for evil.

A ton of the Internet is used for pornography. On social media, people spew hate and bully people into killing themselves. The Internet has become a pipeline for mental sewage. It is something good that people twisted into something evil. That is sin.

Sin is taking a good thing and turning it into a god thing.

It is taking the good gift of money, sex, fame, power, intelligence, athletic success, and comfort and then turning those things into what you worship instead of God. Instead of God's good gifts causing you to thank him more, people begin living for money, fame, sex, and athletic success. They live for comfort. Taking God's good gifts and turning them into things we worship instead of God is sin.

Sin is finding our identities in anyone or anything other than Jesus.

All of us do this. Let me give one practical example. Sometimes mothers struggle in this area. Good mothers, especially stay-at-home moms, pour their lives into their children. They desperately want them to follow Christ and be successes for Jesus in the world. When those children get to their teenage years or young adult years, sometimes they rebel against Jesus. They run from Jesus. For mothers who poured their lives into their children, this is devastating. It feels

like all their sacrifice, love, and raising their children to love Jesus didn't amount to anything.

If you are a mom and this happened to you, you must remember that your identity is not the success of your children. Your identity is in what Jesus has done for you. What Jesus has done for you is bigger than any joy or heartache that the success or failure of your children can bring to you.

It is a sin for any of us to find our identity in what we do when greater than anything we do is what Jesus has done for us. That is what defines us.

Are all sins equal?

This is something many people miss. In one respect, all sin is equal. In another way, all sin is not equal.

All sin makes us guilty before God.

You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. Matthew 5:48 (ESV)

Matthew 5:48 says we are to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect. Anything short of perfection leaves us sinful. It doesn't matter if it is a big sin or a small sin. We are all sinners because none of us is perfect.

For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. James 2:10 (ESV)

James 2:10 says that if we violate the law at one point, we are sinners. It is not like your GPA where anything more than 90 percent is an "A." Anything less than total perfection is a complete failure. The law stands and falls as a unit. Any sin makes us a sinner.

All sin is not equally devastating and equally judged.

While any sin makes us a sinner and is enough to shut us out of God's presence forever, not all sin is equally sinful and equally devastating in its consequences.

Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin. John 19:11 (ESV)

In that verse, Jesus clearly said some sin is greater than other sin. That is why there is a judgment of works called the Great White Throne judgment during which Revelation 20 tells us people will be judged based on what they have done before they are sent to the lake of fire. This means hell is not the same for everyone. Those who sinned more heinously and wickedly in this life will have an experience in hell that involves greater torment than those who sinned less grievously in this life. Hell is a fair and just response to sin. That means the greater the unforgiven sin of people in this life, the greater the degree of just eternal punishment in the lake of fire in the next life. This is why James 3:1 warns that not many should be teachers.

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. James 3:1 (ESV)

1 Timothy 5:8 also tells us how seriously God judges a man who does not work to provide for the needs of his family.

But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. 1 Timothy 5:8 (ESV)

A lazy man who does not like to get out of bed in the morning and can't keep a job and won't feed his family is worse than an unbeliever. There are degrees of devastation when it comes to sin.

What is total depravity?

Maybe you have heard the term total depravity. It can be confusing. Total depravity sounds like we are saying someone is as sinful as they possibly can be. That is not total depravity. That is utter depravity. Utter depravity means someone would be as sinful as they possibly could be. We don't believe in utter depravity. There is always room for unimprovement. We can always become more sinful. While we don't believe in utter depravity, we do believe in total depravity, meaning everything about us has been touched by sin and is infected by sin. Sin affects our bodies. That is why we get sick and die. It is all because of sin. The Bible says death came into the world because sin came into the world.

Sin also affects our minds. We do not think as we ought. How many times this week did you have a sinful thought? Our minds will not always tell us what is right. Sin has touched our minds. Even our ability to reason and draw a conclusion from data is affected by sin. Some people can look at the beauty of this world and so clearly see God making all things. Other people can look at the same world and see evolution and chance. It is the same data but different conclusions from the data. Why does that happen? It is called sin touching our minds.

Our emotions are also touched by sin. What we feel is not always an indicator of what is right. Some of you are intense feelers. You think if you feel right about something then it must be right. Think again. Learn to doubt your feelings because they are also touched by sin. This past week a young woman whose wedding I had done a few years ago told me her brother committed suicide. His emotional world was telling him the world would be a better place

without him. Emotionally he felt he would be better off dead, so he took his life. That was not true. He had a God that loved him, a Jesus that died to save him, a family that cared about him. He didn't feel that way. He felt self-hatred, and that was a lie brought into his life because of sin.

Our thoughts are also infected by sin. Don't always trust your analysis of a situation. Sin has infected our minds so there is no such thing as clear unbiased thinking that is not influenced by sin. If you don't believe that, look at the fake news media.

