

Sin and Calvary the Need and the Solution

by William MacDonald

The sermon emphasizes the seriousness of sin and the need for a sinless substitute, Jesus Christ, to pay the penalty of sin and provide salvation.

Duration: 23:45

Scripture: Genesis 3:6, Numbers 32:23, Psalm 51:3-4, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:16, Hebrews 3:13, 1 John 1:8

Topics: "Calvary"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the enslaving nature of sin and its consequences. He highlights how sin blinds people, making it easier to see faults in others but not in ourselves. The seriousness of sin is demonstrated through the sufferings of Jesus on the cross, as there was no other way to atone for our sins. The preacher also criticizes the tendency to blame others or external factors for our sins, instead of taking personal responsibility. Overall, the sermon emphasizes the shifty and destructive nature of sin and the need for repentance and reliance on Jesus for forgiveness.

Transcript

I want to talk to you this morning about the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary, but I can't. The reason I can't is you can't begin there. You've got to go back and begin with the subject that necessitated the work of Christ on the cross of Calvary.

That's sin, but that's not a very popular subject, sin. It's interesting to me, I was thinking about it this morning, the Holy Spirit of God is trying to bring unsaved men and women to a sense of responsibility and guilt, and modern counseling is designed to relieve men and women of all sense of responsibility and guilt. Modern counseling is working completely against the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit of God is all-powerful, and he still is able to take people, bring them to a sense of their tremendous sinfulness and their need of a savior. I'm so glad of that. What is sin, anyway? Sin is anything that comes short of the perfection of God.

For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and when it says the glory of God, it really means the perfection of God. His matchless perfection. Anything short of the perfection of God is sin.

Have you ever sinned? Sin is doing what we know we should not do. I'll never get famous for saying that, it's so obvious, but sin is more than that. Sin is not doing what we know we should do, and people aren't

so aware of that.

I know I should do good, I don't do good, that's sin. To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. Sin is lawlessness, and I think that's a very good definition of sin.

Sin is lawlessness. It's man pitting his will against the will of God. I will not have him to rule over me.

That is sin. It says in the King James Version, sin is transgression of the law, but a better translation is sin is lawlessness, and that sin is innate in the human heart. It's something that's passed down to us from Adam through human parents.

It's innate in every person. In sin did my mother conceive me. That doesn't mean that she was in a sinful relationship.

Not the thought at all. David didn't have that in mind when he said that it simply means that sin comes down through the human race. I don't have to stand here and labor the point.

Any of you who have raised children know it's true. It doesn't take long before it manifests itself. That's what must have made it so remarkable for Mary, the mother of our Lord, to raise a child who is absolutely sinless.

It's amazing that the Bible doesn't go into more detail about that, but she did. She had a boy who never sasssed her, never grieved her, never broke her heart. Obedient, gracious, kind, loving, all of those things.

And sin is not only innate, sin is universal. There's not a man on the earth who does good and sins not. The more we get to know one another, the more we know that's true.

I mean, you can have a casual acquaintance with a person who thinks he really is a paragon of virtue. You get to know him a little bit, and his halo begins to flip, doesn't it? And when you're married to him, well, that's a different subject altogether. And sin is not only innate, and it's not only universal, but it's pervasive.

Sin has affected every part of our being. Paul brings that up in Romans chapter 3, that not only has everyone sinned, but sin has affected my mind, affected my tongue, my speech, my throat, my feet, my hands, every part of my being. Terrific, isn't it, when you stop to think of it? James tells us that sin begins in the mind.

That's a very good perception. All sin begins in the mind. I think about a thing.

Hmm, I'd rather like that. I nurse it. I continue to think of it.

And what James is really saying in chapter 1 is that if you think about a thing long enough, sooner or later you'll do it. And that's true. It's absolutely true.

In that sense, sin is premeditated. It really is. You think about a thing long enough, sooner or later you're going to do it.

The mind has a wonderful faculty, but the mind can wander down back alleys of evil where no human mind can follow it. But God's mind can. When people tell me, I'm witnessing to people, they say, well, I haven't sinned.

I say, how is your thought life? Because that usually stops them dead in their tracks. How is your thought life? Would you like to take the worst thought you've had this last week, put it on a cart, wear it around your neck for two hours in public? Oh, man, in his right senses would want to do that. Sin is serious.

People have very light thoughts of sin today. But sin is really serious. The seriousness of sin is seen in the sufferings of humanity.

Every time you see an ambulance, every time you pass a hospital, all of the suffering and the funeral homes, all the results of sin. Those things would never exist if sin had not entered into the world. You say, well, any of you sinned? I mean, if you just ate of the fruit of that tree.

