

Man's Problem

by Richard Siple

The main problem of man is sin, which is rooted in selfishness, and the natural mind is blind and cut off from God, but can be healed by the indwelling power of the spirit of God through Christ.

Duration: 50:22

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 2:9, 1 Corinthians 2:14-16, 2 Corinthians 3:16-18, 2 Corinthians 4:4, 1 John 2:15

Topics: "Problem"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of mental blindness and ignorance in people's minds and hearts. He emphasizes that when dealing with others, it is important to understand that they may be mentally blind and ignorant of the truth. The preacher references Ephesians 4:17-19, which describes the vanity and darkness of the minds of those who are alienated from God. He also mentions 2 Corinthians 4, which speaks of the blindness caused by the god of this world. The sermon emphasizes the need for the light of Christ to shine upon people's hearts and minds in order to remove the veil of darkness and ignorance.

Transcript

of knowing you. How can we tell you what it means to us? Just to know you, to walk with you and to talk with you and to sense your wonderful presence, to have the peace and the joy that you put in our hearts. Oh God, we are so thankful.

We praise and adore you as we bow in your presence. I pray now that you'll open our understanding, that we may understand the scriptures and open our hearts, that we may be willing to change our thinking and our ways if we need to do that. In Jesus name, amen.

I hope you enjoyed Ralph's session as much as I did. I thought it was just superb. I hope that you, you got all that down.

It's so important in praying with people and I thought it was just tops. And I hope that you're going to put that into practice. At this session, we're supposed to talk about the subject, what is man's problem? We talked about what is man's makeup, one biblical model of man's mind.

And now we're talking about what is man's problem. And we're thinking again in the area of counseling, when people come for help, a biblical diagnosis. And just to jump immediately right on what the problem

is.

And I want to say this very carefully and hope you don't take occasion to it immediately, but the problem is S I N. The problem is almost always sin. And I like to equate the two words, sin and selfishness. They are really the same.

There is no sin that isn't selfishness, and there's no selfishness that isn't sin. And any sin that you want to trace back to its source, you'll find that it's selfishness. I don't care what sin it is.

And sometimes when we just say sin, it doesn't mean much to us. If we say selfishness, it seems to immediately have meaning in our minds. So I like to use the word.

And that's really what the problem is. It's self-ish-ness. You can divide the word up, put some little dashes between self-ish-ness.

That's what the main problem is. Open your Bibles to Genesis 3, verses 5 to 6. Let's look at how it all began. I want you to notice something very important as to man's problem.

Genesis 3, verses 5 to 6. Genesis is the first book of your Bible, by the way. Hurry. Just teasing you.

All right. Here is Satan now speaking to Eve. There's no sin as far as man is concerned.

Adam and Eve are sinless, in perfect fellowship with God, perfect peace of heart and mind. They don't need a psychiatrist. They're in good shape.

And nothing is wrong in their lives whatsoever. And here the devil is in the picture, speaking to Eve. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be open, and ye shall be as gods, not like gods as it is in many of your more recent translations.

I checked it out very carefully in the Hebrew, and it's as gods. There's a difference between being like God. We were made to be like him.

We were made to be in his image, right? That's how God created man, to be in his image. And God's great task is changing man back into his image. That's the thing God's trying to do in our lives through Christ.

But the devil said, you'll be as God. And there's quite a difference in being like him and being as him. And then he said something interesting, knowing good and evil.

In other words, what the devil said to Eve was, now up to this time, God's been telling you what is good and evil. And God has said that it's good to eat everything in this garden, but that it's evil to eat that one tree in the midst of the garden. Of that tree, you're not to eat.

That's evil. That's wrong. If you eat of that tree, you'll die.

Now, what I want to say to you, my friends, says the devil, is that you don't need God to tell you what is good and evil. That you've got a good head on your shoulders, and you have a good mind, and you can decide for yourself what is good and evil, just like God does. God has decided what is good and evil, but you don't need him to tell you.

You can decide for yourself. You don't need divine revelation. All you need is human intelligence, and you can make your own decisions about what is good and what is evil.

And that is right at the heart of what happened to Adam and Eve. Eve decided that she wanted to be independent from God. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband literally who was with her, and he did eat.

She said, I think I will be independent. I think I'll go my own way. I think I'll do my own thing.

