

Questions

1. What are some ways we tend to minimize sin in our own hearts by excusing, renaming, or justifying it? Which of these is most common for you personally? Why?
2. Thomas Watson said, "Till sin be bitter, Christ will not be sweet." How does recognizing the seriousness of sin deepen your joy in the gospel?
3. How does Achan's story illustrate the anatomy of sin? How have you experienced a similar pattern in your own life?
4. James 1:14–15 describes how desire leads to sin and then to death. Where do you see sinful desires masquerading in your life as "needs," "wishes," "longings," or "expectations"?
5. How does Jesus as our sympathetic High Priest (Heb. 4:15–16) offer hope in the battle against temptation? How can we practically "approach the throne of grace" in moments of struggle?
6. The Valley of Achor ("trouble") became a gateway of hope through Jesus. How does the gospel transform even the most broken places in your life into places of mercy? How does Romans 8:1 help you live with confidence even after failure?

Joshua

The Story of
The Promise-Keeping God

The Seriousness of Sin

Joshua 7:1-26

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In Joshua 7, we learn three sobering realities about sin so that we stop minimizing its seriousness and flee to Jesus, who bore our judgment and gives us peace.

JOSHUA 7 – OVERVIEW TEACHING

*Need prayer?
Someone will be up front by the piano
to pray with you after the 1st & 2nd services.*

1. THE NATURE OF SIN

Through our solidarity with Adam, we have all inherited his sinful nature and guilt. So, sin isn't just what we do, it's who we are by nature—we have evil in of us. And no change in behavior can fix the condition of our hearts. We need rescue.

Unfaithful – Verse 1

The idea is: sin is a betrayal of trust between two parties. Here, its covenant betrayal.

Violated – Verse 11

The word means to willfully trespass; to step over the line you know is there. Sin is going your own way. This is why R.C. Sproul called sin, "cosmic treason."

Sin is Relational Betrayal

God didn't give His commands in abstraction; He gave them in covenant relationship. So, sin isn't just breaking rules, it's breaking relationship.

"Till sin be bitter, Christ will not be sweet." — Thomas Watson

2. THE ANATOMY OF SIN

"I saw, I coveted, I took, I concealed." — Joshua 7:21
(Also: Genesis 3:6; 2 Samuel 11:2-17)

James 1:14-15: 14 But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desire. 15 Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.

David Powlison explains how our sinful desires ensnare us, "...sinful cravings often masquerade in terms like expectations, goals, felt needs, wishes, demands, longings, drives, and so forth."

Hebrews 4:15-16: 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin. 16 Therefore, let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need.

3. THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

- Verse 1, "the LORD's anger burned against the Israelites."
- Verse 12, "I will not be with you anymore unless you remove what is set apart."
- Verse 4-5, death and defeat were consequences
- Verses 25-26, Achan faced his own consequences

Broadly, from this account, we see:

- God won't bless what we're doing while we cling to hidden sin.
- It robs us of our experience of His presence and power.
- And it can harm those around us.

"I will...make the Valley of Achor into a gateway of hope." — Hosea 2:15