

Audio file

[9. 1326gsm_james_1_v15.mp3](#)

Transcript

00:00:00

Please turn with me in the Scriptures to the Epistle of James in chapter one.

00:00:12

In James chapter one, verses 13 to verse 15.

00:00:23

Let us hear the word of God.

00:00:27

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

00:00:33

For God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth thee any man.

00:00:38

But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.

00:00:45

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

00:00:54

And just that phrase this morning, last part of verse 15, James 1, verse 15,

00:01:02

When he is drawn away of his own loss-- sorry, verse 15-- when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

00:01:09

Now this morning, I've been constrained to stay with the subject we began to consider a couple of weeks ago.

00:01:22

And the question I put to us, and even the subject we've been considering, I've entitled a sub-series, if you like,

00:01:32

the battles we all face, the battles we all face.

00:01:41

And this morning, with God's help, we're going to look at dangers and examples, dangers and examples.

00:01:50

Now these battles involve all of us here, all of those whom we know, and it also involves those

00:02:01

who are throughout the world and throughout time.

00:02:06

What are these battles?

00:02:08

Well, they're not physical battles.

00:02:11

They're spiritual battles.

00:02:14

They involve young and old, rich and poor, famous and infamous, preachers, church members, people in every part of the world, people who have existed

00:02:31

are from the dawn of time.

00:02:34

It affects us in so many ways.

00:02:38

The damage is evident.

00:02:41

The results are clear.

00:02:44

What we face in the spiritual realm -- and that's really the area we're going to look at -- is far more serious than what people think

00:02:56

It is.

00:02:56

Or perhaps I could put it like this, it's far more serious than any military general could ever imagine.

00:03:06

We saw together that this, these battles, this subject, it begins with lust.

00:03:15

And of course we saw the difference between lust and temptation and sin.

00:03:21

And that's there if you want to listen to that later.

00:03:25

What is the difference between temptation and sin?

00:03:28

It's a very important question.

00:03:30

Temptation, as it were, is the seed of drawing us away from that which is pleasing to God.

00:03:41

And before I go any further, I just want to say this.

00:03:46

This text is considered very important by our forebears.

00:03:54

This truth, that there's a difference between temptation and sin, there's a crucial need here to understand the difference.

00:04:03

Temptation is when we're attracted to something, when our passions are drawn by something, when our lusts are incited.

00:04:14

Sin, however, is giving in to that temptation or those lusts.

00:04:20

Temptation comes to us.

00:04:23

But until we receive it and entertain it and sit down with it and plan it and implement it, it is still only temptation.

00:04:34

Our Lord Jesus Christ was perfect and sinless and spotless and undefiled and separate from sinners.

00:04:43

Our Lord Jesus Christ was tempted, like as we are, but the Apostle Paul tells us, yet without.

00:04:53

sin.

00:04:55

Our Lord Jesus Christ knew what it was to be tempted and to be assaulted by the great author of temptation, Satan himself.

00:05:08

But our Lord Jesus Christ resisted temptation.

00:05:13

He rebuffed temptation.

00:05:18

He overcame temptation.

00:05:22

and he defeated temptation.

00:05:26

Our Lord Jesus Christ, not only as a sinless, spotless substitute, bore our sin on the cross of Calvary, but suffered grievously as the sinner's substitute.

00:05:46

I believe one of the great

00:05:51

helps in understanding how serious sin is, is a consideration of what it took for Jesus Christ to save us from our sin.

00:06:10

Some people today see sin as a mishap, a mistake, something that's not so serious.

00:06:21

And last week I gave us, I shared the meaning of sin.

00:06:27

And I gave you four aspects, four dimensions.

00:06:33

And of course, the most important principle from the Bible is that sin is always defined in relation to God's holy law.

00:06:42

Always.

00:06:47

God's law is a reflection of His holy character.

00:06:52

And when we sin, which we do, we are transgressing, first of all, God's law.

00:07:03

Sin is the want of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God.

00:07:10

That's one of the catechism questions.

00:07:14

The second thing we learned was that sin is a debt to God.

00:07:18

Sin is a debt to God.

00:07:21

The third thing we looked at very briefly was sin is an act of enmity against God.

00:07:27

And the fourth thing we learned was that sin is a crime against a holy God.