I don't think I need God to reveal truth to me. I think that with the mind I have, I can decide what is good and what is evil, and that I'll be able to get along just fine on my own, independent from the wisdom and knowledge and revelation of God. When my wife was a little girl, one day an uncle came to visit them, and they were about to go up to the house, and my wife was just a little bitty, blonde-haired, cute little girl, little toehead, and her uncle was just thrilled to see her, so he scooped her up in his arms, and he walked all the way up the sidewalk up to the front door of the house, carrying her all the way, and her squirming and not liking it one bit.

And so when they got to the door and he sat her down, she turned around and started back down the sidewalk, and she said, I'll walk by myself. And there's a lot of that in all of us, right? That independence, that pride that says I can make it on my own, I don't need anyone telling me what to do, not even God. And of course she had a good father, and he followed her all the way down, and when she got back, she had a board meeting, had her britches blistered because of her impudence and her stubbornness.

When we begin to look at man and to see the need of his mind, we find that man not only needs to have that knowledge that's acquired by learning and to have that knowledge that comes by reasoning out the things that he's learned and putting his imagination to it, but man desperately needs intuitive knowledge. He needs knowledge through his spirit. He needs the knowledge of God.

He needs divine revelation. He needs the light that God can shed upon his mind, upon his whole heart, upon his life. And he cannot walk by himself.

He cannot be independent. He cannot know good and evil without the help of God. And so the mind of man is in serious trouble because his mind is cut off from God.

1 Corinthians 6.17 says, He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. And what we need, what every human being needs, is the indwelling spirit of Christ within his inner being so that the will is in submission to Christ and the light of Christ is there to bring his revelation and his light upon that darkened heart. And just as Ralph said this morning, you cannot live by just the Holy Spirit in your heart.

You need the word of God. You need the direction and counsel that comes from his word as well. And the two go together because the scriptures, of course, are the words of the Holy Spirit.

He inspired them and we need those. We can make too many mistakes otherwise, but we need that intuitive knowledge. We need that direct input from God.

I believe with all my heart for my careful study of the scriptures that Adam and Eve had this direct intuitive knowledge. Have you ever stopped to think how that Adam was able to name all the living creatures on the earth? I tell you, that is an impossible thing. A man who is a scientist is considered to be a very brilliant man.

If he can just name one species and catalog them and tag them and get them all in order and see they all have names and they all are where they belong. Adam had a mind that was capable of naming every living creature on earth. I believe that Adam had direct input into the mind of God.

I believe that through his spirit in the center of his mind, his inner being, that through his spirit he had direct, immediate, immediate contact with the mind of God so that anything he needed to do, he could just turn in his inner heart toward the spirit of God. And the mind of God was available to him instantly with every answer of everything he needed to know so that he had direct input into the mind of God. You say, well, we ever have that in the future? I believe so.

In first Corinthians 13, it says that in that day, when we see him face to face and the veil is taken away and we see God face to face, that we will then know even as we also are known by God. We will know as directly and completely and immediately as we are known by God. God looks into us and knows everything in our mind.

We will be able again to have direct input into the mind of God. Man needs the knowledge of God if he is to be able to have a mind that's at peace and a mind that's healthy and that's normal and is living as it should be. First Corinthians 2, 9 to 10.

First Corinthians 2, 9 and 10. But as it is written, I have not seen nor heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love him. Now, listen to this.

I get excited about this one. But God has revealed them unto us by his spirit. Hallelujah.

He's not talking about the things in heaven, the things that are prepared for those that love God. He's talking about the things right now in the Christian life that are prepared for those who love God. And the natural mind of man cannot think of it even.

His eye hasn't seen it. His ear hasn't heard it. It's never entered his mind what God has prepared for his people.

But God reveals those things to us by his spirit. For the spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. In that same chapter, verses 14 to 16, we have a passage you're familiar with.

But the natural man, the man without God, the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him. Neither can he know them. He cannot know them whether he wants to or not, for they are spiritually understood.

But he that is spiritual understands all things, for we have the mind of Christ. Amen? Christian, if you're having troubles with your mind, you need to turn your mind to God and to Christ and to the spirit of God and let him flood you with his mind. Many times I say to him, Oh God, right now give me the mind of Christ and let Christ think his thoughts through me.

