



SEVEN DEADLY SINS

7 DEADLY SINS: THE VIRUS AND THE ANTIDOTE

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Scripture Reference: Genesis 3:1 – 13

Doxa church is taking a look at the seven deadly sins. Commonly brushed off and rarely considered for our own lives, each sin presents a unique sickness in our hearts that can only be remedied by Jesus and a battle only winnable through the Spirit's empowerment. Join us for this eight week series on these deadly sins and their antidotes found in Christ. Visit doxa-church.com for service times or more info on how we make disciples in the everyday stuff of life.

Good morning Doxa. Today, we'll be reading out of Genesis chapter 3 verses 1 through 13.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, Did God actually say, you shall not eat of any tree in the garden? And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die. But the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, Where are you? And he said, I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself. He said, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat? The man said, The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of

the tree, and I ate. Then the Lord God said to the woman, What is this that you have done? The woman said, The serpent deceived me, and I ate.

This is the word of the Lord. You may be seated.

Good morning, everybody. Oh, look at that reception. It's bright -- not bright and early -- it's later in the day. Good for you. Feel rested? Some of you. Some of you are new, you're like, This guy's weird. My name's Eddie. If you are new, I'm the lead teaching pastor here with Doxa. Glad you guys could all be here and you are totally free to get up in the middle service and come two rows forward. I promise, I will not bite you. But it is a big day for Doxa. Do you know why it's a big day for Doxa? Cause we're going to two gatherings, right? It's huge. We're kicking off a series. And it's opening Sunday for the NFL. This is massive. Can you imagine? You guys obviously don't care cuz you're at the 11:30.

Anyway, you might be thinking -- if you do have a Bible open up to Genesis 3 -- We're kicking off the seven deadly sin series, and you may have a few questions just right off the bat. First, what are the seven deadly sins and where do they come from? That's a good question. I wanna answer that for you. So the original seven deadly sins is Catholic and origin. However, the ideas that seeded the seven deadly sins began actually way before that in the Roman and Greek culture. There was this vice and virtue ideas, where they were trying to essentially answer the questions of vices with different virtues. And so that got a couple hundred years later, a monk took that and created what he called the eight evil thoughts. And that's essentially the sort of framework for the seven deadly sins.

Of course the Catholics got involved a few hundred years later, decided to formalize it, which they love to do. And so they formalized it. Pope Gregory, the first decided to create the seven deadly sins. And that's where we get it.

You might also be asking where are they at in the Bible? Well, there is no actual list of the seven deadly sins listed in order or anything like that in the scripture. But however, in case you had a guess, yes, they're all sins. And the Bible talks about them profusely in varying areas. Well, if they're not in the Bible in order and they're sort of the secular Catholic beginning, why is Doxa doing a series on them? Great question.

Well, we live in a world that teaches you you can live however you'd like to live. But what the Bible teaches is that any way we live apart from Jesus leads to not just our eternal separation from God in eternity, but our lack of flourishing and our lack of thriving today.

And so, we're teaching through this series as an opportunity to sort of plumb the depths of our own hearts. And plumb the depths of our own sin to root out these seven vices, so that way we can live with the peace and the joy and the thriving that we all seek, regardless of where you come. And the antidote will reveal itself as we go. Sound good? Can I pray for us? And we'll get started? All right.

Well Lord Jesus, I'm thankful to get together with my friends to talk about the seven deadly sins. Lord Jesus, I'm so thankful for the Holy Spirit being present because the Holy Spirit is the power by which we can eliminate some of these things. And so as I teach this Lord God, I just pray for a measure of comfort and familiarity with my friends here that I might communicate

clearly to them. I pray that their guards might go down and as they hear scary words, they might perceive like sin and death that they they'd actually just be comforted and understand that we're just having a conversation about who you are. So I pray, Lord, I pray that your word is clear, and that your will is clearly communicated and our will sort of falls by the wayside as we go. In Jesus name, Amen.

