

The Price You Pay

by Ralph Sexton

The sermon explores the high cost of sin and the importance of choosing God's path over temporary pleasures.

Duration: 39:27

Scripture: Proverbs 11:21, Proverbs 16:5, Matthew 6:33, Romans 6:23

Topics: "Sin And Consequences", "Eternal Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the declaration in the Word of God that the wages of sin is death. However, he also highlights the interruption of hope and help that comes from God through Jesus Christ, who offers the gift of eternal life. The preacher then discusses the price one pays for indulging in sinful behaviors, using examples from the Bible such as David's failure to address his son's rape and the subsequent consequences that befell his family. He also warns about the destructive power of sin in breaking fellowship and relationships, and urges listeners to consider the cost of their actions and prioritize their spiritual growth over worldly pleasures.

Transcript

Romans chapter number 6, Romans 6, and verse number 23. For the wages of sin is death. That's a declaration in the Word of God.

The wages of sin is death. But, here's an interjection from heaven. Here's an interruption on the way to judgment.

Here's hope in a hopeless world. Here's help when you can't help yourself. But the gift of God is eternal life.

As Brother Squire sings, But He came to me. The gift of God is eternal life. And how do we receive that? Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The thought that's on my heart tonight is this. The thought is the price you pay. The price you pay.

How many times have you walked into a store? How many times have you driven up to a yard sale? How many times have you walked on a car lot and looked around and you said, How much? You held up an item that you picked up off a sale table. Or you looked at a person and said, What is the price tag for this item? How much will this cost me? I would like to have this. I desire this.

What will it cost me to enjoy having this possession? I submit to you tonight that without realizing it, every time an individual on planet earth, man, woman, boy, girl, teenager, it doesn't matter the age, I'm reminded that every time a person sins, they have actually walked into the presence of the devil himself. Because they're negotiating a deal. They're making an arrangement.

The only way you can sin, if you've been born again, if you've been washed in the blood of the Lamb, the only way that you can do that is to willfully turn your back on the Lord Jesus Christ. And then you say, I'm no longer going to do God's will. I'm no longer going to honor God's Word.

I'm going to walk in my will. I'm going to do it my way. And I will enjoy the pleasures of sin.

Now, be quite clear in this point. The Bible does declare that sin is pleasurable. There is a fleshly enjoyment to sin.

Sin has pleasure. If you have a human body, that human body enjoys being satisfied. Why? In our culture, our society, we're almost addicted to immediate gratification.

We want to be happy now, rich now. We want pleasure now. And because of that, we've been intoxicated on the pleasures of the human body.

Those can be intellectual pleasures. Those can be psychological pleasures. Those can be physical pleasures.

But we must understand that if I transgress against God's law, I've been saved, I've been born again, I have to turn my back on the Word of God. I have to turn my back on the will of God. And I have to turn my back on the way of God.

And I have to walk over into the store of Satan. I have to go down to the devil's flea market and say, I'm here to purchase a pleasure. I'm here to buy a good time.

I want to get on this porn site on the internet. I'd like to buy some porn candy for my taste buds. I'd like to negotiate a deal with a wife or a man that's not my husband or my wife.

I'd like to satisfy my taste buds. I'd like to enjoy not a beer, not a glass of wine, but I want to make sure that I can drink all that I want to drink. I want to drink myself into intoxication.

I want to make sure that I have all that I want. I'm going to go negotiate over here. What will it cost me to do what I want to do? What will it cost me to leave the Bible way? What will it cost me today if I don't have time with God? What will it cost me if I don't pray today? I'm too busy to pray.

You know, I've got a lot on my plate. I've got time for Fox News. I've got time for Jay Leno.

I've got time for Atlanta Braves. I've got time for NASCAR. But now, God, I just don't have time for You.

What will it cost me if I don't spend time with You? I know there's opportunity at the house of God. I know I could be a teacher. I know I could be an assistant teacher.

I know I could work in the children's ministry. I know I could sing in the choir. I know I could be a doorkeeper in the house of God.

But I've got to hurry home. I've got to get to my comfort zone. I've got to get my big screen back on.

I've got to get in my recliner. I don't have time to make crafts for children. I don't have time to think about a Bible story.

I've got my life to live. Hey, devil, what will it cost me? What will I have to pay for the pleasure of my own flesh? What will it cost me to take that gospel tape out of my tape player? What will it cost me to put a rap CD in my player in my car? What will it cost me to download to my iPod music with filth and four-letter words? What will it cost me if I go rent movies that are taking me down the road of nudity and violence? What will it cost me to open the door to my soul and expose my underside to the craving demons of hell that want to destroy me and destroy my wife and my children? My God in heaven, man, you're supposed to be the high priest of your home. You're supposed to be the man that walks the wall to the door of your own house and says, Hell, you can't have my babies.