00:07:36

And one sin, one sin,

00:07:42

deserves infinite punishment against an infinitely holy God.

00:07:52

One sin.

00:07:56

That's why sin is so serious.

00:08:00

It's cosmic treason against our God, our holy God.

00:08:06

It cannot be defined by our preferences.

00:08:11

by a social justice worldview, or by a sinful, corrupt, God-hating society.

00:08:22

Sin is deadly.

00:08:24

And John Owen said, Unless we're killing sin, sin will kill us.

00:08:32

In some ways, that's what James here, like the Apostle Paul, outlines here in this text.

00:08:41

He says, When it is finished, it bringeth forth death.

00:08:49

If you remember, we also looked secondly at the types of sin, and we saw two aspects.

00:08:55

One was the omission, sins of omission.

00:08:58

It isn't the thing we do, it's the thing we leave undone.

00:09:03

That's the key there.

00:09:04

Some of us memorize various

00:09:08

parts of various prayers as children, and we probably prayed, Lord, forgive me for my sins of omission as well as my sins of commission.

00:09:17

We probably didn't quite understand what we were saying.

00:09:20

Well, it means that it's the thing we leave undone.

00:09:23

We know it's right.

00:09:25

And this, by the way, is only really relevant to the believer.

00:09:29

We know it's right to do what the Bible tells us or to do that which the Holy Spirit prompts us to do, but we leave it undone.

00:09:39

The sin of commission is much more easy to understand.

00:09:43

It's to do with what God prohibits.

00:09:46

We resist God's prompting, and we do it anyway.

00:09:52

It's a matter of will, and we carry it out.

00:09:56

And then, briefly, we looked at the steps to sin outlined in this text that there was

00:10:03

Thus sin is conceived and then sin is enacted.

00:10:07

And this morning, really, what I want us to do is pick up from there and show something of the dangers of sin and the helps in resisting sin.

00:10:22

Now, this text in verse 15, it follows, provides a concise

00:10:31

metaphorical and chronological breakdown of how temptation turns into action and finally sin.

00:10:41

The obvious meaning is figurative.

00:10:44

It's an illusion.

00:10:45

Evil desire is admitted into the mind, and instead of being resisted, prayed against, and driven out, it is retained, fostered, indulged in, and through dwelling upon the object of it, we

00:11:01

begin to get weaker in our resolve, and sin gains strength.

00:11:07

And notice this, how it works.

00:11:12

Notice how it works.

00:11:13

We'll see a couple of examples in a moment.

00:11:16

In other words, if we are tempted to do that which we know is wrong, and we live in such a world of temptations that our forebearers would be astonished at how much temptation we face,

00:11:30

both on the internet, on the websites we look at, and sometimes you're even doing something innocent and something pops up, and the temptation is to click on that particular URL or that particular link, and we think, well, there's no harm in it.

00:11:49

But then the resolve begins to weaken.

00:11:52

And that's the idea here.

00:11:53

We indulge in it.

00:11:55

We foster it.

00:11:56

We feed it.

00:11:58

We dwell upon it, and it grows in strength.

00:12:02

It grows more and more and more to us.

00:12:06

And at length, it's fully matured.

00:12:16

I had a little illustration of this.

00:12:24

Sin is like an egg.

00:12:28

Sorry, temptation is like the egg.

00:12:29

And then inside this egg is larvae.

00:12:34

And when the egg, when the larvae comes out of the egg, the larvae then begins to consume everything around it.

00:12:45

Until then it becomes some kind of caddis fly at the bottom of the river, bottom on the riverbed.

00:12:51

And gradually it grows and grows and is voracious in its appetite.

00:12:58

And in the end, it metamorphosizes into a fly.

00:13:02

And it's like that with sin.

00:13:07

Sin is a tiny little egg.

00:13:09

We don't see it.

00:13:10

It's so small.

00:13:13

And yet, as we feed it, and as we indulge in it, and as we dwell upon it, and as we begin to be attracted to it and grow hungry towards it,

00:13:27

It then becomes not a larvae, but a full-growing adult.

00:13:36

It's only when you start to look at sin in that way that you begin to realize the difference between a high view of God and His holiness and a real understanding of sin.