Listen, no sin is light. There's no such a thing as a sin that isn't serious in the eyes of God. She disobeyed the Lord, she said in her heart, God is a liar and Satan is telling the truth, and she ate the fruit, and all of the misery, the tragedy, the blight in the world today is the result of that sin.

Sin is serious. The seriousness of sin is seen in the sufferings of the Savior on Calvary's cross. When I see the Lord Jesus hanging there and dying for my sins, I know they're serious.

If those sins could have been atoned for in any other way, give God credit, He never would have paid such a price. The reason the Savior died on the cross for my sins is because there was no other way. The seriousness of sin is seen in the sufferings of the unsaved for all eternity.

What does the scripture say? It says, where there are worms, dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, because the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever. Sin is not only serious, sin is tremendously deceitful. It's deceitful in its offer of pleasure, the pleasure of sin for a season.

Sin seems to offer satisfaction, fulfillment in life, pleasure in life, but it leaves a bitter taste. Sin offers satisfaction in life. It's deceitful in this sense.

It's beautiful in prospect, but it's hideous in retrospect. Sin is deceitful because it offers a possibility of escaping the consequences. Go ahead, you can do it and you'll get away.

No, you won't. You can't sin and get away with it. Sin is deceitful because it offers a possibility of escaping the punishment of sin.

There's no escape. Be sure your sin will find you out. Sin enslaves.

It might begin like a thread tying the person, but before it's through the chain, drugs enslave, liquor enslave, evil habits. They really enslave a person. There are men and women, young men and young women today in this whole area, and they're gripped in the chain of sin.

And no human foreigner can break it. Only the power of the living, loving Lord Jesus Christ. Sin blinds people.

You say, how does it blind? Well, I'll tell you how it blinds. Sin is beautiful when I do it, and it's hideous when you do it. Isn't that crazy? I can see fault in you when I might have that same fault in myself, and I can't see it at all.

I'm blind. David had that trouble. He could see fault in a man in a parable, and he was worse than he couldn't see it in himself.

It's easier to see sin in others than it is in ourselves. And sin has a terrible way of hardening a person. The classic illustration of that in the Bible is Pharaoh, isn't it? He said, I will not let them go.

And the more he said that, the more he said he would not let the people of Israel go, the harder his heart got. He hardens his heart. God hardens his heart.

Sin has that effect. It has a tremendously hardening influence on a person's life. Sin is shifty.

It blames God. Think of how many people are blaming God today for their troubles. The Word of God tells them what to do, what not to do.

They go ahead and do it, and then when they reap the consequences, they blame God. That isn't fair. God told them not to do it.

They went ahead and did it, and now they're suffering for it, and they say it's all God's fault. Adam blamed Eve and God. The woman thou gavest thee.

Eve blamed the serpent. The serpent gave you to eat. But the serpent didn't have a leg to stand on.

Sin blames others. It blames parents. This is modern psychology.

Go back and think of the way your parents, what Lloyd said today was the very opposite, wasn't it? Praising his parents, godly Christian parents. But today, young people are encouraged to blame their parents or blame their environment for what they're going through in life. And if you can't blame any of those, blame the devil.

Wear a t-shirt and say, the devil made me do it. My insurance company, my auto insurance company, recently sent out a little paper telling how people explain their automobile accidents. And I'm sure some of you have read this.

An invisible car came out of nowhere, struck my car, and vanished. The other car collided with mine without warning me of its intention. I had been driving my car for 40 years when I fell asleep at the wheel and had the accident.

I pulled away from the side of the road, glanced at my mother-in-law, and headed over the embankment. Nobody was guilty. The king of Prussia went into a prison one day, and he talked to various prisoners.

And they were all innocent. None of them had done anything wrong at all. Finally he came to a fellow and he said, I guess you're innocent too.

And he said, oh no sir, I'm not innocent. He said, I'm here because of the sin that I committed. He said, I deserve to be here.

And the king said to the warden, get this man out of here before he corrupts all these innocent people. Sin is shifty. Sin often brings suffering on the innocent.

It's one of the byproducts of sin, isn't it? People today get a blood transfusion and die of age. What did they do wrong? They didn't do anything wrong. But they're reaping the consequences of sin in the world.

Sin is like that. A child brought up in the home of a drunken father, he reaps the fruit of that drunkenness. He suffers along because of the sin of his father.

And in that sense, sin haunts and it visits future generations. Something else we can say about sin. Sin is never static.

That's why I think leaven, or yeast in the Bible, is a very good illustration of sin. Sin is never static. It never stays that way.

When permitted, it grows and grows and grows. There's no such a thing as a little leaven. No sin is secret.

People talk about secret sin. There's no secret sin. Secret sin on earth is open scandal in heaven, all recorded in minute detail.