You think that's possible? Amen. It is possible. And how we thank God for that.

Turn to 2 Corinthians 3, verse 14, a very important passage that has to do with the natural mind and with how it functions. 2 Corinthians 3, 14, we're talking about man's problem, a biblical diagnosis, not a psychological diagnosis, not a psychiatric diagnosis, a biblical diagnosis. 2 Corinthians 3, beginning with verse 14, but their minds were blinded.

Their minds were blinded for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away. There's a darkness, there's a veil over the natural mind. Which veil is done away in Christ? Now I want to read that again.

But their minds were blinded for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old Testament, which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.

You see, here's the veil, the darkness over man's mind, over his heart. But when he turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Man must have the light of Christ upon his heart and upon his mind.

Now, the Lord is that spirit and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we are with open face beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord. Now go down to chapter four, second Corinthians four, and begin, I think, about the fourth or fifth verse.

And you read these words in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the glorious light of the gospel should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus, the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

So man's heart is dark. It has a veil over it naturally. Now, I want to talk for just a few minutes about the blindness, about the condition of the unbelieving mind.

Turn me please to you're still there, I hope, in second Corinthians three fourteen. Lost my pencil here just a minute. We want to talk now about the.

On. Believing. Mind.

One. The first thing about it is that it is blind. The unbelieving mind is blind, but their minds were blinded.

It says their minds were blinded whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not the mind of an unbeliever. The inward eyes of his soul are blind. He cannot see the truth.

And we need to know that when we're dealing with people need to understand that, especially when we're counseling with them, that we're dealing with people who are mentally blind. Number two, please go to Ephesians four verses 17 to 19. Ephesians four verses 17 to 19.

This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord that she henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their minds. Their minds are vain or empty or futile in the vanity of their minds. Having the understanding darken that mind is dark, being alienated from the life of God.

It is a mind that is spiritually dead. It is cut off from the life of God. Through the ignorance that is in them, it is a mind that is ignorant.

It is ignorant of real truth, the truth of God, and then it speaks again of the blindness of their heart. We've already got that once, but it's there again, the blindness of the heart. And then it says that they are actually past feeling, so their emotions are actually deadened.

So it's a mind that is blind, it is futile, it is dark, it is dead, it is ignorant, and it is deadened in its sensibilities. We're talking about what the word of God says about the unbeliever's mind. It is hard.

It is insensitive. It is cut off from the life of God. That's the mind that we're dealing with.

Now, is it any wonder, and I want to say this with all kindness and carefulness, but is it any wonder that the American Psychiatric Association decided themselves that their success rate in counseling mentally disturbed people is about 4.2 percent, which is about the same percentage of people who get cured who don't go for any help at all. Why? Because they're dealing with a mind that's in this terrible condition. Number three, about this mind of the unbeliever, Colossians 121.

You want to write it down? Colossians 121, and you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled. So that mind is at enmity with God. That mind is not only cut off from the life of God, but it is at enmity with God.

Number four, Romans 1, 21 to 22, and then verse 25. Romans 1, they knew God. They glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations.

There's the imagination again. Their foolish heart was darkened. There's a heart, we've been talking about, that's darkened where the spirit is.

Professing themselves to be wise, he became fools. Now, I wouldn't dare to say that to a man, but God says it. We're talking about the human mind, and God says it's a foolish mind.

And I want to put that down, and I hope after the meeting that somebody doesn't punch me, because this isn't my estimate, this is God's estimate. And it says that they became fools. Then verse 25, who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the creator who is blessed forever.

Then verse 28, and even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, there's that knowledge we've been talking about, the memory. They don't want to remember God. They don't want to think about him.

They don't want his thoughts, his truth in their minds. God gave them over to a reprobate mind. That means a mind that is void of judgment.

What does that mean? You remember our little circle on the diagram that shows man's reasoning ability, his ability to balance truth against truth and to come out with a right answer. God says that because men do not want the knowledge of God in their minds, because they don't want that in their memory, they are incapable of making intelligent judgments on the matters of their personal life. Now they may make intelligent judgment on how to make an atomic bomb, or on how to fix your automobile, or a thousand other things, but as soon as it comes to the inner light, to the heart, to the mind, to the emotions, they are incapable of forming proper judgments because of what has happened to their mind.