All right, well, some years ago I was pastoring at a church and we had a friend of mine, who was coming to church in and out, and he had a really big desire to learn a lot about, not just God or Jesus, but religion. And so he would dabble in our church, which is very similar to Doxa, but he would also go to Jewish synagogue. And then he would also go to some of the new age gatherings that would take place in the city. And he also dabbled a little bit in sort of the occult and he would just sort of gathering all this information -- and I know it sounds a little bit maybe weird or maybe you're there and you're like, that's totally normal. Whatever you think about that. I think he was genuine. I really think he was on a deep search to understand who God was.

And so one time he invited me over for coffee or he invited me out to coffee, and so we get to the coffee shop -- and by the way, great coffee shop we went to, if you wanna know what it was, I'll tell you about it later. It's awesome coffee. So we go in, and here's why -- I go in and the first thing you normally do at a coffee shop is what? You get coffee. Not so with this guy, not so with this guy. And instead of any of the pleasantries of, Hey, how you doing? How's it going? Hey, how's your, how's your family? Anything like that. I sat down at the table with him about to say, Hey, I'm gonna take off my jacket. You wanna get a cup of coffee? And he looks at me and he goes, so tell me why I should be a Christian <laugh>. And, you know, threw me for a loop, no coffee, 7:30 in the morning. Favorite coffee shop. Smells all around me. Not at all focused. He put me right on the spot. Like, how do I answer this question like that?

Maybe you're here and you feel like I'm not a Christian, I'm actually exploring that question myself. Why in the world should I be a Christian? Or maybe you're actually thinking about that, and you're trying, you're on this journey just like this guy was.

I think any good answer to this really good question will say something about Jesus. Right? If you're a Christian, why should you be, why should you be a Christian? Because of Christ! Right? Christ should be in the answer. But we often say things like, like this, we'll say things like, well, you know, the reason why you need to be a Christian is because Jesus saves you. The reason why you should be a Christian is cuz Jesus died on the cross to save you. Or, oh, because you need salvation from God. If you came through this door, you saw the big black cross out here. It says what? Jesus saves. Right? All our answers say, save.

One theologian I heard talking about this very issue and he put it in a really cool analogy. Imagine if you are walking down the street and you're having a, it's a beautiful sunny day, everything's, it's glorious outside, maybe the Seahawks just won, and you've got an ice cream cone in your hand from your favorite place. Molly Moons, or I don't know, Coldstone, depending on how much you like to spend, how much money you like to spend on your ice cream. You're at one of these places, or how bougie you're like your ice cream cone. If you like walnuts and all sorts of weird stuff, you probably went to Molly Moons. And so you're there -- and lavender. And so like, that's not an ingredient. Some of you sell oils and you're like, absolutely it is. It's absolutely ingredient.

So imagine you're walking down the street with your bougie ice cream cone. It's a beautiful day. And outta nowhere, someone runs up to you and you don't see 'em and they're sprinting full speed. And then without you knowing they tackle you. You're ice cream cone goes flying into the air and you hit the ground hard. And then you're sort of dazed laying on your back, and you open your eyes and you see the person get up from you and goes, woo, that was close. I just saved you.

Now, what would be your first question as you looked at them? From what? What did you save me from? What was so urgent that you needed to tackle me and spill my \$11 ice cream on the ground? Like what, what was it? This series and really this sermon is going to attempt to answer that question. From what does Jesus save you from? I mean, after all, this is a series on the seven deadly sins. And so what is sin? Really? I think that's an important question. That's what we're gonna answer this morning. Before we can tackle all these versions of sin. We need to know what sin is. And so we'll talk about what sin is and how we sin. And we're also gonna talk about where it hides in our lives.

Make no mistake, sin hides, especially from sinners. Okay. And then I'll lay out which of the seven deadly sins is coming up next. And uh, we'll go over our schedule. Okay. So, but first let's talk about the big rock we need to move this morning, which is what is sin?

Now the best way to understand sin is to look at sins beginning. That's why we're talking about Genesis chapter 3. In Genesis 3, we see the first sin by humankind. And we're gonna look at that chapter. But just to set the stage for those of you that are new -- Genesis chapters 1 and 2, God creates the whole world. He makes it perfect. He makes man and woman, they're in great relationship with God.

