

Audio file

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Transcript

00:00:04

Please turn with me in the Scriptures to the New Testament and James chapter 1.

00:00:12

James chapter 1 and verse 12.

00:00:16

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

00:00:29

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God.

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For God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man, but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.

00:00:47

Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

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Do not err, my beloved brethren.

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Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

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Of his own will begat ye us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

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Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath,

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for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

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And the Lord will bless his word to our hearts.

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Now, this morning, we're turning again to this portion of Scripture, and we're focusing particularly on verse 15.

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And this text -- and of course, this is in context with the title we had last week, The Battles We All Face.

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This verse, verse 15, then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

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Last week, if you remember, we looked at the battle we all face, and we focused particularly on temptation, on temptation.

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And we saw two things.

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We saw the author of temptation, who is Satan,

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And we saw the steps of temptation, which are twofold in this text, that there's drawn away and there's enticement.

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And I thought we'd be able to get to the other side of temptation last week, but time wasn't with us.

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So this morning, we're going to focus on the other aspect of temptation or the result of giving into temptation, which is sin.

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Now, this message is for everyone.

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because everyone comes into this category.

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Sin is a very, very small word, but it has done grievous damage.

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It has done grievous damage personally, but it's also done grievous damage universally.

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The sin of our first parents, their rebellion against God, has had an effect all the way down to our time, and will indeed continue to affect

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God's universe until Christ returns.

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There is a difference between temptation and sin.

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Temptation, as it were, is being drawn or enticed or attracted to something that displeases God.

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But the Christian has a secret weapon.

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We're able to resist temptation

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because God has given us the ability to resist temptation.

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This, of course, was very common knowledge in biblical circles over the generations.

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Christians knew the difference between temptation and sin.

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Of course, the great example of the one who could resist temptation was the Lord Jesus Christ.

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But in the Bible,

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There are indicators, and we look at this, God willing, next week, there are certain examples that we have of men and women who were tempted in certain ways and yet did not give in.

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Why?

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Because God's Spirit was giving them the strength to resist temptation.

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Our Lord Jesus Christ was not only tempted,

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But He resisted temptation, and He resisted all temptation.

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That's why the old writers would have said that Jesus Christ was sinless, spotless, blameless, immaculate.

00:05:04

No sin.

00:05:06

No sin.

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And this needs to be emphasized in our day.

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Because unless people understand the uniqueness of Christ's sinless nature, they will never see the need of seeking a sinless Savior.

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The other aspect is this, if we downplay sin and downplay the effects of sin, what gospel have we got for sinners?

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So this is a matter not only of

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personal necessity, it's also a matter of gospel necessity.

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We remember, and remember, I'm sure you remember, we saw that sin is, as the catechisms tell us, and sometimes it's good to learn a few questions and answers from the catechism, sin is want of conformity or transgression of the law of God.

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And that's where we're going to begin this morning.

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I come here with a heavy heart, and I hope it'll be an encouragement as well as perhaps a help for some.

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But the first thing I want us to think about is the meaning of sin, the meaning of sin.

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In days gone by, this would have been taught in a Sunday school class.

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It would have been taught in a Bible doctrine class in the churches.

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This would have been taught in the home.

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These truths that I'm just going to share a few of what sin means would have been common knowledge, especially in this country.

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So many young children would have gone to school and they would have gone with two things.

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I was told this recently, a copy of the Word of God and a catechism.

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And I think in some schools, they added one extra, it was a psalter.

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I don't know whether that's true or not, but I've been told by somebody.

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A Cathochism, a series, 150 or more questions and answers, short questions with short answers, but filled with theological truth.

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Where is that knowledge today?

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Where is the knowledge amongst the preachers to define sin?

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Well, let me

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given an attempt.

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And I have a list of things here, so I'm not going to dwell on them too long.

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But I just want us to notice, first and foremost, sin is not defined by mankind.

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The first thing I want us to realize is sin is the breaking of God's law.

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That's the most important thing I could say.

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It's defined in relation to God's law.

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Why?

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Sin is defined in terms of God's law because God's law is a reflection of His holy character.

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You could read many texts about this, but you could read Romans 7, verse 12.

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Sin, from God's perspective, is always a transgression or a trespass of His law.

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Second,

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Sin is transgression of God's law, 1 John 3:4, Whosoever committed sin transgresses also the law, for sin is a transgression of the law.

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Third, sin is a debt to God.

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It's a debt.

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It's not a mishap.

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It's not a mistake.

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It's not a light thing to God.

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That's why the hymn writers speak about debts to God.

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It's a strange language for the 21st century church, but it's true.

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A debtor to mercy I owe, of covenant mercy I sing.

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Debtors?

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You mean we're debtors to God?

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You mean we owe God a debt?

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Yes?

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And believe you me, it's far greater than the national debt or the trillions of dollars that the United States economy is in debt.

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This debt is unpayable by us human beings.

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This debt is unpayable in certain ways.

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First of all, it can't be paid in currency.

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There's no currency that can pay this debt.

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And secondly,

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It can't be paid with the currency of works.

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You can't use works to pay this debt, not even your own works.

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We're all debtors to God.

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And the longer this world goes on, the more debt humanity owes God.

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And every millisecond that passes by in this world, the sin-debt increases again and again and again.

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I can't even reach tall enough.

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And we're all debtors to God, every single one of us here this morning.

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We're debtors to God and we cannot pay this debt.

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We cannot pay the debt we owe God.

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Our sin is a great chasm between us and God.

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And there's no bridge, humanly speaking, and no religious bridge that can bridge this gap.

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28-30, we read about debts.

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In the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples, you remember He says, Forgive us our debtors, as we forgive those who are debtors to us.

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Sorry, Forgive us our debts as we forgive those who are debtors to us.

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This is old language, so important.

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You'll see the other side of this in a moment.

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Third, sin is an act of enmity against God.

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This idea that humanity is in some way in a halfway house between God and hell is not true.

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We're all enemies of God.

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The Apostle Paul tells us that in Romans chapter 5 and verse 8.

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We're enemies of God.

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It's one thing to have a mortal enemy in this life.

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Like David had a mortal enemy in King Saul.

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Saul was out to kill him.

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Saul may not have done the act himself.

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He had an army to do that.

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Some of our forebears, even in this country, were hunted for their lives.

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They were enemies.

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as the rulers would have said, of the state.

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Well, that's a debatable thing.

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But these so-called enemies were not enemies of God.