Number five, the mind is defiled. Titus 1.15, under the pure, all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled, none believing is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled. The Bible has a great deal to say about the mind, the heart, the conscience, all of these things.

Number six, Colossians 2.18, the mind of the unbeliever is fleshly. It's a fleshly mind, that no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, his fleshly mind. Number seven, Philippians 3.19, it speaks of those whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.

It is an earthly mind, a worldly mind, a mind taken up with the things of earth. Number eight, 1st Timothy 6.5, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, men of corrupt minds. Number nine, Ephesians 2.1-3, speaking about people being dead in trespasses and sins, the prince of the power of the air.

And then it talks about the desires of the flesh and of the mind. So it is a lustful mind, a mind full of lust. And then number 10, Ephesians 2.1-3, the same passage, it is a mind that is demonized.

God's word says that you who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, that Satan, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Well, that's quite a picture of the unbelieving mind. It's blind, vain, dark, dead, ignorant, deadened, insensitive, at enmity with God, cut off from the life of God, foolish, incapable of judgment, defiled, fleshly, earthly, corrupt, lustful, and demonized.

Now, would you think that a mind in that condition would have some problems? Rather, it is no wonder that people have mental problems, emotional problems, thought problems. That's the condition of the natural mind, and that's the condition that has to be cleansed and cleared and healed and straightened by the indwelling power of the spirit of God through Christ. And even when men come to Christ and receive him as their Savior, many times some of these things have not been thoroughly dealt with.

And even though the heart is flooded with the light of Jesus Christ, sometimes Christians do not go all the way and deal with all these areas. And sometimes in those that are born again, we will find some of these problems to be present in this condition of the mind. One of the great problems is that people refuse to face the fact that the problems in their mind are spiritual.

They will not admit that there's a real problem of that kind there. On October 3, 1961, the following letter appeared in the health column of the Birmingham Post-Herald. That was when I lived in Alabama.

He did not go to the hospital. He stopped smoking because of too much burning, but he has not stopped drinking. I can see that it is very painful when he swallows the whiskey.

It is painful, too, when he swallows his food, but more so with liquor. When I ask him why he drinks so much, he says it gives him a lift and he thinks the alcohol will burn the boil off. What can I expect? You say, how can anybody be foolish enough, how can they be stupid enough to ignore a thing like that? Well, they can be, of course.

That was a real letter. But let's ask the question, how can people be foolish enough to ignore what's really wrong with them? God's word says this is God's diagnosis of the troubles that are in the human mind and the reason that the human mind has problems. I want to go back now to our diagram and I want to put Christ in that heart and in that mind and I want to talk about a verse in James 1.8. Do you know what that verse is? Put it down.

James 1.8. It says, A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways. Now, what would a double-minded man be? I'll tell you what he is. He's a man who has invited Christ into his heart so that the Spirit of God is

at the center of his mind.

But he's still sitting on the throne trying to run his own life and he's asking Christ to help him run his own life. He's a double-minded man. He's not a single-minded man.

He doesn't have a mind that's given over either totally to the world or totally to Christ. He has a mind in which Christ dwells but a mind in which sin dwells. And so here he is with some of the veil still over his mind even though the light of Christ is within.

Do you know why some people are more miserable after they're saved than they are before? I'll tell you why. Did you ever go into a room where the light was off and it was dark in the room and you couldn't see how dirty the room was? And then you turned the light on and you saw how filthy it was? When you come to Jesus Christ and invite him into your heart, the light comes on. And he begins to show us all the filth of our mind.

All of that long catalog that's in our mind. And he wants to clean it up. And I tell you if you don't let him clean it up, you're more miserable maybe than you were before you were saved.

Do you believe that? Absolutely. Let me tell you something. When Ralph was speaking this morning about not sympathizing with people too much at the wrong time, I was thinking about what Charles Finney said.

He said Christians are trying to make people comfortable that God is trying to make miserable. And that double-minded man is the man whose mind has Christ in it, but he hasn't brought his memory, his reason, his emotions, and most of all his will under the control of Christ. And Christ is not Lord of his life.