Devil, you can't have my wife. But all across America, we've got men that have said, I'd rather feel good. I'd rather have a good time.

I'll trade off my wife. I'll trade off my babies for the pleasure of sin for a season. What's it going to cost me to backslide in the house of God? Mothers in Zion, what's it going to cost you to lose your tears? You know what marked the church down through the decades? I told you about that news reporter last week was talking about the change in our society, the change in our culture, the change in our morals, the change in our values.

And this news reporter looked at this group of people, these talking heads, and said, maybe we ought to find out what the parents of America were doing in the twenties and the thirties and the forties when they made a generation of great Americans that had morals and values. Ladies and gentlemen, it wasn't what they were doing per se as parents. It was the fact that America had a fear and a reverence of God and America went to church on Sunday and we hadn't thrown the Bible out of the school and we weren't trying teachers that witnessed the kids in a classroom and making them feel intimidated or arrested if they found a hurting child and tried to tell them about the love of Jesus Christ.

But America went over to the devil's playground and said, you know what? We want to be like the church of Laodicea. We want to be rich and we don't care what it costs us. If we have to pay with the blood of our babies, we'll pay for it.

We just want to have a bigger house and more chrome on our car. We just want more bedrooms and more bathrooms. We want more leisure and more vacation time.

We want more appliances. Ladies and gentlemen, has anyone in this building considered what we have done? We've paid and paid and paid in technology and all of these inventions are supposed to be giving us more leisure time. More leisure time.

We have the telephone and then we've got the fax. Then we've got the cell phone. This past Monday in North Carolina, we passed the mark, halfway mark.

We now have more cell phone users than we do hardline users in America. Over 5.2 million people are carrying cell phones in North Carolina. So we'll have more leisure time.

We no longer have to feed a horse. We no longer have to ride in a buggy. We've got a car and we've got vans and we've got SUVs.

So we'll have more leisure time. We no longer have to plant our own crops. We no longer have to go to the garden.

We go to the supermarket and we'll have more leisure time. Now we don't even have to go cook like we used to. We can go have a prepared frozen meal.

We can have a meal that will be microwaved. Now all the restaurants are specializing in take-out, carry-at-home. So you'll have more leisure time.

You don't even have to cook. We'll nuke it in the microwave. And you'll have more leisure time.

And then you'll have a computer. So you'll have more leisure time. And you are sitting in the house of God exhausted, worn out, drained, because you don't have any leisure time.

You know why? Because we went over here and we traded off what really counts. We traded off. I submit to you that we are negotiating away the very things that matter in this life.

We're evading and avoiding the principles of God's law. God's laws are not sometimes true. They're not almost always true.

They are true. And the Bible says the wages of sin is death. Look at Proverbs 11.21. Proverbs 11.21 says, The wicked shall not be unpunished.

God said in His Word that the wickedness of the land will not go unpunished. Go to Proverbs chapter 16 and verse number 5. Everyone that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord. God said that He hates that proud heart.

God doesn't like that proud heart. You add another layer of judgment to a holy God when you're heaping up your own sin. When you add to that proud heart.

He said, I hate that proud heart. Don't look around and say, well, he needs revival. She needs revival.

They need revival. God said, uh uh. It's me.

It's you that needs revival. He doesn't like that proud heart. He said that's a sin to have that kind of spirit.

And then He goes on in that fifth verse of Proverbs 16 to say, He shall not be unpunished. There's no greater illustration that sin has a price than the life of David in the Bible. David was a man after God's own heart.

David found out how feeble flesh really is. David discovered from the height of his power and strength. And many times when someone is lifted up financially or lifted up in power or prestige, it opens a door if you're not careful for temptation.

And it opens a door for sin to enter in. And David, out of his power and position and prestige, he opened a door on adultery. He didn't mean to commit adultery, but he wasn't fellowshiping with Jesus like he did when he walked down through the valley of the shadow of death watching those sheep.

That's when Jesus walked with him arm in arm. And the God of this universe dictated and He wrote down, The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He got busy playing politics.

He got busy making money. He lost his prayer time. Lost his porch time.

Didn't spend time with his family like he should. And the next thing you know, the eye began to wander. Adultery entered in.

Before he understood what had really hit him. Don't you understand that the devil and the demons of hell, all they were looking for was just a tiny crack in the armor of David? I mean, if I've got two demons after me, David had legions of demons after him because he was such a powerful man. And he had the heart of God.