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They had been redeemed by the blood of Christ.

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They were God's own choice children.

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And they were no longer enemies of God, even if they were enemies of the state.

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You see, God's sin is an act of enmity against God in two ways.

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It's missing the mark.

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That's a very important word, and that's the word James uses here.

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It's to do with archery, as you might know, and God's standard is perfect.

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But in archery, if you miss the target, or even if you miss the center of the bullseye, I think it's called, on a target, then you have sinned in the old ways.

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But from God's standards, no matter how many arrows we fire, we let go from our bow, it would never hit the target.

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God's target is so high.

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His standards are so perfect.

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His righteousness is so pure.

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And so, sin is enmity against God in another way.

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It's unrighteousness.

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17, All righteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death.

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In James 4, verse 17, Therefore to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

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The early church father, Augustine, said this, Sin comes when we take a perfectly natural desire or longing or ambition and try desperately to fulfill it without God.

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Very interesting, isn't it?

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Not only is it sin, it is a perverse distortion of the image of the Creator in us.

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All these good things and all our security are rightly found only and completely in him.

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Augustine had a right understanding of sin.

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He also had a right understanding of grace.

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Now, you might feel, Well, that's heavy stuff, but let me share what Susanna Wesley taught her son John about sin.

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Susanna Wesley.

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I don't know if she's well known, but she was a godly woman and she says this to her son.

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I think he was about 8 or 9 when I was reading his journals many years ago.

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Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God and takes off the relish of spiritual things, that of course would be godly things, that to you is sin.

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What a definition.

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This is a mother teaching her son.

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Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, and takes off the relish of spiritual things, that to you is sin.

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Profound.

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But the fourth thing, not only is sin

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As I said, first of all, it was breaking God's law.

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Secondly, it was a death to God.

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Third, it's an act of enmity against God.

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But the fourth thing, it's a crime against God.

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It's a crime.

00:15:42

And of course, this wouldn't be common today.

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We are criminals, spiritual criminals.

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I assure you, not real criminals.

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But from God's perspective, we have been traitors.

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He's the king.

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He's the

00:16:01

Almighty King.

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He's the sovereign King.

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He rules over all.

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And every sin that we commit in this world is, as one man puts it, cosmic treason.

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Cosmic treason against an all-holy God.

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Listen to Spurgeon.

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I could have chose many of the writers for this, but Spurgeon says this.

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A profound personal wrong against God, describing it as a breach of his law, a dishonor of his name, and a rebellion against his authority.

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This he viewed-- this is what Spurgeon said.

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That's what Spurgeon-- this is what Spurgeon said.

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He viewed it, quote, as the greatest evil in the universe, a parent of all evils, close quote.

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This is what our forebears used to teach about sin.

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This is what our forebears believed when it came to the word sin.

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So let me tell you what sin is not.

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Sin is not defined, firstly, by our preferences.

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I don't like is not a definition of sin.

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That's a preference.

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It's more important to say, What does God say?

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Secondly, sin is not defined by a social justice worldview.

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Now, you might say, Why are we talking about this?

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Because this is what our society is infected with.

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This is what our young people are being trained to think like.

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Social justice worldview teaches that social structures, systems, institutions, laws, and cultural norms are all, unless they teach a certain view, then they're wrong.

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What does this mean in English?

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Well, simply, I'll try and boil it down like this.

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The system teaches that you have an oppressed and oppressor.

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Now you see where you're going.

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And traditional views of marriage, of family, of right standards, are oppressive.

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And therefore, what is needed is liberality or freedom to express whatever you want to do.

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The oppressor, by the way, are often those who do not want to be taught truth.

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They want to believe that their social preferences and their personal preferences should overthrow the old standards.

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But look where the society is going.

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This social justice worldview is right across every aspect of academia.

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Third, sin is not defined by society, by societal mores, or by a corrupt church.

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Sin cannot be defined by a sinful society.

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Do you see the illogical nature of this?

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A sinful society defines sin.

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A corrupt society defines that which is not corrupt.

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A perverse society defines that which is not perverse.

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It's preposterous, but unfortunately it's happening.

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We are told today that our standards are not acceptable.

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Our view of God will eventually be pushed to the side, and our standards for righteousness and truth and holiness and justice will be obliterated.

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But thankfully, God is still on the throne.

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And no matter what rulers think they can do, or how

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how they can redefine what God has not defined, what God has defined, is immaterial to God.

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One's personal preferences are a matter of society's mores, or mores.

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Morality is defined now by people's morality.

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If I didn't say it like that, you might not think it was so strange, but that's what's happening.

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People's morality is defined by their own morality.

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In days gone by, when you said to somebody, that person is not a moral person, or that person is acting immorally, most of the community would know exactly what you were talking about.

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And I'm not going back too far.

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I'm not going back to Susanna Welles's day, or even Spurgeon's day.

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I'm just going back to the 1950s.

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I wasn't around in the 1950s, but I've been told that's what it was like.

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In other words, sin is not determined by psychological, sociological, or ecclesiological surveys.

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A psychological survey says this, a sociological survey says that, and even a church or ecclesiological survey says this.

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And this is the idea, you see.

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As long as the majority of society says something is permissible, then it can't be sin.

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Do you see where we've gone?

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We've moved from a social justice worldview to a society corrupt, a corrupt society defining sin, and now the majority of society says, Ah, but it's allowed, it's permissible.

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It can't be sin.

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And then you see the attention turn around to reverse the process.

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But what you say is sin.

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What you Bible teaching preachers say is sin, sorry, is righteousness, is actually our view of sin.

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Your teaching on purity and holiness and righteousness and goodness, well, they're all against our preferences and our permissibility.

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So sin is not to do with preferences, with worldviews, with various surveys.

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But what is sin then?

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As I said before, sin is the want of conformity or transgression of the law of God.

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God says it.

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You read the Old Testament.

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you see how sin affects so many stratas of society you read Exodus chapter 20 and you have those I call them beautiful Commandments you might not have thought of like that but if you read the first three verses of Exodus chapter 20 the whole atmosphere the whole context of the Ten Commandments is one of Redemption it's one of Redemption

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Maybe I should just turn there for a moment to show you this.

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Yes, it's their strong teaching.

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Yes, all of us have fallen short of God's commandments.

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Yes, each one of us has broken the commandments of God, all ten of them.

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Maybe not, I trust not physically, but in our minds and our hearts, we've broken all these commandments.