00:13:56

This -- let me, first of all, put it like this.

00:14:03

Every sin has a sting in the tail.

00:14:08

Every sin.

00:14:11

There is no mild sins to God.

00:14:15

Most sin we commit is in the mind, but eventually it will become an action and it will be implemented.

00:14:26

Now, in my training, we learned certain things, and one of them was assess, implement, and review.

00:14:36

And often what we do is we assess the situation, we take it on board, and then we begin to give in to it.

00:14:43

We implement that particular temptation, it becomes sin, and then instead of, well, let me put it like this, every sin not only has a sting in the tail, but every sin seems sweet.

00:14:58

until we realize it's actually bitter.

00:15:02

The true believer has a strange relationship with sin.

00:15:08

The true believer knows that sin is serious, but we still give in anyway.

00:15:14

None of us here can resist unto death.

00:15:18

But the true believer doesn't want to dwell with the results of forgiving into sin.

00:15:24

They want to be clean and right with God again.

00:15:29

The unbeliever doesn't mind.

00:15:32

In fact, the unbeliever gets quite upset when you start talking as a Christian about resisting sin.

00:15:38

Even religious people don't like this because they have no tools and no equipment to resist sin.

00:15:46

Only the Christian has the tools to resist temptation and sin, because only the true Christian is in Christ.

00:15:54

And because Christ, we're in Christ and Christ is in us, His Spirit enables us to resist sin.

00:16:03

So let me put it like this.

00:16:04

The true believer sees the dangers of sin.

00:16:07

This is the first thing.

00:16:08

He sees them.

00:16:10

She sees them.

00:16:13

continue to consider every temptation to sin and attempt to escape danger, to be the same thing as sinking a ship in order to avoid pirates.

00:16:25

Let me put it like this, sin impairs the sight.

00:16:28

and it works towards blindness.

00:16:30

Sin benumbs the hearing and tends to make men and women deaf.

00:16:33

Sin perverts the taste, causing men to confound the sweet with the bitter, the bitter with the sweet.

00:16:39

And sin hardens the touch and eventually renders a man past feeling.

00:16:47

It impairs not just the physical side, first of all, but the spiritual sight.

00:16:53

It impairs the spiritual sight of what really pleases God.

00:16:59

It benumbs the hearing.

00:17:01

What does that mean?

00:17:03

Well, it stops the inner understanding from working properly.

00:17:09

It perverts the taste.

00:17:12

Sin almost always will try and convince us that which is displeasing to God is actually pleasing to God.

00:17:19

But more importantly, it's pleasing to us.

00:17:21

That's the important thing.

00:17:24

Sin perverts the taste.

00:17:27

It confounds the sweet with the bitter.

00:17:29

We see this all the time.

00:17:31

Oh, it's a sweet thing to give in to this temptation and to sin, but the bitterness afterwards.

00:17:39

And it hardens, not just the touch, but the heart.

00:17:43

How often have we felt, not that God has moved from us, but that we have turned our face and our back on God, because ultimately that's what sin is.

00:17:55

But for the believer,

00:17:57

We all know Christ as our Saviour.

00:18:01

We have repented of our sin and trusted in His crosswork on Calvary.

00:18:07

Alas, we are still tempted and tragically we give in to sin, but our sin has been dealt with.

00:18:15

That doesn't mean we minimise sin, because how does sin affect us as believers?

00:18:20

Well, the word here death could be to do with the death

00:18:25

Paul speaks about this in Romans 6, and at the end of Romans 6, the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus.

00:18:38

If somebody is born in sin, lives in sin, and dies in sin, then the wages of sin is death.

00:18:46

But someone who's forgiven of their sin, how does sin affect us now?

00:18:53

It affects our souls.

00:18:55

It affects our close fellowship with God.

00:18:58

It has a ripple effect that will affect the people we live with and the people around us.

00:19:06

Some people argue that sin is private.

00:19:09

Yes, in many ways it is, but the effects are public.

00:19:14

Think of standing on the shores of one of the locks around here, one of these beautiful locks, and try and skim a stone.

00:19:23

And you throw the stone, a flat stone, and it lands, and it does various jumps across the water.

00:19:30

You see the ripples.