Your sex life is known to God. Your dishonesty is known to God. Your ethics in business, or lack thereof, are known to God.

No secret sin. Your sex is known to God. Sin has its consequences, and they are inescapable.

Sin has its consequences in this life. It has its consequences in the human body. Did you know that you have Christian lungs, Christian kidneys, and a Christian liver? You say, what do you mean by that? I mean, obedience to the word of God is good for those organs.

Disobedience to the word of God is bad for them. I don't say that all sickness is a result of sin, because that is not true. But it is true that sin has its consequences in the human body, and not only so, in the personality as well.

Paul, in Romans chapter 1, says of those who commit gross sin, receiving in themselves the due reward of their deeds. Inescapable. Sin has its consequences in the life to come, death, and hell.

Apart from the gospel, sin's consequences are inescapable. There are people who seem to get through life, murderers and all the rest, they seem to get through life, and they get caught. I admit that, but that's not the last chapter.

The consequences of sin are absolutely inescapable. You can't get away with it. And this is the divine dilemma.

God loves his people. God loves his creatures, but God is holy. God is holy, and he cannot condone sin.

He cannot wink at sin. He cannot overlook sin, or think kindly of it. He's a purer eye than to behold iniquity.

He wants to save the sinner from eternal judgment, but how can he do it? There's only one way. To find a sinless substitute who will die for the sinner. He has to be sinless, because if he has any sin of his own, he'd have to die for those sins.

He has to be human, because it would be an unequal substitution for anyone else but a human to die for humans. He has to be sinless, he has to be human. His life has to be of infinite value, because he has to die for an almost infinite number of people, and he has to be willing.

And there's only one person in the universe who meets that bill, and his name is Jesus. He's sinless, he's human, he's God. And the marvelous thing is, he's willing.

He was willing. He didn't have to be. He didn't have to leave the heights of glory 1900 years ago and come down to this jungle of sin to die for us.

But he was willing to do it, and he was willing to shed his blood, because without the shedding of blood, there's no remission of sin. The Lord Jesus is the only one who could meet the bill. What did he do? He died to pay the penalty of sin.

He died to satisfy the righteous claims of God against us. They were righteous claims, too. He made atonement by the shedding of his blood.

In short, he finished the work of redemption. Oh, you say, well, then everybody paid. No, not everybody paid.

You say, but he finished the work. He did. I know.

His work is sufficient for the sins of the whole world, but it's only efficient for those who trust in the Savior. The fact that Jesus died on the cross and was buried and rose again doesn't save you. You have to be willing, and you have to come to him in simple, trusting faith, and by a definite act receive him as Lord and Savior.

God, I've often said, God is not going to populate heaven with people who don't want to be there. That wouldn't do at all, would it? Imagine bringing people to heaven who don't want to be there. Ridiculous! Heaven would be hell for those people, and would spoil it for all the rest.

But isn't it wonderful that the Lord Jesus Christ would come down to this world 2,000 years ago, seeing us in our plight under the curse of sin, and say, Allow me. I will pay the price that this sin deserves. If he believes in me, I'll give him everlasting life and a home in heaven.

Sin is serious. If I don't accept the work of Christ, the atoning work of Christ for my sins, I'll have to pay the price myself. That's hell for all eternity.

You say, What's hell like? I don't know what hell is like. It's worse than ever I could imagine. I want to tell you this.

I don't want to be in any place where there's no such a thing as love. There's no love in hell. There's no fellowship in hell.

There's no friendship in hell for all eternity. Shall we bow our heads in prayer? And while our heads are bowed, it may be that somebody in the room this morning is a victim of modern-day psychology. Maybe you've paid money to have people tell you that you mustn't feel guilty, that you mustn't feel responsible.

It's a sickness, or it's somebody else's fault. The Holy Spirit of God would like to plow you up today, make you realize that your sins will drag you down to hell if you don't come the blood-sprinkled way to receive the Lord Jesus as your Savior. Will you do that now? Try a simple act of faith.

Will you just lift your heart to God and say, Lord Jesus, I believe you died for me on Calvary's cross. I am a sinner. I believe you died for my sins.

The best way I know how, I receive you as my Lord and Savior. If you do, come up and tell us afterwards that you trusted the Lord. If on Jesus Christ you trust, seek for him, you surely must.

Oh, and humble to the dust if you love him, say so. Shall we pray? Father, we do thank you for your wonderful plan of salvation. Our situation was indeed desperate.

We were in eternal danger. You sent your lovely Son to pay the price of our redemption. From full hearts we thank you today, and we pray that if there are any here who are not sure they pass from death to life, they might get the matter settled before this day is over.

We ask it as we give our thanks in Jesus' name. Amen.

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