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But look at how the Lord begins.

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It's marvelous.

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And God spake all these-- this is Exodus 20, verse 1-- and spake all these words, saying, 'I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of *****'.

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Thou shalt have no other gods before me.' What has the Lord done?

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He's reminded them of two main things.

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One, they were in a house of ***** a house of slavery.

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They were in chains.

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to their cruel Egyptian masters.

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But two, God delivered them.

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God broke the chains that held them in *****.

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And then He gives them these instructions to show them that as they were now redeemed or delivered by His power, they were to live to His glory.

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And what an example they would have been to the rest of the nations around them.

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And dear friends, are we not freed from a greater *****?

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I've looked at the-- I've just shared something of the meaning of sin, but we have been freed from the great ***** of sin.

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God has broken the chains that held us steadfast to our sins, to our loss, and to our continuous hurtling towards a lost eternity.

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We had always sinned against God, but in the gospel we find mercy and forgiveness and pardon for sin.

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Well, the second thing I want us to look at the morning is meaning of sin.

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Secondly, the types of sin.

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There are secret sins.

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Proverbs 28 verse 13 speaks about concealing that which is

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against God's law there's presumptuous sins uh the uh David speaks about this in Psalm 19 verse 13 save me from presumptuous sins so what types of sin are there well there are two main types and again this would have been very common knowledge in times gone by but I don't know whether this is common knowledge today first of all there's a sin of commission of omission what does that mean what is what does this word omission mean well it's from the word omit

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You leave it out.

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Something you know you should do, and you just leave it out.

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Give me an example.

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It isn't the thing you do or think or say.

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It's the thing you leave undone.

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See the difference here?

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It's the thing we've left undone.

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So perhaps the Holy Spirit was prompting us

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in some way to do that which would please the Lord, and we have left it undone.

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That's a sin of omission.

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There are more serious ones, but that's a gentle one, if you like.

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A sin of omission is when we fail to do what God prescribes: the worship of God, the meeting in His house, the declaration of the gospel.

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These are sins of omission.

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We know what we should do,

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But we omit it.

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Perhaps somebody says, well, what about those who are not able to come to church?

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Well, if they're unwell or sick or infirm or working and acts of mercy, caring for those who are sick or unable to care for themselves, well, that's allowed.

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Of course, we have those-- that teaching.

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But some people just willfully say, no, I'm not doing that, even though I know I should be doing it.

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But there's the other side, which is the sin of commission.

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And this is what perhaps we're all more aware of, doing, saying, even thinking what God prohibits.

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And that's much more subtle.

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And that's much more private, if you like.

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When somebody is involved in sins of commission, it could be to do with questionable websites.

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It could be to do with someone of the opposite sex and we're attracted to them and we're dwelling on it.

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That's a sin of commission.

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God says, Thou shalt not commit adultery.

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And yet, all of us are guilty of this to a greater or lesser degree.

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One man, Thomas Brooks, puts it like this, Sinful commissions stab the soul, sinful omissions starve the soul.

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It's very interesting, isn't it?

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We stab the soul when we do that which displeased the Lord and we know we're doing it, but we also starve the soul when we leave out what we should be doing to please the Lord.

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One man, another man, puts it like this, Every sin has a sting in the tail.

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Every sin.

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Well, the difference between the Christian and the non-Christian is this, though the Christian sins,

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we very quickly go to the Lord and ask for forgiveness.

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We don't hang around, we don't dilly-dally.

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I know that might be an Irish phrase, but I'm sure you understand.

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We don't, as it were, say, Well, it's okay, it's not too serious.

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No, no, no, we want to be back in close fellowship with the Lord.

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The unbeliever never knew fellowship with the Lord, so they don't understand what it is to sin against a holy, loving Father.

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They sin against, and in their view sometimes, an angry judge who is God Almighty.

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Most people don't even bother about that anymore.

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So these types of sins.

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Lastly, this morning, in the text, steps to sin.

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Well, we might get one more in.

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Steps to sin, this is the third thing.

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Look at how James breaks this down.

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And you only find this in the Scriptures.

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You only find this in Scriptural writers.

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You only find this in men who held to this inerrancy of Scripture, the infallibility of the Word of God and the trustworthy of Scripture.

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See what he does.

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He says, Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, verse 14, and enticed, as James 1, verse 15, then when lust hath conceived.

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Look at the steps here.

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so we have this temptation coming against us it might come through the mind it might come through the eyes it might even come through the ears whatever way it comes it comes to us and it has a power in it and it has a drawing power as we learned last week and it entices us but what if we give in to this temptation James tells us lust hath conceived

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Lust hath conceived.

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That's the language of a child being conceived in the womb.

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The sin truly exists, though it be an embryo or in tiny form, and when it is grown to its full size in the mind, it is brought forth to actuality.

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See how he breaks this down?

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When lust hath conceived,

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And then, secondly, sin is enacted.

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He lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.

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Its fruit is sin.

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When temptation is yielded to, sin is produced.

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Third, sin then brings forth-- it's finished.

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What does it mean to be finished?

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It doesn't mean, as some people think, that that's the end of it.

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No, it's more to do with that it has come to its fruition.

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It has gained power.

00:32:00

It has gained strength.

00:32:01

And what's the fourth aspect?

00:32:06

It bringeth forth death.

00:32:10

Now, for the unbeliever, Paul tells us in Romans 6, verse 23, The wages of sin is death.

00:32:19

But of course, the gospel has the balance that the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ.

00:32:27

But perhaps people need to hear that the wages of sin is death, eternal, unending death.

00:32:38

But for the Christian, what does it mean for us?

00:32:40

Because James, of course, is writing to believers.

00:32:43

What does the word death mean here?

00:32:46

Well, you could

00:32:48

Soften this.

00:32:50

You could say, well, you know, you always have the gospel.

00:32:54

But I believe what James is trying to teach us here is that it leads to some kind of breaking in our close fellowship with God.

00:33:06

Don't we know what that is?

00:33:09

When we have sinned, dear friends, I include myself in this, please don't think I'm beyond this.

00:33:16

When we have sinned, what's the response?

00:33:19

We grieve.

00:33:22

Our conscience is stricken.

00:33:25

We feel shame.

00:33:29

We feel that we've lost something and we have.

00:33:34

And sometimes when we've given in to some great sin or temptation and we're so, we feel utterly awful, if I can put it like that, ashamed,

00:33:45

We think, can God forgive me?