00:19:32

But now think of you're standing there, and you see this large salmon coming out of the water to rising up and taking a fly and going straight back into the water.

00:19:44

The ripples are much wider.

00:19:46

They begin in where the salmon jumped.

00:19:50

and went back into the water, but now they're going rippling across the lock.

00:19:56

That's what sin does.

00:19:58

It has a ripple effect.

00:20:01

It has a ripple effect.

00:20:04

And that's why we need to be ruthless with it.

00:20:08

We need to understand how it works, but we also need to be ruthless with it when it does overcome us.

00:20:17

Thankfully, because we are in Christ, the consequences of our sin are temporal, not eternal.

00:20:26

Sin has an eternal consequence.

00:20:30

But for the believer, that consequence has been dealt with in the cross.

00:20:37

Christ's payment on our behalf makes our destiny with Him eternally secure.

00:20:44

And although

00:20:45

This temporal effect could involve our fruitfulness as well as affecting our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

00:20:53

He said He will never leave us nor forsake us.

00:21:01

So let me secondly now look at two different responses.

00:21:04

We've seen something of the dangers of sin.

00:21:06

Now let's look at two different responses.

00:21:09

Two men in the Old Testament

00:21:13

who had a different response to temptation.

00:21:17

The first is in Genesis chapter 39, and we'll just turn there very briefly, because I want you to see that this isn't a problem for the 21st century.

00:21:27

this has always been a problem.

00:21:31

In Genesis 39, we immediately enter the account of Joseph, one of Jacob's sons, his second youngest, his son, a very special son, a young man who walked with God.

00:21:47

And Joseph has been sold into slavery by his brothers,

00:21:54

You can read about all that before.

00:21:56

And now in Genesis 39, we have Joseph working for one of the most powerful men in Egypt, Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh.

00:22:09

And Moses gives us this account here to show us that Joseph was like us in so many ways.

00:22:19

Now, none of us here have been slaves.

00:22:22

And Joseph became so well respected in the household that, in many ways, Potiphar left all his home responsibilities, including the administration of his home, to this Hebrew slave.

00:22:41

Potiphar, we seem to think, was a decent man by those standards.

00:22:50

but he was also the master, but his word was law.

00:22:58

Potiphar had a wife, we're not told her name, but she is one who looks upon this young Hebrew slave in a lustful manner, and she planned to tempt this young man, to seduce this young man,

00:23:18

and to conquer this young man.

00:23:28

We pick up the story in verse seven.

00:23:33

And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph.

00:23:41

She's the temptress.

00:23:43

She's the seductress.

00:23:45

And she said, 'Lie with me.' She's quite clear.

00:23:49

Now, we need to remember that this woman is a powerful woman.

00:23:53

She's probably an attractive aristocrat.

00:23:58

She has money and wealth, and often those are the things that tempt young men.

00:24:06

But notice the response.

00:24:09

Joseph in verse 8, He refused.

00:24:13

That's where we should begin.

00:24:15

He refused.

00:24:16

He said, No.

00:24:19

Behold, why?

00:24:20

Well, he gives 2 reasons.

00:24:22

Behold, my master knows not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand.

00:24:29

There is none greater in this house than I, neither have he kept anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife.

00:24:38

In other words, he recognizes his position in the household, and he recognizes also her position as his wife.

00:24:49

Joseph is a slave.

00:24:51

He has no rights, he has no freedoms, but he has the right attitude.

00:24:58

How does he respond?

00:25:00

Well, we saw, first of all, he refused.

00:25:03

But she doesn't give up.

00:25:07

Notice what happens.

00:25:09

She now plans

00:25:12

to ensure that she's alone with him and that he cannot resist her.

00:25:19

Look at this.

00:25:21

It came to pass when Joseph went into the house to do his business, to do his administrative work, there was none of the men of the house there were there.

00:25:29

Notice what she's done.

00:25:31

She's got rid of all the other servants.

00:25:35

This is so clever.

00:25:37

This is often how temptation works.

00:25:40

And it came to pass about this time, and she caught him by his garment.

00:25:44

Now she's not going to give up.

00:25:47

She grabs a hold of him, and she says to him again, Lie with me.

00:25:52

Come into my bedchamber.

00:25:54

I don't want to use any particular coarse terminology.