And so there's this, there's this level of connectedness, they're experiencing with him and they're living with peace and joy, they don't die, wveryone's happy, there's no drama. It's a great life. Okay. But then Genesis 3 happens.

Look at verse one with me. Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, Did God actually say you shall not eat of any tree in the garden? And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but God said, you shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden. Neither shall you touch it lest you die. But the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die for God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that the tree was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened and they knew they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made for themselves loincloths.

So what we see here is the world's very first sin, sort of, at least the one announced to us in here in Genesis 3. There's a lot we can learn about sin from this passage. You know, what's helpful to know is that sin the word sin in the Bible, it's original language in the Hebrew and in

the Greek means essentially this idea of missing the mark, or missing the goal, or think about failure to reach a goal of some type, right? That's essentially what it means.

And so here's the story -- God creates everything perfect, where the man and the woman flourish. They're flourishing, they were connected to God, they were free of shame, they were free of, they had everything they needed in this wonderful relationship. And so God creates human beings to essentially live up to that standard. The standard is full connection with God, full connection with one another, peace and joy in your life. That's the standard. Okay? But what we see when Eve and Adam take part of this fruit is that they're immediately now incapable of living up to that standard. Immediately. You see that they sew loin cloths for themselves. All of a sudden they're aware and ashamed of the way God made them. This is immediately what happens. Because of sin, humanity has become incapable of living without this shame, this guilt, this pride, this anger, and all other evil.

Now you might be thinking, that seems a little bit much, but that's because honestly we've never known a world without sin. People always ask me, why are we talking about Genesis 3 again? We're always talking about Genesis chapter 3. I already know Genesis 3. I've studied Genesis 3. You don't know Genesis 3. Nobody knows Genesis 3. Nobody knows the ramifications, just what happened in this text. No one understands it. There was a world without evil, death, and injustice, and brokenness -- and it existed. And now we are living a sinful world. We don't understand it.

And so sin means missing the goal. It means that we're not able to live up to this wonderful standard of connectivity. It's kind of like, like, imagine the goal is unattainable. And so imagine this, you see that exit sign back there? You don't have to look, just trust me, it's there. Okay. That exit sign is God's standard. This is his perfect, wonderful standard. And this crumpled up tissue is my attempt to hit the mark. Okay. But I know we have someone that's got a really a way better arm in here than me. There's gotta be someone that wants to throw this. Come on. We gotta --- come on, come on up. Let's go. Come on. Here's the fearless -- He looks like he has no sin in this man, there is no sin. <laugh> All right. All right, buddy. I want you to give your best effort -- stand right here. And I want you, with that tissue to live up to God's perfect standard and hit that exit sign.

I said hit the mark, not Allison in the face. Great job. Give him a hand, give him a hand. Wait, we shouldn't clap. He missed the mark. We're not supposed to clap over sin. Just kidding.

Great analogy, but it's a way to demonstrate how incapable we are at actually hitting God's standard. It's almost impossible. But we could also do with a few questions for our own hearts. For instance, have you ever recognized something about yourself that you've longed to change? But no matter how hard you try, you just can't seem to freaking change for freaking good? You know what I'm talking about? You're so upset. You're like, I gotta get this outta my life. I gotta get this outta my life. I gotta get this outta my life. And you can't do it.

Or have you ever been working on something? Maybe it's a sin. Maybe it's this, this sense of condemnation over you that you're trying to get out. And you've tried for so long that you're getting exhausted and you know what? It's like, forget it. I'm just gonna quit. I'll just deal with it in five years, 10 years, 15 years -- when I get married, when I have kids, when I'm a

grandparent, or when I retire. I'm gonna keep moving the goalpost because we just can't get it outta our life.

That is us experiencing the effects of sin. Okay? But again, more importantly than living to meet some standard here is actually the biggest ramification of sin. And it's this -- sin, as I've been saying, has broken our relationship with God and people. So sin is not just about doing things that give you a D or an F on the exam of life. It's, it's actually about broken connections. We saw here in Genesis 3 here that there's a mistrust happening. Eve hears what God says, but then she knows that God says, don't touch this tree. And he's given her all these other trees. And yet the serpent slithers up. And once the serpent slithers up, he sows the seed of distrust and she bites the seed.