This doesn't mean we can think anything rightly, feel anything rightly, or have a healthy body. There is a big remnant of God's goodness still in us. This is why we see people in the world who do not know Jesus but love their neighbor. They do good for others. They have compassion and kindness apart from Jesus. This is because the remnant of whom they were created to be by God is still part of their lives. That is good.

What are some sinful views of sin?

This point is fun. Our nature is so naturally sinful that when we sin we have a sinful view of our sin. It is so easy to have a sinful view of our sin. Let me show you.

Sin is just breaking an arbitrary rule.

Sin is much more than just breaking a rule. The rules of the Bible are not arbitrary. God's laws are there because they represent God's character. When we break God's laws, we violate God's nature, and breaking God's laws frustrates our relationship with God.

Think of it this way. Imagine you are married. Your wife is a school teacher. When she starts working at the school, she finds out her old boyfriend is also a teacher working at the same school. You asked her to not talk with him or spend time with him because she is married to you. You don't want to risk reigniting old passions if she spent too much time around him. Imagine what would happen if two months later you found out she was eating lunch with him every day. Would you be upset? I think you would. If you said to her, "I thought we agreed you wouldn't spend time around him," and she said, "That doesn't matter. It was just an arbitrary rule," you would think it wasn't an arbitrary rule. It was a rule put in place to protect your relationship. Breaking that rule brings pain to your marriage relationship. This is the same way it works for God and the laws he gives us in his word. They are not arbitrary. They are all there to protect us. Violating them brings damage to our relationship with God, not joy to our relationship with God.

Since Jesus died for my sin, it does matter if I continue in sin.

I have seen this many times. People reason that since they are forgiven of their sin because Jesus always forgives sin, then why not continue in sin? After all, won't Jesus always forgive? This is a common excuse young Christians use for sexual sin, especially when a young Christian couple wants to rationalize living together before marriage.

We must remember that Jesus rose from the dead not just to pay the just eternal consequences of our sin but also to free us from the death and destruction that sin will bring to our lives whenever we choose it. We must understand, by definition, sin is always a bad choice. When we choose to sin, it

will always ruin our lives, not add to our lives. Sin is never a good idea. Sin looks like it may benefit us right now but that is a lie. Sin will always take from us and ruin us. Jesus didn't just die to free us from the eternal consequences of our sin but he died to free us from the power of sin over our lives today so we don't have to keep walking back in sin.

Does Jesus forgive our sin? Yes. He forgives sin and frees us from the power sin has over our lives. Even though Jesus forgives our sin, it is always a dumb idea to continue in sin.

Think of it this way. It is always a dumb idea to take a gun and shoot yourself in the foot. We can be thankful we have doctors and hospitals that can stick our foot back together and help it heal back to normal, but it is always a dumb idea to keep shooting yourself in the foot with a gun after it is healed.

In the same way, it is always a dumb idea to continue in sin even though Jesus forgives our sin.

If I don't confess every sin, I will go to hell.

Some people have the idea that if they can't think of every sin and don't confess every sin, they will die with unforgiven sin and not be with Jesus. These people end up super introspective, always looking in their life for sin.

Is it important to confess our sin when we realize we have sinned? You bet it is. The problem is sin even affects our ability to perceive our own sin. We don't see all of our sins. Many times we don't even realize we have sinned. Thank goodness that trusting in Jesus results in Jesus forgiving all of our sins. That doesn't just include the sin of my past. It also includes the sin of my present and

the sin of my future. Jesus' forgiveness of sin even includes forgiveness for the sins I will never realize I committed.

When I sin, God knows my heart. That is what counts.

Some people believe that they can use swear words and speak hatefully to other people and it is no big deal. Their actions are wicked on the outside of their lives, but they don't think it is a big deal because they claim God knows their hearts. He knows the inside of their lives. On the inside, they are good people. Here is the problem with that line of reasoning. Our words and choices on the outside of our lives are just a reflection of what is the true state of our hearts on the inside of our lives.

You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. Matthew 12:34 (ESV)

You cannot say your heart is good but your life is bad. Your life is just a reflection of your heart. It is an overflow of your heart. There is congruence between who we are on the inside and the way we live on the outside. There is no such thing as a person who has a good heart on the inside but is living a promiscuous, gossiping, and divisive life on the outside. Everything connects back to the heart. I often say what we role play in our minds becomes what we real play in our lives.

Since sin is fun, I sin a little. I don't want to live a boring life.

This is definitely a sinful view of sin. If you love Jesus, sin is not fun. This idea that sin is fun is wrong-headed. You know you should be faithful to your spouse, but rather than be faithful, you flirt with other women at work. That isn't

fun. That will always bring pain. A year down the road it will always be more fun to be faithful to your own wife rather than flirting with other people's wives.