And God loved him. And the devil wanted him to fall and to be stained to bring hurt to the Lord God Almighty. You've got to understand, there's hundreds and thousands of people in Asheville and Buncombe County and western North Carolina, but you take his name.

You claim to be the bride of Christ. You claim to be a Christian. And because of that, you've got an adversary, an enemy.

And he's tracking on you. He's got satanic GPS on you. He's watching you.

He's trying to find a little crack in your relationship with the Lamb of God that that door would crack open, that he could put a wedge in, keep the door from shutting. He's trying to put a place in there where you no longer can pray, no longer can get with God, no longer can you have that loving relationship as God's child. He would love to see you fall.

He would love to see you bring a reproach because you would not only stumble, make a mistake, get in the mud pit of this old earth, but family and friends that look up to you, they'd say, well, if she can't make it, if he can't make it, there's no sense in me trying. I can't live right. They're a much better person than I am.

And there's a discouragement factor. There's the little one stumbling. And then the reproach that goes to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

You've got to understand that it costs to go sin. You've got to understand. There's a payday for every sin that we commit.

Now you watch what happened to David. He didn't mean to commit adultery. He broke a relationship.

Next thing you know, he's plotting a murder. What happened, David? Man after God's heart. I messed up.

I've got to clean it up. I don't know how to clean it up. I can't live with this woman.

She's not my wife. Maybe I can send her husband off to war. And all of a sudden, how quickly he realized he's out of control.

He's broken fellowship. What happens when you buck and shake off the tender wooing of the Holy Ghost? How many times have you sat in a service and God dealt with you and you said, I'll get outside, that'll go away. If I can get back home, I'll shake that off.

And the Holy Ghost of God trying to pull the rain in on you, trying to warn you and restrain you. And you said, no sir, I want to do what I want to do. I want to live how I want to live.

I want to walk the way I want to walk. None of your business what I watch. None of your business what I say.

None of your business. I had a man stand back at that door not many months ago. I got through preaching honest before the Lord.

I didn't even know the man was in the building. And I noticed all of a sudden he came back around the corner and he stood there for a minute and he disappeared. I'm still shaking hands.

And then he came back when everybody fanned out. And he was so mad his hand was shaking. And he said, you've got no business ticking on me like that.

You've got no business talking to me that way. I'll do what I want to do. He'd been in this church for many, many years.

I didn't know he was messing around with another woman. I didn't know he was backsliding on God. I didn't know he was fooling around in alcohol.

I didn't know those things. I didn't even know he was in the building. But he thought that I had talked to somebody in his family.

He thought that somebody had called me and I was focusing on him. His problem was, he wasn't right with God. His problem was, the Holy Ghost sat down beside him.

His problem was, he was in rebellion against the three times Holy God. Do you understand that I'm just the sinner saved by grace? I wouldn't know how to talk to you about your sin. I wouldn't know what to say to you.

All I can do is pray and get with God and say, Oh God, somehow You allow me to declare what You have said. And may it pierce the heart as You loaded up and the arrow is set on fire with the flame and power of Your holy Word. May it pierce into that heart that is in rebellion against You.

You must understand, he was so angry that if he could have, he would have hit me. He would have struck me. He was so mad.

And he turned three or four steps and turned back around and he said to me, I'll do what I want to do and you can't stop me. Oh, and he went to do what he wanted to do. I'm telling you, he's paid a horrible price since that Sunday.

Oh, it's cost him dearly since that Sunday. You've got to understand, folks, you can rebel. You can kick against the bridle when God the Holy Ghost is trying to reign you in, hold you back, knowing that your flesh can go out of control.

And you've got to understand that you, when you kick against the pricks of the Holy Spirit, you're walking on a dangerously thin piece of ice. It could crack at any moment and your world could change with one phone call. I wonder if David understood where he was headed when the adultery and the murder was plotted.

And then he went off into one year of deception and cover up. And during that year, he tried to cover up and to hide what had been going on. And for a year, he tried to hide his sin.

And then God wound up a preacher named old Nathan. And he just said, you know what? He may cut my head off, but if he does, that's alright. If I don't go talk to him, God's going to get me.

And Nathan got more afraid of God than he did of David. And he walked into the king's throne room and he declared with a trembling voice and a shaking hand, Thou art the man, old David. You're the man that's going against God's Word.

And David repented. And David did find forgiveness. But I would submit to you as a church family that even though he found forgiveness and he repented before God, he still had to pay the price of his sins.