So sin fundamentally, really at its root is a mistrust of God. That is why the serpent sews seeds of doubt into the woman because he's interested in God's character being destroyed before her and before Adam. And you know what? The serpent does the same thing to us. He gets us to mistrust.

Let me just take a look around in society for a second. I mean, if you've ever been to college, you understand if you've been in college and there's a lot of godly character assassination taking place. You go in to see a professor, a professor for some reason hates God and they decide they're gonna tell you. Best friend hates God, he just left the church, and everyone hates God. Everyone hates God. There's whole YouTube channels, whole blogs dedicated to telling you why God's not real and why God's so mean and, why God shouldn't be trusted, and God's not real, and that's why you should believe this, this and this instead.

Which really begs the question, like why mock something so much, and get angry about something so much, if you don't even believe it exists. But that's actually the serpent interested in the assassination of the character of God. Because human beings are made in the image and likeness of God. We understand -- Romans 1 says the truth about God is plain. And yet we suppress the truth by our unrighteousness, which is sin in our lives. And so even though we believe God's not real, we still hate him. How do you hate someone that's not real? That's us believing the lie of the serpent. The mistrust takes place.

Look at verse 8, more mistrust. And they heard the sound of the Lord walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves in the presence of the Lord God among the trees. But the Lord God said called to the man and said to him, Where are you? As if God doesn't know? And he said, I heard you, I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.

So now, because of sin, the man and the woman hide from God. Why? Because they're naked. Now pop quiz. If you know your Bible, were Adam and Eve naked before Genesis 3? Yes. You might not like to think about it, but the answer's yes, they were. They were naked. And now all of a sudden sin enters the world and they have experienced a level of shame on themselves. They don't like what they're seeing and they need to hide it, because they're embarrassed of it.

Now we do the same thing. We don't necessarily, we might not actually hide from God literally. Although many of us do. Like we won't, maybe if we know God might be somewhat present in some way, we might avoid spaces like this. Maybe this is your first time here, and you've been,

you've been ignoring or trying to get around going to a church because we say things like, man, I gotta, I really gotta clean myself up before I go. I gotta stop doing this thing in my life before I can actually visit a church because God might be there. We hide from God.

We might not literally hide from him, but we do say other things that show our distrust of God. We might say things like, I don't know, you know, God's not gonna show up in this. I don't know why I believed it. Or how could God allow X, Y, and Z or, you know, I knew I was stupid for believing. Or this must just be, all of the struggling I'm going through right now, this just must be God's way of punishing me. Or you know what might just be flat out -- You know, see, I knew this God wasn't real.

Maybe you're here and you're not a Christian, you're thinking, dude, sin is a silly idea. I don't believe in God or anything or sin, and you know, I'm checking this out. I'm exploring it. I get that. I get it.

But if you're there, just consider one thing. Would you say this, would you say to yourself that there's still a sense of dread over you, that you feel when you're making decisions and living a lifestyle because you just wanna make the right ones? Would you say that there's a sense of condemnation over your mind when you fail or disappoint people? Would you say there's still a sense that you feel like no matter how hard you spin your wheels or how, how busy you make yourselves or how much you feel like you need to grow or how much you need to continue to improve, you still just don't feel like you can make things better about yourself? Or you feel like I know I'm not doing right, so I gotta medicate. I gotta figure out a way to medicate with an addiction or something positive like work so I don't have to ever think about how I'm falling short.

If so, friends you're experiencing what it means to be separated from your maker. That's what you're experiencing. You're feeling separation from the creator God who created you, you just don't know how to categorize the feeling when you feel it.

Okay. Well now we know what sin is. You might be asking, well, why don't we all just stop sinning? That way we can be in relationship with God. Simple enough. Has anyone ever tried that? We're all over here, wallowing in it. Why don't we just try? It would work. It might work. The reason why we can't is because sin is not a behavior, it's a condition. You see because Adam and Eve sin, they pass off that sin genetically down to the human race. And so we as children of Adam and Eve all have sin natures embedded in our DNA.

Look at Romans 5:12, it sort of explains this. It says, Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, so death spread to all men because all sinned.