00:33:49

Well, of course he can forgive us.

00:33:51

But the old devil gets busy.

00:33:55

And he says, you can't be forgiven for that.

00:33:58

That's such a mortal sin.

00:33:59

That's such a heinous sin.

00:34:01

You can't be forgiven for that.

00:34:03

And that's where the Holy Spirit comes.

00:34:06

He says, don't look at yourself, young man.

00:34:09

I say, I look at myself here.

00:34:11

Don't look at yourself, young man, or older man.

00:34:14

Look to Christ.

00:34:16

Look away from yourself and look to Christ.

00:34:21

And you'll find in an astonishing way that you're drawn more to Christ.

00:34:28

And you're yearning for Christ.

00:34:31

And you come to the Lord with your head hung low and your heart as heavy as can be.

00:34:37

And you pour out your heart to the Lord and the Lord comes to you in the gospel and grace.

00:34:48

What this does is it breaks fellowship.

00:34:53

It doesn't remove us from the covenant of salvation, of grace.

00:34:59

It doesn't remove us from the family of God.

00:35:01

It doesn't take us out of being adopted as children.

00:35:06

It doesn't take away the Holy Spirit from us, but our sin

00:35:12

Mars our close communion and fellowship with the Lord.

00:35:16

The old writers are full of this.

00:35:18

I could have quoted so many of them.

00:35:22

Time has gone, but you read for yourself and you see their response, and you see their encouragement to go to Christ.

00:35:34

Sin is serious, and sometimes, sadly,

00:35:42

We're taught by society that sin isn't serious.

00:35:46

But though we might sin greatly, grace abounds even more.

00:35:54

Most of you know about John Bunyan's books.

00:35:58

Most of you have read, I trust, Pilgrim's Progress.

00:36:01

What a marvelous book that is.

00:36:05

Now, it's not inspired scripture.

00:36:07

Please don't ever think it is.

00:36:10

But if I were given two books on a desert island, and I was given a choice of two books, I believe it would be The Scriptures and Pilgrim's Progress.

00:36:23

And I was allowed one more, just one more, I'd ask for Matthew Henry's commentaries, all six volumes of them.

00:36:34

I wouldn't have any social media.

00:36:35

I wouldn't have anything.

00:36:37

I've been exiled to an island.

00:36:40

If I was given those three things, then that's enough.

00:36:44

And if I was allowed to take another Bunyan book, it would be Grace Abounding.

00:36:50

Grace Abounding.

00:36:53

In some ways, when you read Grace Abounding, you see yourself, especially us younger men, us men, we see ourselves as

00:37:03

Bunyan exposes his own heart and his own struggle with sin and temptation and all that he met and how the Lord delivered him.

00:37:16

Well, I had much more to say, but I think we'll leave it there.

00:37:19

The meaning of sin was the first thing, secondly, the types of sin, and thirdly, the steps to sin.

00:37:26

But let me leave you with this.

00:37:29

For the Christian, the sin

00:37:33

that we have committed even this morning.

00:37:36

And we've all even committed sin this morning, dear friends.

00:37:40

Maybe just in our hearts, maybe just in our minds.

00:37:42

Maybe it was a fleeting thought.

00:37:46

And we kind of dwelt on it too long.

00:37:51

It's all washed away in the blood of Christ.

00:37:56

When Christ was on the cross, all our sin was poured upon Him.

00:38:06

9, If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us of all unrighteousness.

00:38:22

Jesus Christ, in the Gospel, is able to forgive us of all our sins.

00:38:32

And that's a message this world needs.

00:38:36

That's a message that the respectable sinner needs, as well as the public sinner needs.

00:38:45

That's a message for the person with a pricked conscience or a sensitive conscience.

00:38:51

They need this message.

00:38:53

That's a message for the self-righteous.

00:38:56

Sin is serious.

00:38:59

The meaning of sin is transgression against God's law.

00:39:02

There are various types of sin, and there are steps to sin, but there is forgiveness in Christ.

00:39:09

Well, let us pray.

00:39:10

Father in heaven, we're thankful this morning.

00:39:12

Bless us, keep us, sustain us, and help us.

00:39:16

Lord, we face these battles every day, every moment, every waking hour.

00:39:22

But we're thankful as Christians here this morning, many of us can say, yes, there have been many battles,

00:39:29

Yes, we have many scars, and yes, Christ has the victory, and we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

00:39:40

Oh, bless each one here this morning.

00:39:43

Oh, work mighty wonders in people's hearts.

00:39:46

Oh, that the Gospel go forth with power, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.

00:39:54

And though, Lord, we might feel the chiefest of sinners, Jesus Christ

00:39:59

is able to save us even as well.

00:40:02

Great God, hear our prayers for Jesus' sake.

00:40:06

Amen.

Audio file

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Transcript

00:00:04

Please turn with me in the Scriptures to the New Testament and James chapter 1.

00:00:12

James chapter 1 and verse 12.

00:00:16

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

00:00:29

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God.

00:00:34

For God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man, but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.

00:00:47

Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

00:00:57

Do not err, my beloved brethren.

00:01:00

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

00:01:12

Of his own will begat ye us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

00:01:20

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath,

00:01:28

for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

00:01:33

And the Lord will bless his word to our hearts.

00:01:38

Now, this morning, we're turning again to this portion of Scripture, and we're focusing particularly on verse 15.

00:01:47

And this text -- and of course, this is in context with the title we had last week, The Battles We All Face.

00:01:57

This verse, verse 15, then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

00:02:10

Last week, if you remember, we looked at the battle we all face, and we focused particularly on temptation, on temptation.

00:02:20

And we saw two things.

00:02:21

We saw the author of temptation, who is Satan,

00:02:25

And we saw the steps of temptation, which are twofold in this text, that there's drawn away and there's enticement.

00:02:35

And I thought we'd be able to get to the other side of temptation last week, but time wasn't with us.

00:02:42

So this morning, we're going to focus on the other aspect of temptation or the result of giving into temptation, which is sin.

00:02:53

Now, this message is for everyone.

00:02:55

because everyone comes into this category.

00:02:58

Sin is a very, very small word, but it has done grievous damage.

00:03:05

It has done grievous damage personally, but it's also done grievous damage universally.

00:03:11

The sin of our first parents, their rebellion against God, has had an effect all the way down to our time, and will indeed continue to affect

00:03:24

God's universe until Christ returns.

00:03:29

There is a difference between temptation and sin.