This is the lie Satan told to Adam and Eve. Eat the forbidden fruit. God is holding something back from you. He doesn't want you to have fun. He is keeping you from your true potential. God was not withholding fun from Adam and Eve's life. He was keeping death, destruction, and misery out of their lives. The idea that a little sin is fun is a sinful view of sin.

Sin doesn't matter as long as nobody gets hurt.

I hear this all the time from young adults who are sleeping together before marriage. They are consenting adults. They aren't hurting anybody. Their intimacy happens behind closed doors. How can this be a sin when nobody is getting hurt? I assure you, lots of people are getting hurt with your sin.

First, you are hurting yourself. Every time you are intimate and you feel the guilt and shame of your sin, you are hurting yourself. When your conscience convicts you of sin and you work hard to ignore the Holy Spirit and your conscience, that is not a good thing. Any time you are working hard to ignore a guilty conscience and the conviction of the Holy Spirit, you are hurting yourself.

Second, you are hurting the person with whom you are intimate. By choosing to not save yourself for your wedding night, you are telling him or her the commitment of marriage and saving sex exclusively for marriage is not important to you. That hurts the person you are living with. By not making a commitment and getting married, you are telling the person you are living with that you are not confident you want to be with him or her. If somebody better

comes along, you will leave and move on. That hurts women terribly. In addition, you are stealing intimacy that should be reserved for a future spouse, especially if you don't marry him or her.

Third, if you are in a church, your sin is affecting the holiness and purity of the entire church body. Sin spreads in the church. Sin also spreads to others who watch us. Those family, friends, and co-workers who are observing you, are more influenced toward sexual activity before marriage because they saw premarital immorality modeled in your life, not purity.

Fourth, you are hurting your relationship with God. Sin always separates us from God. Premarital sex will leave you feeling distant from God. You will end up with a cloud of sin and shame hanging over your head. You will lose joy in your relationship with God.

There is nothing wrong with a little secret sin.

Sometimes we think secret sins don't count. The problem is we know our secret sin. God knows our secret sin. The people around us who love us also know about our secret sin. They just don't know what it is. This is common among men who struggle with pornography. The wife knows her husband is distant. She can tell there is something wrong in the relationship. She can't put her finger on the problem. The truth is the husband is engaged in the secret sin of looking at stuff online that he shouldn't. When he is with his wife his brain is not with her. His brain is engaged in a fantasy world of visual sewage that he piped into his head. The problem is that even if you don't get caught in your sin,

everybody knows about your sin because everybody knows there is something wrong with you when they are around you.

If it is popular, it must be OK because everybody is doing it.

Sometimes you will just hear people making this cultural argument. That is the way we do it in our culture. I was talking with Dallas Johnson, who is one of our college interns. He just came back from Europe. We were talking about what life is like in Europe. One of the things he told me is people date and live together for many years in Europe before marrying. There are maybe five to seven years of marital try-before-you-buy life together before marriage. The reason is that this is just the culture in Europe. Just because everybody lives together before marriage doesn't mean it is right, even if it is a culturally acceptable thing to do.

Right now the culturally acceptable thing is LGBTQ+ in our society. That may be what the culture does, but God gave Adam one woman. God created marriage. God sealed Adam and Eve for life.

What are some sinful responses to my sin?

I minimize my sin.

That is claiming my sin is not that big of a deal. "You are overreacting. It was just a little lie." "It was just a little indiscretion." "It was just a little flirting with someone of the opposite sex. It was just a few hot and steamy text messages we exchanged. It is really no big deal." "Stop acting like my sin is a big deal." That is a sinful response to sin. The correct response is not minimizing sin. It is owning our sin and repenting of our sin.

I think my sin is the exception to the rule.

"I know it is sin for everyone else, but I have special circumstances. I am the exception to the rule." Here is the way I see this all the time. People come in for premarital counseling, and I quickly find they are living together. I tell them that if they want me to officiate the wedding, they need to live apart. They immediately say, they cannot afford to do that. God knows they don't have the money to live apart so they are the exception to the rule. Folks, God will never put us in a position where we have to sin. He may put us in a position where it is hard to not sin but he will never put us in a position where we have to sin. Maybe you can't afford to live apart but you haven't even looked around and asked to see if somebody has a basement you can use or a couch where you can crash until you get married. You are not the exception to the rule.

I blameshift my sin on someone or something else.