Death spreads to all men because all sin. It's a super spreader event. Okay. This is what took place. Sin in its inevitable consequence, death, spreads to everyone. Okay. Everyone. Do you disagree? Does anyone disagree with this? Okay. If you disagree, all you have to do is stop sinning then. Because if it's not in your nature, your sin essentially is an inanimate object and you are totally morally neutral, and you decide to pick up a sin, let's say pride or lust or wrath, and you fling it at someone, and then you as a morally neutral creature can say, oh, I'm so sorry. What was I thinking? I'm totally morally neutral. Not a big deal. I won't do it again. But you do do it again. You do do it again. You do it all the time because you're not morally neutral,

and this isn't your sin. Your sin is here. It's attached to your essence and being, and you don't cast a neutral sin at someone, you actually pour out your essence on them. That's what you do when you sin. You're pouring out the condition, the virus of sin upon somebody that's actually what's taking place.

So our actions against God's will, or sin are not, are not, is not. Uh, well, how should I say this? Our symptoms, your actions are symptoms of the condition of sin. There we go. Your actions are the symptoms of the condition of sin in your life. Okay? Okay.

So now you know what sin is. But how do we sin? Like what are the sort of buckets that we sin? And I do think that as you decide, I want, I do want to get some of this stuff outta my life. I think thinking through the actual buckets and the framework of how we actually sin will help us better identify them. Okay.

So how do we sin? The answer, it lies in Genesis chapter 3, verse 6, check out this. So when the woman, that's Eve, saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

So in this verse, we actually see three ways that all sins or sinners sin. Okay. The first one, she says that she saw the tree and that it was good for food. Theologians, call that the lust of the flesh. She saw that the tree was a delight to the eyes, theologians call that the lust of the eyes. And that she saw that the tree tree can make her wise. That's called the pride of life. The three ways, all humans, sin are the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life.

Now, if you didn't catch that, first John 2 actually, summarizes this for us in verse 16, it says this -- for all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes and the pride of life is not from the Father, but is from the world. Now, while it can be complicated to determine the sources of your sin. I actually think understanding how all sin is essentially one of these three things, actually can help you make sense of how you understand yourself. Okay? So let me go through all three of them and you just see what the Lord pulls, what strings he pulls in you. Okay.

So let's go to the first one, lust of the flesh. The lust of the flesh is the temptation to feel, it's the temptation to feel something. It's the desire to satisfy a physical appetite, a physical appetite. Now people think often think that lust of the flesh is just things like sex. Oh no. I mean, it's that, but it's more than that. It actually could be anything we're tempted to feel in a manner incongruent with the way God's calling us to live, and the way that leads to your flourishing. Okay. Anything.

Think about it. Give you an example. Imagine you come home from a long day at work and you are exhausted because your manager, your boss, whoever they were on you all day. And they were rude and they were belligerently rude. And there was no -- if you're at Amazon, the bananas ran out at the stand and you had nothing to eat. And you're just like, now I'm cranky, and you get home and your spouse is no different.

They're angry. Their boss is mad at them. Their kids are crazy to them. They stubbed their toe at the gym. They're frustrated, everyone's angry. And you're just spent. And then your kids come

in the door or your roommates, if you don't have any kids -- well, they're roommates if they're your kids. But they come in the door and they're going crazy and they're nuts. And you're like, oh my gosh, I got, I got my boss, I got my spouse, I got something going on with my mom and dad, I got the kids, I got the roommates. Oh my gosh, this is so much. And then they all go, you know what? I think we're gonna take off. We'll give you some space. We're gonna go grab some, some bougie ice cream. <laugh>

Then all of a sudden you're all alone. And you're like, I just need to feel something right now. What do you go for? One theologian says, religion is what you do with your solitude. Where do you go? There's a lot of places you could go while you could veg out on some online illicit materials. You could purchase a bunch of stuff online for a dopamine release. Or you could just eat two tubs of ice cream for dinner and some cookies for dessert. You can do a lot.