00:03:33

Temptation, as it were, is being drawn or enticed or attracted to something that displeases God.

00:03:43

But the Christian has a secret weapon.

00:03:47

We're able to resist temptation

00:03:50

because God has given us the ability to resist temptation.

00:03:57

This, of course, was very common knowledge in biblical circles over the generations.

00:04:05

Christians knew the difference between temptation and sin.

00:04:09

Of course, the great example of the one who could resist temptation was the Lord Jesus Christ.

00:04:17

But in the Bible,

00:04:18

There are indicators, and we look at this, God willing, next week, there are certain examples that we have of men and women who were tempted in certain ways and yet did not give in.

00:04:32

Why?

00:04:34

Because God's Spirit was giving them the strength to resist temptation.

00:04:43

Our Lord Jesus Christ was not only tempted,

00:04:46

But He resisted temptation, and He resisted all temptation.

00:04:53

That's why the old writers would have said that Jesus Christ was sinless, spotless, blameless, immaculate.

00:05:04

No sin.

00:05:06

No sin.

00:05:08

And this needs to be emphasized in our day.

00:05:12

Because unless people understand the uniqueness of Christ's sinless nature, they will never see the need of seeking a sinless Savior.

00:05:25

The other aspect is this, if we downplay sin and downplay the effects of sin, what gospel have we got for sinners?

00:05:39

So this is a matter not only of

00:05:41

personal necessity, it's also a matter of gospel necessity.

00:05:50

We remember, and remember, I'm sure you remember, we saw that sin is, as the catechisms tell us, and sometimes it's good to learn a few questions and answers from the catechism, sin is want of conformity or transgression of the law of God.

00:06:10

And that's where we're going to begin this morning.

00:06:11

I come here with a heavy heart, and I hope it'll be an encouragement as well as perhaps a help for some.

00:06:20

But the first thing I want us to think about is the meaning of sin, the meaning of sin.

00:06:28

In days gone by, this would have been taught in a Sunday school class.

00:06:32

It would have been taught in a Bible doctrine class in the churches.

00:06:38

This would have been taught in the home.

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These truths that I'm just going to share a few of what sin means would have been common knowledge, especially in this country.

00:06:50

So many young children would have gone to school and they would have gone with two things.

00:06:55

I was told this recently, a copy of the Word of God and a catechism.

00:07:02

And I think in some schools, they added one extra, it was a psalter.

00:07:06

I don't know whether that's true or not, but I've been told by somebody.

00:07:09

A Cathochism, a series, 150 or more questions and answers, short questions with short answers, but filled with theological truth.

00:07:23

Where is that knowledge today?

00:07:26

Where is the knowledge amongst the preachers to define sin?

00:07:30

Well, let me

00:07:32

given an attempt.

00:07:34

And I have a list of things here, so I'm not going to dwell on them too long.

00:07:38

But I just want us to notice, first and foremost, sin is not defined by mankind.

00:07:49

The first thing I want us to realize is sin is the breaking of God's law.

00:07:56

That's the most important thing I could say.

00:07:59

It's defined in relation to God's law.

00:08:01

Why?

00:08:03

Sin is defined in terms of God's law because God's law is a reflection of His holy character.

00:08:10

You could read many texts about this, but you could read Romans 7, verse 12.

00:08:14

Sin, from God's perspective, is always a transgression or a trespass of His law.

00:08:23

Second,

00:08:25

Sin is transgression of God's law, 1 John 3:4, Whosoever committed sin transgresses also the law, for sin is a transgression of the law.

00:08:38

Third, sin is a debt to God.

00:08:42

It's a debt.

00:08:44

It's not a mishap.

00:08:46

It's not a mistake.

00:08:49

It's not a light thing to God.

00:08:53

That's why the hymn writers speak about debts to God.

00:08:58

It's a strange language for the 21st century church, but it's true.

00:09:02

A debtor to mercy I owe, of covenant mercy I sing.

00:09:11

Debtors?

00:09:12

You mean we're debtors to God?

00:09:15

You mean we owe God a debt?

00:09:18

Yes?

00:09:20

And believe you me, it's far greater than the national debt or the trillions of dollars that the United States economy is in debt.

00:09:30

This debt is unpayable by us human beings.

00:09:36

This debt is unpayable in certain ways.

00:09:39

First of all, it can't be paid in currency.

00:09:43

There's no currency that can pay this debt.

00:09:46

And secondly,

00:09:48

It can't be paid with the currency of works.

00:09:52

You can't use works to pay this debt, not even your own works.

00:09:56

We're all debtors to God.

00:09:59

And the longer this world goes on, the more debt humanity owes God.

00:10:06

And every millisecond that passes by in this world, the sin-debt increases again and again and again.

00:10:14

I can't even reach tall enough.

00:10:18

And we're all debtors to God, every single one of us here this morning.

00:10:24

We're debtors to God and we cannot pay this debt.

00:10:28

We cannot pay the debt we owe God.

00:10:32

Our sin is a great chasm between us and God.

00:10:36

And there's no bridge, humanly speaking, and no religious bridge that can bridge this gap.

00:10:45

28-30, we read about debts.

00:10:50

In the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples, you remember He says, Forgive us our debtors, as we forgive those who are debtors to us.

00:11:04

Sorry, Forgive us our debts as we forgive those who are debtors to us.

00:11:09

This is old language, so important.

00:11:14

You'll see the other side of this in a moment.

00:11:18

Third, sin is an act of enmity against God.

00:11:24

This idea that humanity is in some way in a halfway house between God and hell is not true.

00:11:32

We're all enemies of God.

00:11:35

The Apostle Paul tells us that in Romans chapter 5 and verse 8.

00:11:39

We're enemies of God.

00:11:43

It's one thing to have a mortal enemy in this life.

00:11:47

Like David had a mortal enemy in King Saul.

00:11:50

Saul was out to kill him.

00:11:54

Saul may not have done the act himself.

00:11:56

He had an army to do that.

00:11:58

Some of our forebears, even in this country, were hunted for their lives.

00:12:05

They were enemies.

00:12:08

as the rulers would have said, of the state.

00:12:12

Well, that's a debatable thing.

00:12:15

But these so-called enemies were not enemies of God.

00:12:19

They had been redeemed by the blood of Christ.

00:12:23

They were God's own choice children.

00:12:26

And they were no longer enemies of God, even if they were enemies of the state.