Do you understand what I'm saying? Do you remember the other night when I was talking about that if I got upset and I got angry and I went to someone in this church and I just got in their face, lost control, and I finally just got on Bill's last nerve and he turned around and he said, it pops me right in the nose. And he says, you know what, Ralph? That's enough. Whack! And he splatters my nose and blood's running down my face.

And I've been severely rebuked and chastened. And all of a sudden, his tender heart was crumpled. He just hit his friend and broke his nose.

And I said, Bill, I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Bill. I should have said all that.

I was out of control, man. I'm sorry. Don't have any more.

I'm sorry. Bill says, I'm sorry, Ralph. I'm sorry I lost my temper.

I'm sorry I hit you. Please forgive me. And I said, I forgive you, buddy.

I shouldn't have been pushing. Now, we've repented. We've asked God to forgive us.

We're hugging. We're making restitution. He's giving me one of those old guns he's put up for me for years.

He's trying to mend the fence. It's mine and God's. It's mine and God's.

I still have a broken nose. We've shaken hands. We're going out to eat.

I got cotton stuck up my nose. Big old bend. My nose is still broken.

I'm sorry. Forgive me. Restoration.

But it costs to sin. I don't know why I'm subverting, but there's somebody in this building that's playing on the wrong playground. You're seeing how close to the edge you can walk.

Still come back in here on Sunday. But I'm telling you, it's not worth the trip. The wages, sin, death.

There are seven paydays that David paid in his life. If you go through all of this study, you can find the seven paydays that he paid. You can go through and find out that he paid an awful price for his actions.

When you go through and look at 2 Samuel 12, 11, Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house. Out of your own house. I will take thy wives before thine eyes and give them unto thy neighbor.

And he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this son. Absalom. His own son rebels against his father David.

He listens to the plotting of Ahithophel. And that's Bathsheba's grandfather. And when he listened to that wicked plotting, he pitched a tent on the roof of the palace and he slept with the concubines of the king.

And David's first payday was rendered. Second payday. 2 Samuel 12, 19.

When David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead. Therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. The death of that child that he had was Bathsheba.

And that was the second payday that David had. You and I must ask ourselves, what will we pay for the pleasure of a season? The third payday. 2 Samuel 13, 10.

And here we have the story. It says in the last part of that 14th verse, Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice, but being stronger than she, forced her and lay with her. And David's own daughter, Tamar, is raped by David's son.

Incest in his own family. Third payday. That book said, that sword is not going to leave your house.

Because you had too much life. And let me tell you something, when you go out and you sin willfully, you go buy the wrong kind of music, rent the wrong kind of movies, you go buy things you shouldn't, you're lighting up a joint, you're going to do a little nose candy, you're just going to be a social party person, and you know better, you're getting in the car and everybody's drinking. I'm not going to drink.

I'll just have a ginger ale. You know you're not supposed to be going to those places, doing those things. You know you're not supposed to be gossiping.

You know you're not supposed to be listening to that trash talk. You know all that stuff. Just remember this, what you're going to pay.

What you're going to pay for those few minutes of pleasure. The fourth payday, 2 Samuel 13. David did not one thing about his son raping Tamar.

So Absalom kills Amnon, his brother. And he revenged his sister's rape. And the fourth payday that David paid was the fact that his own son murdered his son.

2 Samuel 13, we have the fifth payday. We have Absalom fleeing. And he went there for three years.

And the soul of King David longed to go forth unto Absalom. And Absalom had to leave the presence of his own dad. And they loved each other.

And for three years, broken fellowship. Nothing will break the fellowship in a home, a marriage, children, in-laws, relatives, like sin. Sin will drive a wedge in families.

And you'll have blood kin in the same town. Won't even speak to each other. Because of S-I-N.

Sin. That was the fifth payday. The sixth payday, 2 Samuel 14.

So Joab arose and went to Gersher and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. Absalom returned after three years of being away. And then David still wouldn't sin.

And there's another two years in there. And that became the sixth payday that David paid for his own sin. A three-year period and a two-year period.

The seventh payday, 2 Samuel 14.30. Therefore he said unto his servants, See, Joab's field is near mine, and he hath barley there. Go and set it on fire. And Absalom's servants set the field on fire.

Up to this point, the family is suffering. And now because of David's sin, now his friends are suffering. And when a friend sins, it's a betrayal.

It's a knife in the heart. And it costs seven paydays that David paid. What price is sin? In 2 Samuel 18.33, and the king was much moved and went up to the chamber over the gate.

Now, the story's changing. Now he's weeping. And as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom, would God I have died for thee.