Common sins that fall into the lust of the flesh are things like lust, gluttony, and even things like sloth or laziness. Now in their worst forms, these things can manifest in addictions, right? We all know these addictions, food addictions, alcohol addictions, sex addictions, illicit materials, all of these things. Or you can become a comfort addict and you could watch television all day, or Netflix, or sit on your TikTok all day and just watch it.

Now you might be thinking this guy's pretty stuffy here. Like that's a lot. Like, I feel like I'm not gonna be making the mark anytime soon. Fair enough. You might ask a question, like, is it wrong to eat? Does this guy think it's wrong to have ice cream? Or is it wrong to be intimate with somebody? Or is it wrong to relax and watch a little TV? Is it wrong to online shop? The answer is -- it depends.

It depends on if what you're doing is done in a godly way that leads to connection with God and you're flourishing. Or if it leads to disconnection with God and your lack of flourishing. That's the lust of the flesh. Let's look at the lust of the eyes.

Now the lust of the eyes happens when Eve says that the tree was good to her eyes. Now the lust of the eyes is the temptation to have or possess. It's the desire to acquire. You want things, right? Common sins that fall in this category are things like greed and envy. Greed and envy. Two big ones, right? Sins like these manifest in coveting. So we might say things like, you know what? That woman's got the best life ever. Her kids are well behaved. She's got a good husband. She's got a great job. I don't know. She's got a nice washer and dryer. I don't know what it is, but you're looking at it and you're going, man, I want that life. I think I need to get it. I'll stop at nothing to have that, right.

Or you might say, I want that job. That job looks great. I want that guy's job. No, none, not the one like him. I want his, I love that office. As soon as I get that promotion, I'm gonna make it happen. Or you might go on Instagram, and we're looking at cars, we're going, I need this car. And we orient our life to get to get a vehicle. Or you might even say something like, you know what? She is beautiful. I wonder what it would be like if she was with me instead of that guy. By the way, there's a covenant about that somewhere in the Old Testament.

Worse sins manifest out of the lust of the eyes like this -- adultery, stealing, or even oppression of the weak, because you'll squish other people to get what you want in your life. Now, is it wrong to want a better life? Is it wrong to want a promotion? Is it wrong to long for more

money in your profession? Is it wrong to want a wife or a husband? The answer is, it depends. It depends on whether or not what you're doing is being done in a godly way that leads to connection with God and your flourishing, or if it leads to disconnection with God and your lack of flourishing.

Okay. Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, boastful pride of life. This is when Eve said that she saw, she saw that the tree was to be desired to make one wise. This is the temptation to become. This is the temptation to be something. Common sins that fall into this category are pride and wrath. Pride and wrath -- two really big sort of scary ones here. Now the worst version of pride and wrath I think are really clear to us, which is when we think of sin, we think of, oh, pride and wrath sins, right? Because they manifest in really angry ways and we can easily identify 'em in our culture. So steamrolling other people, being arrogant, being a domineering leader, being braggadocious, easy sin, right? Oppression of those who disagree with you can be a sin, or you just don't like. Classism, sexism, racism, easy -- pride, wrath.

The pride of life really does get worse though, because the worst versions of it become physical abuse, things like genocide and murder. It's the easiest way to see it. The pride of life manifests when we stop at nothing to become something. We want to become that thing and we wanna show it to the world or prove it to ourself. And if we can't become something on our own, then we need to make sure no one else can get it. We need to make sure no one else can get it, so we're the biggest and best remaining.

There are two ways to build the biggest building. Have you ever heard this phrase? The first way is to build the biggest building. And the second way is to tear all the other buildings down. That's what pride and wrath does.

But just like all these sins, guys, you might have looked at the list and were like, I don't have that one, I don't have that one, I don't have that. Oh yeah. Oh boy. Oh, not that one. Not that one, that one. All these sins hide themselves from you. Pride and wrath are not easily seen when they're not at their extremes, but they're there.

For instance, when you show, when you want that promotion at the job so that everyone will know how great you are. When you wanna show your friends that you're the highest earner and buy the nicest house. You wanna have the most followers, the most likes, the most comments and views so people understand that you're just a valuable contributor society. Or you might wanna be the biggest donor to the church or to the charity, so that way everyone knows how valuable and meaningful you are. Or you might wanna just have the nicest kitchen, so when the friends and family come over, they understand your dishwasher's nicest.