00:12:32

You see, God's sin is an act of enmity against God in two ways.

00:12:37

It's missing the mark.

00:12:39

That's a very important word, and that's the word James uses here.

00:12:44

It's to do with archery, as you might know, and God's standard is perfect.

00:12:52

But in archery, if you miss the target, or even if you miss the center of the bullseye, I think it's called, on a target, then you have sinned in the old ways.

00:13:05

But from God's standards, no matter how many arrows we fire, we let go from our bow, it would never hit the target.

00:13:15

God's target is so high.

00:13:17

His standards are so perfect.

00:13:19

His righteousness is so pure.

00:13:23

And so, sin is enmity against God in another way.

00:13:27

It's unrighteousness.

00:13:30

17, All righteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death.

00:13:35

In James 4, verse 17, Therefore to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

00:13:42

The early church father, Augustine, said this, Sin comes when we take a perfectly natural desire or longing or ambition and try desperately to fulfill it without God.

00:13:54

Very interesting, isn't it?

00:13:57

Not only is it sin, it is a perverse distortion of the image of the Creator in us.

00:14:02

All these good things and all our security are rightly found only and completely in him.

00:14:12

Augustine had a right understanding of sin.

00:14:17

He also had a right understanding of grace.

00:14:22

Now, you might feel, Well, that's heavy stuff, but let me share what Susanna Wesley taught her son John about sin.

00:14:30

Susanna Wesley.

00:14:33

I don't know if she's well known, but she was a godly woman and she says this to her son.

00:14:38

I think he was about 8 or 9 when I was reading his journals many years ago.

00:14:43

Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God and takes off the relish of spiritual things, that of course would be godly things, that to you is sin.

00:15:01

What a definition.

00:15:03

This is a mother teaching her son.

00:15:07

Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, and takes off the relish of spiritual things, that to you is sin.

00:15:22

Profound.

00:15:27

But the fourth thing, not only is sin

00:15:30

As I said, first of all, it was breaking God's law.

00:15:34

Secondly, it was a death to God.

00:15:36

Third, it's an act of enmity against God.

00:15:38

But the fourth thing, it's a crime against God.

00:15:42

It's a crime.

00:15:42

And of course, this wouldn't be common today.

00:15:47

We are criminals, spiritual criminals.

00:15:51

I assure you, not real criminals.

00:15:54

But from God's perspective, we have been traitors.

00:15:58

He's the king.

00:15:59

He's the

00:16:01

Almighty King.

00:16:02

He's the sovereign King.

00:16:03

He rules over all.

00:16:06

And every sin that we commit in this world is, as one man puts it, cosmic treason.

00:16:14

Cosmic treason against an all-holy God.

00:16:20

Listen to Spurgeon.

00:16:22

I could have chose many of the writers for this, but Spurgeon says this.

00:16:25

A profound personal wrong against God, describing it as a breach of his law, a dishonor of his name, and a rebellion against his authority.

00:16:35

This he viewed-- this is what Spurgeon said.

00:16:38

That's what Spurgeon-- this is what Spurgeon said.

00:16:40

He viewed it, quote, as the greatest evil in the universe, a parent of all evils, close quote.

00:16:51

This is what our forebears used to teach about sin.

00:16:56

This is what our forebears believed when it came to the word sin.

00:17:02

So let me tell you what sin is not.

00:17:05

Sin is not defined, firstly, by our preferences.

00:17:11

I don't like is not a definition of sin.

00:17:15

That's a preference.

00:17:18

It's more important to say, What does God say?

00:17:22

Secondly, sin is not defined by a social justice worldview.

00:17:27

Now, you might say, Why are we talking about this?

00:17:30

Because this is what our society is infected with.

00:17:38

This is what our young people are being trained to think like.

00:17:43

Social justice worldview teaches that social structures, systems, institutions, laws, and cultural norms are all, unless they teach a certain view, then they're wrong.

00:18:01

What does this mean in English?

00:18:03

Well, simply, I'll try and boil it down like this.

00:18:06

The system teaches that you have an oppressed and oppressor.

00:18:12

Now you see where you're going.

00:18:14

And traditional views of marriage, of family, of right standards, are oppressive.

00:18:25

And therefore, what is needed is liberality or freedom to express whatever you want to do.

00:18:35

The oppressor, by the way, are often those who do not want to be taught truth.

00:18:44

They want to believe that their social preferences and their personal preferences should overthrow the old standards.

00:18:52

But look where the society is going.

00:18:56

This social justice worldview is right across every aspect of academia.

00:19:03

Third, sin is not defined by society, by societal mores, or by a corrupt church.

00:19:12

Sin cannot be defined by a sinful society.

00:19:16

Do you see the illogical nature of this?

00:19:23

A sinful society defines sin.

00:19:26

A corrupt society defines that which is not corrupt.

00:19:32

A perverse society defines that which is not perverse.

00:19:36

It's preposterous, but unfortunately it's happening.

00:19:42

We are told today that our standards are not acceptable.

00:19:46

Our view of God will eventually be pushed to the side, and our standards for righteousness and truth and holiness and justice will be obliterated.

00:20:01

But thankfully, God is still on the throne.

00:20:03

And no matter what rulers think they can do, or how

00:20:07

how they can redefine what God has not defined, what God has defined, is immaterial to God.

00:20:17

One's personal preferences are a matter of society's mores, or mores.

00:20:24

Morality is defined now by people's morality.

00:20:31

If I didn't say it like that, you might not think it was so strange, but that's what's happening.

00:20:37

People's morality is defined by their own morality.

00:20:41

In days gone by, when you said to somebody, that person is not a moral person, or that person is acting immorally, most of the community would know exactly what you were talking about.

00:20:52

And I'm not going back too far.

00:20:53

I'm not going back to Susanna Welles's day, or even Spurgeon's day.

00:20:57

I'm just going back to the 1950s.

00:21:02

I wasn't around in the 1950s, but I've been told that's what it was like.

00:21:07

In other words, sin is not determined by psychological, sociological, or ecclesiological surveys.

00:21:16

A psychological survey says this, a sociological survey says that, and even a church or ecclesiological survey says this.

00:21:25

And this is the idea, you see.

00:21:27

As long as the majority of society says something is permissible, then it can't be sin.

00:21:37

Do you see where we've gone?

00:21:39

We've moved from a social justice worldview to a society corrupt, a corrupt society defining sin, and now the majority of society says, Ah, but it's allowed, it's permissible.

