



Gospel Power (present)

SECTION 3: NOTES

Understanding Your Sin Complex

Ephesians 2.1-3: What is natural condition apart from Jesus? What does the Bible teach about our sin problem?

Larry Crabb: Many pastors preach an 'iceberg' view of sin. All they worry about is what is visible above the water line, too often satisfied when their people turn from church-defined sins of behavior. (Moralistic change)

Root: Old self is corrupt through "deceitful desires" – desire to be satisfied, saved, significant elsewhere (Eph. 4)

1. Deceitful: built on lies about who God is and what he's done, and lies about what is good, right, and true
2. Over-desires: controlling desires or inordinate desires, usually good things overly trusted in and hoped in

Richard Lovelace: The structure of sin in the human personality is far more complicated than the isolated acts and thoughts of deliberate disobedience commonly designated in the world. In its biblical definition, sin cannot be limited to isolated instances or patterns of wrongdoing; it is something much more akin to the psychological term *complex*: an organic network of compulsive attitudes, beliefs, & behaviors deeply rooted in alienation from God. Sin originated in the darkening of the human mind and heart as man **turned from the truth about God** to embrace a **lie about him** and consequently a **whole universe of lies about his creation**. Sinful thoughts, words and deeds flow forth from this darkened heart automatically & compulsively, as water from a polluted fountain.

Implications: How does a robust, biblical view of sin affect the way we think about growth and change?

Galatians 5.16-26: What does "fruit" tell us about true growth and where it take place?

True growth is fruit: Organic (slow & seasonal), Certain (fruit, not works), Symmetrical (all one "fruit")

True growth is starts in the roots: Fruit is new character that begins with new desires in the heart

Resource 1: Grace - New Motivation to Change

Religious change: saved by grace but grow by self-discipline, accountability, and sin management (look like?)

Grace Change: True growth "feeds off" of and flows from justification - cross gets bigger (look like?)

The Way In Is The Way On: Repentance and faith in the gospel is the way in - and the way on (over and over)

Recognizing: Identifying the lies and idols at the root of my sinful behaviors & negative emotions

Repenting: Confessing and turning away from these root lies and idols, and what they say about God

Rejoicing: Remembering the truth about God revealed in the gospel and worshipping him for it

Using The 4 G's (p.24-25): Which are you most prone to forgetting? What are the results? Give a recent example.

Tim Keller: Pervasive, all-of-life-repentance is the best sign that we are growing deeply and rapidly into the character of Jesus. Consider how the gospel affects and transforms the act of repentance. In “religion,” the purpose of repentance is basically to keep God happy so he will continue to bless you and answer your prayers. This means that religious repentance is selfish, self-righteous, and bitter all the way to the bottom.

Selfish: In religion we are sorry for sin only because of its consequences for us.

Self-righteous: Repentance can easily turn into an attempt to “atone” for one’s sin.

Bitter: Every instance of sin and repentance is therefore traumatic, unnatural, and horribly threatening. Whereas in religion we repent less and less often, the more we feel accepted and loved in the gospel, the more and more we will be repenting. Although there is some bitterness in any repentance, in the gospel there is ultimately a sweetness. **This creates a radical new dynamic for personal growth.** The more we see our own flaws and sins, the more precious, electrifying, and amazing God’s grace appears to us. On the other hand, the more aware we are of God’s grace and our acceptance in Christ, the more able we are to drop our denials and self-defenses and admit the true dimensions of our sin. **The sin underlying all other sins is a lack of joy in Christ.**

Discuss: How does this view of growth affect the way we see indwelling sin? What do we do with sin now?

Resource 2: The Holy Spirit - New Power to Change

John 14.15-21: Who is the Holy Spirit, and what role is described here? How is this good news for us?

John 16.12-15: Who is the Holy Spirit, and what role is described here? How is this good news for us?

Ephesians 3.14-21: Who is the Holy Spirit, and what role is described here? How is this good news for us?

Martyn Lloyd Jones: A man and his little child are walking down the road and they are walking hand in hand, and the child knows that he is the child of his father, and he knows that his father loves him, and he rejoices in that, and he is happy in it. There is no uncertainty about it all, but suddenly the father, moved by some impulse, takes hold of the child and picks him up, holds him in his arms, kisses him, embraces him, showers his love upon him, and then he puts him down again and they go on walking together. That is it! The child knew before that his father loved him, and he knew that he was his child. But oh! the loving embrace, this extra outpouring of love, this unusual manifestation of it — that is the kind of thing. The Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.” (Romans 8)