And so he's in serious trouble. I want to show you something that I call a primary choice. Now here's a man who is facing life and he can go in two directions.

He can go in the direction of the world or he can go in the direction of God. Now, right here, there's a primary choice to make. And that primary choice will determine which way his mind goes, which way his life will go.

If he makes a primary choice, listen carefully, if he makes a primary choice of pleasing self, then it follows irretrievably that he will be selfish and he'll walk in the flesh and he'll walk in the way of the world. He cannot choose to please self and walk in the way of God. The mindset on the flesh is death, but the mindset on the spirit is life and peace.

For the mindset on the flesh does not please God. It says in the NAS, indeed it cannot. You see, a man may invite Jesus Christ into his heart and life because he wants to be saved and he wants to be forgiven.

And he's so miserable and he doesn't want to go to hell, but he doesn't want to give up pleasing self. And he wants Christ in his life to make him feel better and help him to please self. But if he makes the primary choice of pleasing self, it just naturally follows that he will be defeated and he cannot please God and he will walk in the flesh.

He will live an up and down miserable Christian life. Amen. Very weak.

Did you eat too much lunch or is that conscience bothering? Well, how should it be? You see, if his primary choice is pleasing Christ, then he begins to walk in the spirit and walk with God. And if a man's primary choice is pleasing Christ, he cannot walk in the world. Let me illustrate what I mean.

Here we are in Saskatoon and suppose you decide that you want to go to Vancouver. But I won't say Saskatoon because I haven't been around here long enough. I don't even know what route to take.

I better say Regina. We'll say we're in Regina and we want to go to Vancouver. And we get on route one going east.

And so we're riding along and the man riding in the car says, where are you going? I'm going to Vancouver. He says, no, you're not. You're headed for Toronto.

Oh no, I have made a very definite decision in my life that I'm going to Vancouver. Because I know you've made that decision, but brother, you've also made the decision to get on route one going east. And that's a primary choice.

And once you make that decision, you're not going to Vancouver. Are you following me? And in the mind of a Christian, in the center of his heart, if he is seeking to please self, then that's a primary choice in his life. And there is no way that he can please God.

He cannot have victory. He cannot have peace. He cannot be blessed and used of God.

He will walk in the flesh and he will live an up and down Christian life and constantly a life of failure. Because that primary choice will determine which way he will go. I want to talk to you about some other problems that definitely come into the picture.

Three problems and they're connected with the urge to sin. How many of you here ever have the urge to sin? Let me see your hand. The rest of you have just sinned.

You've lied because we all have the urge to sin. Now, what brings about the urge to sin? I have three tapes on this, and so I'm not going to try to cover those three tapes. I hope that you will get them and read them.

There are three tapes on the urge to sin, but I want to mention it very briefly now as we're talking about the problem that man faces in his mind. First of all, the problem of temptation, James 1, 12 to 17. Blessed is the man that endure temptation for when he has tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him.

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempted he any man. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, his own inward desire and enticed. The desire is inside, the enticement is outside.

Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death. Now, let me show you what I mean about this. Here is the man, and we're going to see what happens to him.

There is Satan holding out to him the temptation of the world. And of course, here is God wanting him to walk in the ways of God. Now what happens? There is within this man many, many natural desires, normal desires that God has given him.

And I want to make this very clear, because when you're counseling people, you need to understand that, that the desires of men basically are good. You say, what is sin? Sin is using something good in a wrong way. That's one definition of sin.

There are other good ones, but that's one of them. Sin is using something good in a wrong way. Everything God has made is good.

Amen. And it's all to be received with thanksgiving. So sin is using something good in a wrong way.

Let me ask you something. Do people sin with sex? Come on, you can answer me. I want you to talk back to me.

It's not polite to sit and stare at someone when they ask you a question. Do people sin with sex? Is sex evil? There you are. It is something good that God has given us for very good purposes used in a bad way.

Do people sin with food? That was a little weaker. Is food evil? No. So it's something good that people use in a bad way.

And on and on I could go, you see. Is whiskey evil? I only had about one answer. I think it is.

But it's something that was originally good. The corn is good. The grapes are good.

It's all good. God made it. But men take it and through a very devious and ingenious and clever method, they make it evil.

But nevertheless, it's something God made is good. So within man are good desires that God has placed there. When you're counseling with people and you face these problems, you need to distinguish between the problem of temptation and sin.