00:21:53

It can't be sin.

00:21:55

And then you see the attention turn around to reverse the process.

00:22:02

But what you say is sin.

00:22:06

What you Bible teaching preachers say is sin, sorry, is righteousness, is actually our view of sin.

00:22:15

Your teaching on purity and holiness and righteousness and goodness, well, they're all against our preferences and our permissibility.

00:22:27

So sin is not to do with preferences, with worldviews, with various surveys.

00:22:38

But what is sin then?

00:22:40

As I said before, sin is the want of conformity or transgression of the law of God.

00:22:50

God says it.

00:22:53

You read the Old Testament.

00:22:55

you see how sin affects so many stratas of society you read Exodus chapter 20 and you have those I call them beautiful Commandments you might not have thought of like that but if you read the first three verses of Exodus chapter 20 the whole atmosphere the whole context of the Ten Commandments is one of Redemption it's one of Redemption

00:23:23

Maybe I should just turn there for a moment to show you this.

00:23:28

Yes, it's their strong teaching.

00:23:31

Yes, all of us have fallen short of God's commandments.

00:23:34

Yes, each one of us has broken the commandments of God, all ten of them.

00:23:38

Maybe not, I trust not physically, but in our minds and our hearts, we've broken all these commandments.

00:23:45

But look at how the Lord begins.

00:23:49

It's marvelous.

00:23:51

And God spake all these-- this is Exodus 20, verse 1-- and spake all these words, saying, 'I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of *****.

00:24:01

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.' What has the Lord done?

00:24:06

He's reminded them of two main things.

00:24:11

One, they were in a house of ***** a house of slavery.

00:24:16

They were in chains.

00:24:19

to their cruel Egyptian masters.

00:24:22

But two, God delivered them.

00:24:26

God broke the chains that held them in *****.

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And then He gives them these instructions to show them that as they were now redeemed or delivered by His power, they were to live to His glory.

00:24:43

And what an example they would have been to the rest of the nations around them.

00:24:48

And dear friends, are we not freed from a greater *****?

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I've looked at the-- I've just shared something of the meaning of sin, but we have been freed from the great ***** of sin.

00:25:04

God has broken the chains that held us steadfast to our sins, to our loss, and to our continuous hurtling towards a lost eternity.

00:25:18

We had always sinned against God, but in the gospel we find mercy and forgiveness and pardon for sin.

00:25:27

Well, the second thing I want us to look at the morning is meaning of sin.

00:25:30

Secondly, the types of sin.

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There are secret sins.

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Proverbs 28 verse 13 speaks about concealing that which is

00:25:38

against God's law there's presumptuous sins uh the uh David speaks about this in Psalm 19 verse 13 save me from presumptuous sins so what types of sin are there well there are two main types and again this would have been very common knowledge in times gone by but I don't know whether this is common knowledge today first of all

there's a sin of commission of omission what does that mean what is what does this word omission mean well it's from the word omit

00:26:08

You leave it out.

00:26:11

Something you know you should do, and you just leave it out.

00:26:14

Give me an example.

00:26:17

It isn't the thing you do or think or say.

00:26:21

It's the thing you leave undone.

00:26:23

See the difference here?

00:26:26

It's the thing we've left undone.

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So perhaps the Holy Spirit was prompting us

00:26:33

in some way to do that which would please the Lord, and we have left it undone.

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That's a sin of omission.

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There are more serious ones, but that's a gentle one, if you like.

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A sin of omission is when we fail to do what God prescribes: the worship of God, the meeting in His house, the declaration of the gospel.

00:26:56

These are sins of omission.

00:26:59

We know what we should do,

00:27:02

But we omit it.

00:27:05

Perhaps somebody says, well, what about those who are not able to come to church?

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Well, if they're unwell or sick or infirm or working and acts of mercy, caring for those who are sick or unable to care for themselves, well, that's allowed.

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Of course, we have those-- that teaching.

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But some people just willfully say, no, I'm not doing that, even though I know I should be doing it.

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But there's the other side, which is the sin of commission.

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And this is what perhaps we're all more aware of, doing, saying, even thinking what God prohibits.

00:27:44

And that's much more subtle.

00:27:48

And that's much more private, if you like.

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When somebody is involved in sins of commission, it could be to do with questionable websites.

00:27:59

It could be to do with someone of the opposite sex and we're attracted to them and we're dwelling on it.

00:28:05

That's a sin of commission.

00:28:07

God says, Thou shalt not commit adultery.

00:28:12

And yet, all of us are guilty of this to a greater or lesser degree.

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One man, Thomas Brooks, puts it like this, Sinful commissions stab the soul, sinful omissions starve the soul.

00:28:28

It's very interesting, isn't it?

00:28:30

We stab the soul when we do that which displeased the Lord and we know we're doing it, but we also starve the soul when we leave out what we should be doing to please the Lord.

00:28:43

One man, another man, puts it like this, Every sin has a sting in the tail.

00:28:49

Every sin.

00:28:51

Well, the difference between the Christian and the non-Christian is this, though the Christian sins,

00:28:58

we very quickly go to the Lord and ask for forgiveness.

00:29:05

We don't hang around, we don't dilly-dally.

00:29:07

I know that might be an Irish phrase, but I'm sure you understand.

00:29:10

We don't, as it were, say, Well, it's okay, it's not too serious.

00:29:14

No, no, no, we want to be back in close fellowship with the Lord.

00:29:18

The unbeliever never knew fellowship with the Lord, so they don't understand what it is to sin against a holy, loving Father.

00:29:26

They sin against, and in their view sometimes, an angry judge who is God Almighty.

00:29:35

Most people don't even bother about that anymore.

00:29:39

So these types of sins.

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Lastly, this morning, in the text, steps to sin.

00:29:47

Well, we might get one more in.

00:29:49

Steps to sin, this is the third thing.

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Look at how James breaks this down.

00:29:55

And you only find this in the Scriptures.

00:29:56

You only find this in Scriptural writers.

00:29:59

You only find this in men who held to this inerrancy of Scripture, the infallibility of the Word of God and the trustworthiness of Scripture.

00:30:09

See what he does.

00:30:09

He says, Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, verse 14, and enticed, as James 1, verse 15, then when lust hath conceived.

00:30:20

Look at the steps here.

