

I. Introduction

A. The Gospel

1. God - author, loves every single man and woman
2. Mankind - Image of God; deeply loved by God

B. Sin - Why do we have to talk about this?

1. An ignorant diagnosis of the problem will lead to superficial remedies (try harder, be gooder).
2. Understanding the nature of sin will make you wiser about human nature (why do people do evil things; hate, etc.).
3. Knowing the consequences of sin will bring deeper gratitude toward God for those who are humble and surrendered (Romans 1:18).
 - a. True condition of my heart
 - b. The nature of sin
 - c. The magnitude of God's just wrath

II. Sin

A. Genesis 3 - Background

1. Adam and Eve knew God as Papa.
2. Enter the serpent: aka devil (slanderer), Satan (accuser), evil one, ruler of this world, Beelzebul, god of this age, prince of the power of the air...
 - a. Questions whether or not Papa can be trusted
 - b. Planted the seed, "You're not complete, you're not good enough, the most important thing in your life is you and you need to always look out for you."
3. Sin was the result of suspicion and pride over trust and humility in our relationship with God.
 - a. This is why the theme of trusting God and humility is so strong in God's Word.
 - b. At this moment, the righteousness of God separated Him from His most loved creations - the ones He shared His image with. And it was no fault of His!

*Your greatest issue is that you don't trust God.

- B. Romans 1:21-2:1 - What happened because we didn't trust ... a series of exchanges.

**Although they knew God, they decided not to trust Him. The one who built the nursery and formed them with His hands and breathed His breath into them. They/we chose not to trust.

**Q: Is there anything worth diminishing your intimacy with God? Hopefully you honestly wrestled with that this week.

1. Exchange #1: The glory of God for the stuff in the nursery. (Romans 1:21-23)
 - a. Exchange: I'm not satisfied or happy or trusting currently so I'll give this back and get something that I can place my trust in
 - b. Pitiful substitutes: exchanging God for that which won't last
 - c. Futile thinking (Daniel 4)
 - 1) Daniel 4:30,33

"and the king answered and said, 'Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?' Immediately the word was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from among men and ate grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair grew as long as eagles' feathers, and his nails were like birds' claws."

2) Daniel 4:34

"At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to Heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored Him Who lives forever, for His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His Kingdom endures from generation to generation."

- d. Darkened hearts - the heart wants what the heart wants
 - 1) Jesus = light (John 8:12)

"Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'"

2) Ephesians 1:18

"having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which He has called you, what are the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints,"

3) 2 Corinthians 4:6

"For God, Who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

- e. Romans 1:22-23 - we took the stuff on the nursery and decided to trust it over and above the One who gave it to us.

**As a result of that exchange, we can no longer trust our minds/thinking or our hearts unless they are being renewed by the power of the Holy Spirit, in which case we still need to be cautious and confirm with Scripture.

2. Exchange #2: The primary affection toward God for the secondary affection toward others. (Romans 1:24-27)
 - a. Darkened hearts lead to lustful hearts.

- b. Futile thinking leads to unrighteousness behavior and abuse.
- c. Together, they lead us to relationships with one another to fill the void that was left when we trusted ourselves rather than God. In fact, these hearts and minds led all the way to re-invent/re-create the creation narrative and God's design (Papa's design) for men and women and romantic affection.

**Be careful not to mistake this as a worse sin. In fact it is no different than any sin that places my affection above God's love and design. Affection for morality is as bad as any other dishonorable passion.

3. Result (Romans 1:28-32)

- a. Because of those two exchanges, humanity became characterized the following way ...
- b. Now, our world has published a list of approved behaviors and beliefs that Papa never intended for his children.

4. Consequence: We all judge one another from the vantage point of our own sins while we continue in them. (Romans 2:1)

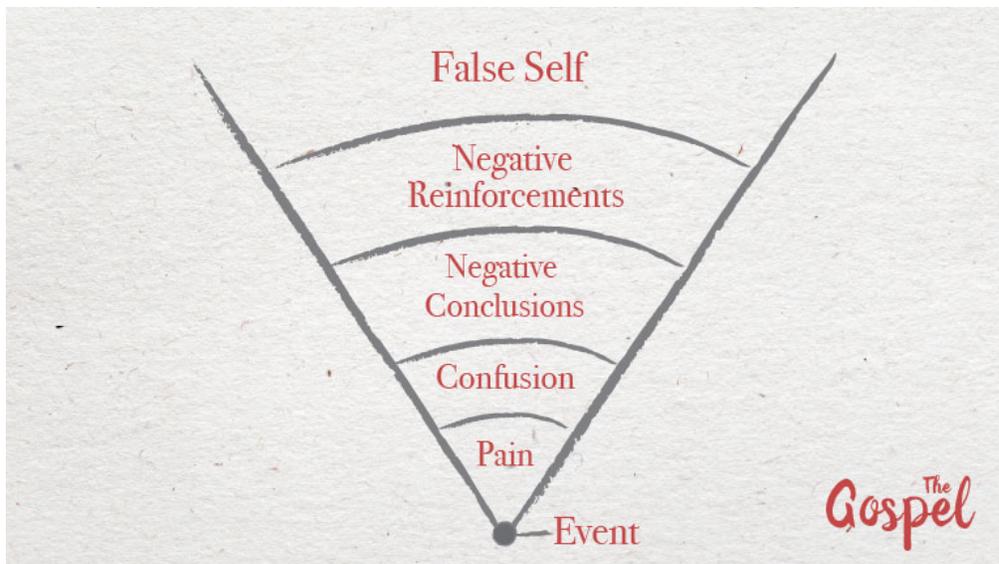
- a. We are not called to eradicate sin or even make sure others know that they're in sin, we are called specifically to point people to Jesus.
- b. We can be so right that we're wrong.

C. The problem created by sin.

- 1. Back to the righteousness of God
 - a. God is righteous.
 - b. God demands righteousness from us.
 - c. All we have is sin.

*We don't have righteousness to offer Him, only sin that requires His wrath.

- 2. Our fear and our sin ...
 - a. Doodle: growth of a false story



- b. All we can see is how that sin has helped us to cope and survive - but know that this isn't living! (The rich young ruler walked away sad.)
- 3. God's righteousness
 - a. God gives us His righteousness through Christ - God sees through our sin and sees Himself in Christ
 - b. We then live by faith believing that God is enough even without our sin that we believe defines us or we've become enslaved to.

We have, for too long, focused on sin. Let me explain, no too much, let me sum up.

- 4. Motorcycles and curves
 - a. Looking through the curve to where you want to end up

*We need to stop focusing on our sin and look through the sin to the Son - Jesus Christ. That is the only way we will arrive where we really want to go, the only place of true fulfillment and peace.

- b. John 8:2-11
 - 1) Woman caught in adultery (sex with a man not her husband)
 - 2) Romans 2:1 - judge others while we continue in our own sin. Pharisees left.
 - 3) Jesus to the woman (John 8:10-11)

"Jesus stood up and said to her, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' She said, 'No one, Lord.' And Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.'"

*Look through your sin to me and keep your focus on Me. Where you're looking is where you'll end up. Now, go and sin no more.

III. What now?

- A. Are you stuck focused on your sin?
 - 1. Defeated by it?
 - 2. Enslaved by it?
 - 3. Afraid of what your life might be without it?

*It's time to look through your sin and focus on Jesus.

- B. Communion