00:25:58

But she's longing for her passions and her lust to be fulfilled.

00:26:04

Now he's really in difficulty.

00:26:08

He went in there innocently, he wasn't expecting this, and she grabs him, and he leaves her and runs out.

00:26:17

Now, it doesn't mean he ran out with no clothes on him, but his outer garment, he left it in her hand.

00:26:25

Now, if you wear the Potiphar, and what she does then is she lies.

00:26:33

She doesn't get what she wants, so she lies.

00:26:36

We'll pick up that in a moment.

00:26:38

But notice here what Joseph says.

00:26:42

And it's very instructive.

00:26:52

It's so important in verse 9.

00:26:56

How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?

00:27:01

And I've left that to the end to show you the principle that he's operating on.

00:27:09

His first response and his first loyalty is to God.

00:27:14

How can I do this great wickedness, this gross wickedness, and not just harm myself, but sin against God?

00:27:26

I need to remind you that Joseph didn't have written scripture.

00:27:32

Joseph lived long before Moses.

00:27:35

But God had put in this young man's heart a principle that would carry him all the way through life.

00:27:41

I'm not saying that Joseph was sinless.

00:27:45

Can't say that.

00:27:47

But in this context, his principle, his life principle, was that he could not transgress God's holy standards.

00:28:00

I want you to notice a couple of things here.

00:28:02

First, Joseph appeals to loyalty.

00:28:05

Potiphar has entrusted him with complete authority over his house, but of course he has not allowed him to have any dealings with his wife, especially in this physical matter.

00:28:17

Secondly, Joseph frames this act as transgression against God, not against his master.

00:28:25

Third, Joseph elevates a theological dimension beyond social obligation or personal advantage.

00:28:35

The issue becomes one of confident faithfulness to a sovereign, loving, creator God.

00:28:43

What do his lessons teach us?

00:28:48

They teach us, first of all, that his flight demonstrates his resistance requires decisive action.

00:28:54

Second, his refusal cost him dearly.

00:28:58

Potiphar comes home, his wife makes up this story,

00:29:02

and Joseph is then cast into prison.

00:29:05

But third, Joseph chooses integrity over self-preservation and giving into temptation.

00:29:15

Joseph reminds me of Job.

00:29:19

You may have memorised this text.

00:29:21

I have made a covenant with mine eyes, but I would not look upon a maid.

00:29:29

How we can learn so much from Joseph.

00:29:33

And Joseph overcome that, overcame that particular temptation.

00:29:40

But there's another example, and you're probably much more familiar with this, is David and Bathsheba.

00:29:47

And the reason I chose these two examples is because in many ways they have similar, they're similar situations.

00:30:02

Notice in 2 Samuel chapter 11, and here David is the king of Israel.

00:30:10

Joseph, of course, had been a slave in Egypt.

00:30:13

David is a man of power.

00:30:16

He is a man of prestige.

00:30:17

He is a man of reputation.

00:30:19

He is very rich.

00:30:22

David, we are told, there was a time of battle when the kings would go out and fight the battles with other nations.

00:30:30

But instead of being in the battle at the battlefield, he was at home relaxing.

00:30:41

Sometimes it grieves us to say that when we're at ease and comfortable and luxurious, and we have no needs, often sin becomes more attractive.

00:30:57

David is in the cool of the evening.

00:31:00

He's most likely sitting up on the roof, because it's very hot in that part of the world, and he sees this woman who's bathing herself.

00:31:07

This is 2 Samuel 11, 2, and she was beautiful to look upon.

00:31:12

She was very attractive.

00:31:14

What should David have done immediately?

00:31:16

He should have turned his eyes away.

00:31:20

That's what he should have done.

00:31:22

But he doesn't.

00:31:25

And he's the complete opposite of Joseph.

00:31:29

David was not in conversation with this woman.

00:31:34

He sees her from afar.

00:31:36

The lust rises up in his heart.

00:31:39

He wants this woman for himself.

00:31:42

He knows this woman.

00:31:43

This woman is one of his officers' wives, most likely one of his trusted officers.

00:31:49

And therefore, she is off limits.

00:31:53

But David has other ideas.

00:31:56

He inquires who she is.