Temptation is not sin. All right. There are desires within a man that are good, but Satan is out here holding out the world to the man.

And this is what he's saying. Take that desire in you and fulfill it in some way outside of the perimeters of God's permission. Fulfill it in a wrong way.

Take those good things that God has put in you and use them in a wrong way. Now, he doesn't say it as openly as that. He says it very much more clever than that.

But temptation is outward enticement, pulling on those things within us that are basically good, trying to get us to fulfill them in a way contrary to the will and the word of God. And when you're dealing with people in counseling, you need to distinguish between the two so that they can be set free from unfair bondage of Satan and so they can deal with temptation in a proper context. Well, God's word says, love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

And you know that scripture as well as I do. Then there's another problem, and that's the problem of self-preservation. I want to give you this very, very quickly.

I got started 10 minutes late, so I'm going to take till 2 o'clock here. Self-preservation. 1 John 3, 4. Let me ask you a question.

What is sin? Give me a biblical answer. Good. You got it.

1 John 3, 4. Whosoever commit a sin transgresses also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law. All right. Now turn to Matthew 22, verses 35 to 40.

Matthew 22, verses 35 to 40. Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? And Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength. Getting right into the heart, soul, and mind, right into the center of the man now, the whole inward man.

This is the first and great commandment. And the second is likened to it. Thou shalt love thy neighbors thyself.

Now watch what Jesus said on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. And in Romans 13, Paul said that he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. So what is the law? The law is love.

The law is to love God supremely. And my fellow man is myself. Amen.

That's keeping the law. That's the spirit of the law, not the letter of it, but the spirit of it. Now, if that's true, listen to carefully now to what I'm going to say.

If it's true that sin is breaking the law and that the law is to love God supremely and our fellow man is ourself. Then what is the opposite of that love to love God supremely and to love your fellow man as yourself? What is the opposite of it? Selfishness. Selfishness.

We're right back to my original definition of sin. Selfishness. And there's a problem in man when you begin to deal with him and counsel him and try to help him.

There's a problem in him of selfishness. Now, Hebrews 2, 14 to 15, for as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death. That is the devil and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Romans 5, 12 says that by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin. So that death passed upon all men for that all have sinned. Now, follow me very carefully now.

I'm going to give you some information you've never have heard anywhere else, never will for a while. I want to tell you what that inherited sin factor is. You need to know about it when you're dealing with men.

Death is an inherited factor, isn't it? A baby can die in his mother's womb, right? Has he ever sinned yet? Not actually. Innocent before God because God says that when there is no law, sin is not imputed. Paul said, I was alive without the law once when he was too young to have moral consciousness.

So sin is not imputed when there's no law, but death passes to every human being. So every human being that comes into the world is a dying human being facing death. The fear of death is bondage, says the scriptures.

I just read it to you from Hebrews 2. The fear of death produces a bondage. Men fear death. The fear of death and the bondage of it produce the desperate desire for self-preservation.

Preserve self at all costs. Death, the specter of death, produces a fear in man that brings him into the bondage of self-preservation. So he's always trying to preserve self and take care of self and put self first and please self and feed self and lift up self and glorify self.

Am I telling the truth? Oh, even in the little bitty ones. I remember our little boy the first time he ever discovered that he was not the center of the universe. We had a family over at our house that had eight children and we only had one.

And our little boy was playing on the floor with another little boy his size who had been used to fighting with his seven brothers and sisters. And so he came up to my little boy and my little boy had something that he wanted and he took a hold of it and my little boy hung on to it. So he just doubled up his fist and he smacked my boy.

And I was sitting there a little bit amused waiting to see what would happen because no one but his daddy and mother had ever smacked him. Precious me has just been hit. And he sat there absolutely stunned, horrified.

And you see the wheels turning in his mind, you know. And then self-preservation came to the fore. And he had a wooden block in his hand and he went wham, hit him on the head.

About that time two fathers rescued before they killed each other. Self-preservation. Self-preservation.

Later I'm going to get into the cure but I can't pass without mentioning it. What is the cure to this problem of self-preservation? This determination to resist death and to save myself at all costs. What's the cure? To give it up to death.