It is not my fault. It is their fault. This is blaming your sin on other people. It is someone else's fault that we sin. This is so common. It is so wrong. I dealt with this one time with a guy who was getting angry and yelling at his wife. When I talked to him about not treating her that way and that he needed to love her and speak to her with gentleness and kindness, his answer was, "I wouldn't yell at her if she didn't make me so angry. It is her fault I yell at her." That is totally wrong. She may have angered you but you chose how you would respond to that anger. You chose to yell at her instead of lovingly talking to her about your disagreements. This is what Adam did in the Garden of Eden when God approached him about eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Adam immediately blame-shifted it to his wife. "It is Eve's fault. She gave me the fruit." "No, Adam it is your fault because you chose to eat the fruit." Blame-shifting is a common sinful response to our sin.

I only partially confess my sin.

This is when we are caught in our sin, only confessing or admitting to part of our sin. The reason we only partially confess our sins is that we are hoping nobody finds out about the rest of our sins. If we don't need to come completely clean with our sin, we can continue in our sin. This often happens in a marriage when one of the spouses is not conducting himself or herself appropriately with someone of the opposite sex. At home, text messages start showing up on the lock screen of the husband or wife's phone. The spouse sees a strange name constantly texting at late hours of the night. The spouse begins to get suspicious and talks to his or her spouse about the suspicious texts. What often happens is partial confession. The one spouse claims the texts are just for work or that they only had lunch together once or that they are going through a difficult time in life and you are helping them. The problem is that this is only part of the story. It isn't the whole truth. It is only the first layer. Instead of coming clean and admitting sin and repenting of sin, he or she continues in sin. Then what happens is he or she gets caught a second time and has a real problem on his or her hands because the trust between spouses is broken.

I have only worldly sorrow for my sin.

This is, "I am sorry I am caught but I am not sorry for what I did."

For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. 2 Corinthians 7:10 (ESV)

This is sorrow for the effects of sin, but not for the sin itself. This is the guy who gets pulled over for driving 75 mph in the 55 mph zone. After the cop gives him the ticket, he is mad at the cop for pulling him over, not mad at himself for speeding. As soon as he gets back on the road, he goes back to driving 75 mph in a 55 mph zone.

I justify my sin by claiming I am a victim of circumstances.

"I can't help it. My father yelled at me a lot growing up. So that is why I yell at people." "My mom always yelled. That is why I yell." "I am the way I am because I grew up poor." This is constantly claiming you are a victim of your circumstances so you blame your sin on your poor circumstances.

I will agree that when people come out of a tough home, that may make them more predisposed toward certain sins but it does not justify sin.

For example, a friend of mine is a soldier in the army. When he is deployed, he is away from his wife a year at a time. I am sure he is lonely. He is around not just men but he is also around other women who are also away from their husbands for a year at a time. That is a tough circumstance. It doesn't justify cheating on his wife.

I express mere confession of my sin instead of genuine repentance.

This is when people are willing to admit that what they are doing is sinful, but they have no plans to change their ways. This is super confusing. This is when you talk to a friend that is self-employed and discover that he or she is not reporting all his or her income to pay fewer taxes. When you point out that this is sin in the eyes of God, the friend agrees with you. He or she even thanks you for

pointing this out. Afterward, he or she has no desire and no plans to change. This is merely confessing without repenting. This is mere confession. "Thank you for helping me see my sin but I have no plans to change my sin."

How does God respond to sin?

God judges sin.

When Adam and Eve sinned, God judged their sin. They were cast out of the Garden of Eden. Life became difficult. Work became a burden. Death, murder, and hatred were introduced into the world because of sin. Many of life's joys were turned into sorrow because of sin. God didn't just judge Adam and Eve's sin but he will ultimately judge all sin. He will send the devil and his angels to the lake of fire and all who have sinned and not trusted in Jesus will also be there. Thankfully, that is not the end of the story.

God sent his Son to save us from our sin.

God doesn't just judge sin. God loves us. He sent his own son to take on human flesh. He died in our places for our sin to pay for our sin and give us new life. The Bible tells us that when we repent of our sin and trust in Jesus to forgive our sin a great exchange takes place. All of our sin goes to Jesus and all of the purity and perfection of Jesus' life is credited to our lives.

Today, I don't know where you are at with sin in your life. You may be struggling with big issues or sin or in bondage to small issues of sin. Either way, the one thing I know is your sin is killing you. There is freedom to be found. Run to Jesus. Confess your sin to Jesus. Ask for forgiveness of your sin from Jesus.

Jesus will not only forgive you for sin eternally but he will break the power of sin in your life today making you into a completely new person.



Dr. Kurt Trucksess is ordained in the Evangelical Free Church of America. He enjoys reading, writing, and time with his family. Feel free to contact him at www.Christ2RCulture.com (www.c2rc.com)

© You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material in any format provided (1) you credit the author, (2) modifications are clearly marked, (3) you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction, (4) you include the web address (www.Christ2RCulture.com) on the copied resource.