00:31:59

But he doesn't acquire, sorry, who she is.

00:32:01

He inquires after her.

00:32:03

He wants to know what she's doing.

00:32:04

He probably sends one of his men to do that.

00:32:08

One of the men says to him, is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah?

00:32:13

They had died immediately.

00:32:16

David should have said, yes, I need to get a hold of myself.

00:32:21

Of course she is a wife.

00:32:23

Of course she's married.

00:32:25

She's probably a lot younger than him, than David is.

00:32:29

But even so, David doesn't stop there.

00:32:34

Now, verse 4, and this is how he's now implementing his plan of fulfilling his lusts.

00:32:40

He sent messengers.

00:32:43

She came unto him.

00:32:46

He took her, he lay with her, and he had committed adultery.

00:32:54

He had sinned against his covenant God.

00:32:58

He had transgressed God's holy law because he knew the Ten Commandments.

00:33:02

And he knew the one, thou shalt not commit adultery.

00:33:06

But he went ahead anyway.

00:33:09

He's much more like us.

00:33:11

He's so much information at his disposal.

00:33:14

He also has prophets who could have taught him and instructed him.

00:33:19

Perhaps he should have called for some of those.

00:33:23

But he didn't.

00:33:25

He gave in.

00:33:27

And he committed adultery.

00:33:31

And the consequences had a ripple effect.

00:33:35

Not only had he sinned against God, but he had broken up a marriage.

00:33:39

He had broken a covenant that had been made between the husband and the wife.

00:33:45

He had polluted that marriage.

00:33:48

These are all relevant to us today.

00:33:52

And David would suffer grievously

00:33:57

for it.

00:34:00

He gave in to his lust.

00:34:04

He yielded to the temptation.

00:34:07

He sinned with Bathsheba, but that wasn't enough.

00:34:12

He now tries to cover up his sin.

00:34:16

This is so, interesting.

00:34:19

He tries to cover it up by getting this

00:34:23

woman's husband to return back because now she's pregnant expecting a child.

00:34:30

Most likely, Uriah will come back and spend time with his wife and then all of his sin will be covered up.

00:34:41

But Uriah is more faithful to David than David is faithful to Uriah.

00:34:47

And Uriah knows that he should be

00:34:50

in the battle.

00:34:51

He shall be fighting the Lord's battles.

00:34:55

And eventually, Uriah refuses to go back to his wife.

00:35:01

He stays in the palace, and David organizes for Uriah's death.

00:35:11

You see what happens there?

00:35:13

David has sinned.

00:35:15

David has transgressed, but the ripple effects now are-- he's covered up his sin now.

00:35:21

He's now arranged for one of his chief officers to die in battle.

00:35:26

It seems quite reasonable.

00:35:29

And yet God never leaves David alone.

00:35:33

David's conscience is so pricked that he has sleepless nights, he has aches in his body, he has weeping, he has tears, he pours out his heart.

00:35:45

And Nathan comes along and exposes his sin.

00:35:49

Nathan comes along and tells him a parable about a sheep and a rich man and a poor man, and that the rich man stole the sheep belonging to the poor man.

00:36:01

David was incensed with this, and Nathan turned to him and said, Thou art the man.

00:36:08

David is confronted with his sin.

00:36:11

We know that David was a believer.

00:36:13

We know that David repented because you can read that in Psalm 51.

00:36:18

The difference, of course, between him and Joseph is that Joseph said, How can I do this great wickedness and sin against a God, sin against a holy God?

00:36:29

David, however, had to admit that he had sinned against God.

00:36:34

Against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight.

00:36:38

But David, you've sinned in so many ways and your sin has had a ripple effect right across your kingdom and even some would say his kingdom was affected from then on.

00:36:49

Ah, but no.

00:36:50

David repented.

00:36:52

David received forgiveness.

00:36:55

David was forgiven.

00:36:57

David was restored.

00:37:02

And I want you to just...

00:37:03

In a closing few moments, I want you to hear just a little illustration.

00:37:10

There was a man called Dr.

00:37:12

Ralph Stockman.

00:37:14

He was once standing on the edge of the Niagara Falls, one clear, cold March day.

00:37:21

He was wrapped up well.

00:37:24

And the waterfalls were glistening in the bright sun.