O Absalom, my son, my son. Do you know where that chamber was? That was the same dead chamber he took Bathsheba. That's the same piece of real estate.

What a circle we've made. He went to lust with the eye gate. Where do you think that his son learned to lust after his own sister? He learned that lustful look from his own daddy.

The sin of the father. Now we're making a circle back to the place where the sin was conceived, the plotting was going on. And after hearing of Absalom's death, David climbs those stone steps up to the chamber by the gate.

The chamber. It's David's bedroom. Where did David get in trouble in the first place? In the king's bedroom.

Bathsheba was in that bedroom. And yet we're now in that bedroom. And now there's no party.

Now there's no drinking. Now there's no having friends over. Now there's no planning the weekend away.

He's in those stone steps climbing up there. Hot tears running down his face going, Oh my God! Absalom! Absalom! My son Absalom! It's too late. He can't back it up.

He's going to die and meet God. And God's going to forgive him. But what he did was he broke that hedge down around his family.

And when you willfully sin, listen, it's one thing to make a mistake and stumble. It's another thing to sit at work and plan to go against God's Word and God's way. It's another thing to get in your car and plan where we can meet and talk.

It's another thing to find out how we can text each other and make it look like a business call. It's another thing to get on that internet and get in a chat room with somebody you don't even know so you can talk trash. I'm telling you, that's willfully planning to transgress against the will and Word of God.

It wasn't many months ago that we were in a staff meeting. The secretary's buzzed. There was a man out front weeping and crying.

You could hear him weeping back in the office. Went out. He was absolutely out of control.

Broken hearted. I said, there's some preachers back there in the office. Just come on back.

I brought him back there. I won't go into all the details. But this man was a professed Christian.

A leader in his church. And he had gotten at work. Working a lot of hours.

And they brought in some temporary help. And he got over familiar with the opposite sex. Started having lunch together.

Started planning their breaks together. Started talking together. Then expressing their dissatisfactions in life together.

Then how much we need each other. And then they planned a weekend. One night.

You know what he said? He said, the moment I got off that bed. He said, I was nauseated. I was sick.

He said, I turned around and started crying. I said, ma'am, will you forgive me? I'm supposed to be a Christian. I'm supposed to be living right.

I'm supposed to be telling you about Jesus. Ma'am, I'm sorry. Ma'am, please forgive me.

He said, I ran outside. I didn't even stay. Got in my car and went home.

He's weeping because he had just left the doctor. For months he had had flu-like symptoms. And had been sick and couldn't feel better.

And he went to the doctor. And he found out that one night, that one time, he had acquired AIDS. He didn't understand that woman had a lifestyle with many people.

And she was HIV positive. And he had picked up a very powerful form of the virus. And the doctor told him, in so many words, he was terminal.

That the little cocktails of today didn't seem to be working against what he had acquired. You know what he was weeping about? How do I go tell my wife? I've got to go home and tell my wife I'm dying. Because of one night.

And then he said, you know what the doctor told me before I left? I've got to bring my wife in. I may have killed the woman. And I, listen.

You'll never feel more helpless in your life than when you're dealing with those kind of situations. And I got down and I began to pray. And the men began to pray.

And he said something in his prayer. I can still hear it right now. And I believe I'll hear it until the day I die.

We're praying away. We're praying away. And he's begging God.

And I'm begging God to touch him physically. He's repented God. He's asked for forgiveness.

Give him a physical touch. Let him have another opportunity. Don't let his wife be sick.

I'm praying for God to give him that opportunity. He's broken. He's devastated.

He'll live right. But I promise you, he will. You can tell by his spirit.

And all of a sudden I heard the most pitiful wail and cry. And he went, Oh! Oh my God, no! Oh! Oh God, no! God, don't treat my baby like you did baby that was a part of David's life. Don't touch my baby like you did David's baby.

Oh God, please don't touch my baby. While he was praying, it dawned on him what we just read. That the baby died.

And they had a new little baby. And while he was praying, he started begging God. Don't take my baby.

I just have to tell you, I've been so burdened that I couldn't sleep last night. Because I love you. And I know when you preach to your own church family, I know you can become offended.

And you can leave the church. I know y'all can have a meeting and vote me out. I know all those things.

But let me just tell you this. Before I leave. What's it going to cost you to see it? You may never see me again.

But is it going to be worth the deal you'll make with the devil? Is it going to be worth it? To have your pleasure. To be popular. To make your friends think you're cool.

To not stand up for Jesus who died for you. Do you think it's going to be worth it? What price will you pay for your sin?

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