You want to be rid of the fear? The bondage? The hold that Satan has? The flesh has? You want to see selfishness broken? Put to death, destroyed so you're liberated? Accept the principle of death. Accept it, don't flee from it. Accept it in the cross of Christ.

Second Corinthians 5, 14 to 15. For the love of Christ constraineth us because we thus judge that if one died for all then we're all dead. And that he died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves but unto him which died for them.

And rose again. And then the third area is sinful habits. And I'm not going to take time with that now because you can get my tape, The Renewing of the Mind.

Will you do that? And it deals with sinful habits. And I think if you've never heard that tape, and I'm not one to promote my own tapes but that's one you ought to hear. The Renewing of the Mind will deal with a matter of sinful habits.

Now, we must stop the blaming game. And I'm beginning to edge into my next lecture but that's alright. We must stop the blaming game.

Where did the blaming game begin? The Garden of Eden, didn't it? Because God said to Adam, what have you done? He said, it was my wife. And they've been saying it ever since, haven't they ladies? Yes, and in fact he said, it was the wife you gave me. You can go back and read it.

So he wasn't only blaming his wife for his problems, he was blaming God for his problems. We're good at that. And people come to me and this is what they say.

They say, Pastor, I don't know why I have this problem. I don't know why I'm so depressed. I have prayed and I've prayed.

And they give me an impression they've done everything God wants them to do. And they finally end up with a little bitterness in their voice. It sounds like they're saying, God won't answer my prayers and God just won't help me.

Well, don't you believe that? Who do you believe, God or man? I don't believe that. I believe the Word of God. And God's Word says that if our heart is right, we have confidence toward God.

Amen? I believe that. So we must give up the blaming game. I'm going to read you a little poem.

And please understand this poem is not meant to be an attack on anyone. It's just meant to focus in on the blaming game. I went to my psychiatrist to be psychoanalyzed.

To find out why I killed a cat and blacked my husband's eyes. He laid me on a downy couch to see what he could find. And here is what he dredged up from my poor subconscious mind.

When I was one, my mommy hid my dolly in a trunk. And so it follows naturally that I am always drunk. When I was two, I saw my father kiss the maid one day.

And that is why I suffer now from kleptomania. At three, I had a feeling of resentment for my brothers. And so it follows naturally I poison all my lovers.

But now I'm happy for I've learned the lesson this has taught. That everything I do that's wrong is someone else's fault. My beloved brother, if you're going to counsel people today, you need to rescue them from the brainwashing that has taught them that everything that's wrong with them is someone else's fault.

Sin is the problem. Selfishness is the problem. The lack of the fullness of Christ in the heart is the problem.

It is a spiritual problem, not someone else's problem. Men have been telling us for years that we are the sum total of our environment. We are not the sum total of our environment.

We are the sum total of our personal reaction to our environment. Which is totally different. Where does the responsibility lie? The responsibility lies right in the heart of the man with the problem.

And he must be able to take that responsibility in order to deal with that problem. Now, even though some of you have heard it, some of you haven't, so I'm going to give it to you again anyway, because it really illustrates this matter about the blaming game. One day there was a little boy helping his mother.

And he was down in the basement, cleaning the basement, a lovely thing for a little boy to do for his mother. And out from under the couch came a mouse. And so he took the broom and he went after the mouse and he hit the mouse, but it wasn't dead yet.

So he chased it across the room and he hit it up against the steps and it couldn't run anymore now, but it was still kicking. So he took the broom and he beat the mouse until he had smashed it and it was thoroughly dead. And was he excited.

He picked it up by the tail and it was all mangled and bloody and horrible. And he went running up the stairs to show his mother what he had done. The only problem is he didn't know the preacher had come to call on his mother.

And so his mother was sitting in the living room and he couldn't see the preacher because he was sitting around the corner from the door. So he went dashing into the middle of the living room. He said, mother, mother, see what I've got, that I was cleaning the basement for you.

And this mouse ran out from under the sofa and he said, I hit him with a broom and knocked him up against the wall, but he wasn't dead. So I hit him again and knocked him up against the steps. And then, and then he saw the preacher.

And he did a double taking and the wheels turned in his mind. He thought what he would say next. He said, and then, and then, and then the Lord called him home.

Don't you believe it. Next.

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