00:37:27

It was low in the sky.

00:37:30

There were some birds, small birds, that swooped down to ***** a drink from the clear water.

00:37:36

But one of Stockman's friends said, look at the birds.

00:37:40

He thought, well, they're coming down, they're dipping their wings, and they're going back up.

00:37:49

But as they dipped down for a drink, tiny droplets of ice were forming on their wings.

00:37:56

And as they returned for additional drinks,

00:38:00

more ice would weigh them down onto their bodies plunged into the falls.

00:38:08

Friends, I bring this with a heavy heart.

00:38:12

There are men whom we have esteemed over the years who have let their sin grow so powerfully, and then they have tried to cover up their sin.

00:38:24

Usually it's adultery, but it's not always.

00:38:27

It can be to do with money, it can be to do with greed, it can be to do with all manner of things.

00:38:32

But these were men who stood up and preached the gospel that we love.

00:38:37

They taught the Bible.

00:38:40

But did they have the same attitude to sin as Joseph did?

00:38:42

Did they see how serious sin was?

00:38:48

Did they grasp anything of the dangers of sin?

00:38:52

Of the ripple effects of sin?

00:38:55

of the evidence that sin is deadly.

00:39:00

Oh, we thank God that in the gospel there is forgiveness for sin.

00:39:06

Every sin, every sin that we have committed, there is forgiveness.

00:39:16

God's remedy in the gospel.

00:39:19

The Bible says that if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just.

00:39:26

to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us of all unrighteousness.

00:39:33

That's why we need the Lord's table, the ordinances.

00:39:37

We'll look at this next time.

00:39:39

We need the ordinances to remind us of how good God is and faithful God is, but also to be reminded what Christ has undertaken for us and how he has paid the price for our sins.

00:39:53

Ah, what a Savior.

00:39:56

A sinless, spotless Savior who understands our every difficulty and our every temptation, and yet did not give in to temptation.

00:40:06

And if you're struggling here this morning with some temptation that only you know of and God knows of, God can give you the grace to resist that temptation, to overcome the effects of that temptation,

00:40:23

and the note of joy of salvation that David speaks about in his psalm.

00:40:30

Christ, the holy, righteous, sinless, spotless Lamb of God, crucified on Calvary's cross to pay the price for our sin, to free us from the ***** to sin, and to bring us into fellowship with Almighty God.

00:40:48

What a gospel, and how we thank God for it.

00:40:52

And just

00:40:53

Lastly, if you noticed, we sang a hymn, oppressed with sin and woe, a burdened heart I bear, opposed by many a mighty foe, yet will I not despair?

00:41:02

Written by a woman called Aunt Bronte.

00:41:04

When you sang that hymn, when you read that hymn, you'll understand that she had an understanding.

00:41:10

She had a proper comprehension of how serious sin was.

00:41:14

Look at verse five, In my Redeemer's name I give myself to thee, and all unworthy as I am.

00:41:23

my God will welcome me.

00:41:27

Let us pray.

00:41:28

Our gracious and glorious Lord and God and Heavenly Father, we're thankful for this morning for thy goodness and grace to us in Christ.

00:41:37

We're thankful for teaching us so much and instructing us and helping us.

00:41:41

And though, Lord, we have all sinned, and though we've all given in to temptation and we've sinned, and it's had a ripple effect in our lives and in others' lives,

00:41:51

We thank thee for the gospel of redeeming grace, through which Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son, suffered, bled, and died so that we could be forgiven, so that we could be washed, so that we could be cleansed, so that we could walk with God.

00:42:06

O Lord, we're thankful that there is always that fountain open to thy people.

00:42:11

We can always have our sins washed away.

00:42:14

Help us, Lord, not to dally with sin, not to delay with sin, not even to entertain sin.

00:42:20

but, Lord, to run to thee, to flee to thee for forgiveness and pardon, and that we would know thy peace and thy grace in a greater measure in our hearts.

00:42:30

O Lord, we pray for any who are battling with temptations at this time.

00:42:35

Enable them, strengthen them, and even, Lord, encourage them that there is strength in thee, and thou wilt help them overcome these sins.

00:42:45

We ask, O Lord, hear our prayers in Jesus' name.

00:42:49

Amen.