00:30:23

so we have this temptation coming against us it might come through the mind it might come through the eyes it might even come through the ears whatever way it comes it comes to us and it has a power in it and it has a drawing power as we learned last week and it entices us but what if we give in to this temptation James tells us lust hath conceived

00:30:53

Lust hath conceived.

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That's the language of a child being conceived in the womb.

00:31:01

The sin truly exists, though it be an embryo or in tiny form, and when it is grown to its full size in the mind, it is brought forth to actuality.

00:31:14

See how he breaks this down?

00:31:15

When lust hath conceived,

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And then, secondly, sin is enacted.

00:31:25

He lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.

00:31:29

Its fruit is sin.

00:31:31

When temptation is yielded to, sin is produced.

00:31:36

Third, sin then brings forth-- it's finished.

00:31:41

What does it mean to be finished?

00:31:45

It doesn't mean, as some people think, that that's the end of it.

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No, it's more to do with that it has come to its fruition.

00:31:57

It has gained power.

00:32:00

It has gained strength.

00:32:01

And what's the fourth aspect?

00:32:06

It bringeth forth death.

00:32:10

Now, for the unbeliever, Paul tells us in Romans 6, verse 23, The wages of sin is death.

00:32:19

But of course, the gospel has the balance that the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ.

00:32:27

But perhaps people need to hear that the wages of sin is death, eternal, unending death.

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But for the Christian, what does it mean for us?

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Because James, of course, is writing to believers.

00:32:43

What does the word death mean here?

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Well, you could

00:32:48

Soften this.

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You could say, well, you know, you always have the gospel.

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But I believe what James is trying to teach us here is that it leads to some kind of breaking in our close fellowship with God.

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Don't we know what that is?

00:33:09

When we have sinned, dear friends, I include myself in this, please don't think I'm beyond this.

00:33:16

When we have sinned, what's the response?

00:33:19

We grieve.

00:33:22

Our conscience is stricken.

00:33:25

We feel shame.

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We feel that we've lost something and we have.

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And sometimes when we've given in to some great sin or temptation and we're so, we feel utterly awful, if I can put it like that, ashamed,

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We think, can God forgive me?

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Well, of course he can forgive us.

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But the old devil gets busy.

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And he says, you can't be forgiven for that.

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That's such a mortal sin.

00:33:59

That's such a heinous sin.

00:34:01

You can't be forgiven for that.

00:34:03

And that's where the Holy Spirit comes.

00:34:06

He says, don't look at yourself, young man.

00:34:09

I say, I look at myself here.

00:34:11

Don't look at yourself, young man, or older man.

00:34:14

Look to Christ.

00:34:16

Look away from yourself and look to Christ.

00:34:21

And you'll find in an astonishing way that you're drawn more to Christ.

00:34:28

And you're yearning for Christ.

00:34:31

And you come to the Lord with your head hung low and your heart as heavy as can be.

00:34:37

And you pour out your heart to the Lord and the Lord comes to you in the gospel and grace.

00:34:48

What this does is it breaks fellowship.

00:34:53

It doesn't remove us from the covenant of salvation, of grace.

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It doesn't remove us from the family of God.

00:35:01

It doesn't take us out of being adopted as children.

00:35:06

It doesn't take away the Holy Spirit from us, but our sin

00:35:12

Mars our close communion and fellowship with the Lord.

00:35:16

The old writers are full of this.

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I could have quoted so many of them.

00:35:22

Time has gone, but you read for yourself and you see their response, and you see their encouragement to go to Christ.

00:35:34

Sin is serious, and sometimes, sadly,

00:35:42

We're taught by society that sin isn't serious.

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But though we might sin greatly, grace abounds even more.

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Most of you know about John Bunyan's books.

00:35:58

Most of you have read, I trust, Pilgrim's Progress.

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What a marvelous book that is.

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Now, it's not inspired scripture.

00:36:07

Please don't ever think it is.

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But if I were given two books on a desert island, and I was given a choice of two books, I believe it would be The Scriptures and Pilgrim's Progress.

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And I was allowed one more, just one more, I'd ask for Matthew Henry's commentaries, all six volumes of them.

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I wouldn't have any social media.

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I wouldn't have anything.

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I've been exiled to an island.

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If I was given those three things, then that's enough.

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And if I was allowed to take another Bunyan book, it would be Grace Abounding.

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Grace Abounding.

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In some ways, when you read Grace Abounding, you see yourself, especially us younger men, us men, we see ourselves as

00:37:03

Bunyan exposes his own heart and his own struggle with sin and temptation and all that he met and how the Lord delivered him.

00:37:16

Well, I had much more to say, but I think we'll leave it there.

00:37:19

The meaning of sin was the first thing, secondly, the types of sin, and thirdly, the steps to sin.

00:37:26

But let me leave you with this.

00:37:29

For the Christian, the sin

00:37:33

that we have committed even this morning.

00:37:36

And we've all even committed sin this morning, dear friends.

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Maybe just in our hearts, maybe just in our minds.

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Maybe it was a fleeting thought.

00:37:46

And we kind of dwelt on it too long.

00:37:51

It's all washed away in the blood of Christ.

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When Christ was on the cross, all our sin was poured upon Him.

00:38:06

9, If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us of all unrighteousness.

00:38:22

Jesus Christ, in the Gospel, is able to forgive us of all our sins.

00:38:32

And that's a message this world needs.

00:38:36

That's a message that the respectable sinner needs, as well as the public sinner needs.

00:38:45

That's a message for the person with a pricked conscience or a sensitive conscience.

00:38:51

They need this message.

00:38:53

That's a message for the self-righteous.

00:38:56

Sin is serious.

00:38:59

The meaning of sin is transgression against God's law.

00:39:02

There are various types of sin, and there are steps to sin, but there is forgiveness in Christ.

00:39:09

Well, let us pray.

00:39:10

Father in heaven, we're thankful this morning.

00:39:12

Bless us, keep us, sustain us, and help us.

00:39:16

Lord, we face these battles every day, every moment, every waking hour.

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But we're thankful as Christians here this morning, many of us can say, yes, there have been many battles,

00:39:29

Yes, we have many scars, and yes, Christ has the victory, and we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

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Oh, bless each one here this morning.

00:39:43

Oh, work mighty wonders in people's hearts.

00:39:46

Oh, that the Gospel go forth with power, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.

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And though, Lord, we might feel the chiefest of sinners, Jesus Christ

00:39:59

is able to save us even as well.

00:40:02

Great God, hear our prayers for Jesus' sake.

00:40:06

Amen.