Now, is it wrong to work hard to become the best at your company or be the best athlete you can be? Or is it wrong to be the best salesperson at your company or grow the biggest social media following? Is it wrong to have the nicest kitchen in Clyde hill or Yarrow Point? If you do, invite me over, seriously. Um, the answer is, it depends. It depends on if what you're doing is done in a godly way that leads to your connection with God and you're flourishing, or if it leads to disconnection with God and your lack of flourishing. Are you seeing a theme?

Determining whether or not something is a sin or not, is less, is really less about the actual behavior and more about its root. What's worse is though, and here's I think the big point,

human beings are not neutral. We are sinners, which makes us poor judges of whether or not something is sinful. In the Bible, and even today, and even today when people sin, they often don't know it. And what's worse, sometimes when people sin, they think they're doing something good. This is what's troubling for us as people who are sinners. Sinners are poor judges of what sin is. Because we live it, we breathe it, it's always what we do. Did you think sin would be ethically and morally obvious? Like, oh, murder -- sin. Really easy. You think there gonna be boxes where you can just easily check. Jesus says out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks. Jesus is looking internally at your heart to determine what happens out outside of you. So your external actions are merely a reflection of what's going on inside. It doesn't matter.

Well, you might say no, no, no. There's some actions that are inherently good. Inherently, no matter what. For instance, I give the most to charity, I serve at the soup kitchen, I continually give lots of money away, I give my time, and energy, money, I donated the most backpacks to the backpack drive. You say these are innately good things. Oh, really? Well, what if you only donated your time and your money and your energy so everyone saw you? What if you only did it so you could feel good about yourself and who you are? What if you did it so you could beat your metaphorical chest and say, you know what, see how good I am. I am good. I have done it.

You might be doing good at face value, but in your heart, you're a proud person. You aren't serving those people for them. You're serving them for you. And you're using them. You're actually using them. You actually can use people you give money to. You can use them for your own self-esteem and self aggrandizement. To make yourself something. Or as John Bloom would say, the love of our own glory is the greatest competitor with God in our hearts. And sometimes we cloak this idol in a pious disguise.

Sinners, again are often bad judges of whether or not a sin is good or bad. So like they say, when you want to know about the water, don't ask the fish. Human beings have been swimming in sin for a long time, and they've never been outta the fishbowl. Human beings are bad judges at moral success and moral failures. That's why some of the villains who have caused the biggest atrocities in humankind will go to their graves believing that they're right about their decision. It's not as if all of them are going, yes, I can't wait to cause evil and destruction. This is great, I wanna destroy the world. Not everyone's like that. People think they're doing the right thing.

Many of your famous celebrities, pastors, athletes have fallen and go to their grave thinking they've done nothing wrong. Which leads me to question for you. Have you been in a spot where people have spoken into your life and told you something about your behavior and no matter how many people come to you and say the same thing, you still believe that they're all wrong. And you're the one that's right. It could be five people come to tell you something. 10 people come to tell you something. 15 people come to tell you something. They're all saying, Hey, I see something in your life you've gotta work on. And you're going, man, all these people are crazy. It's I who are smart. I've got this figured out. Do I need to say it? Friend, you're a fish who can't describe water. You're swimming in sin. If this sounds like you, you are at war with yourself, trying to wrestle with your inner nature. And you justify your actions at any cost.

Friends, when you justify your actions at any cost, that's called sin. When you have to do mental gymnastics and linguistic linguistical gymnastics -- there's one -- to convince people that you're right. That's called sin. You are alienated from your creator and you are trying to make sense of the world apart from him. That's what it is. This is why we need some external source that could be a judge that can look down in our lives and help us adjudicate what we're doing.

Speaking of which, brings us back full circle. You need saving. You need saving. You need someone to tackle you and to tell you that you're saved. And that guy needs to be Jesus. You see the wages of sin is death. Remember what God told Eve? If you eat of this tree, you're gonna die. He wasn't saying, I'm gonna kill you. He's saying you're gonna die. You're going to die. He told her if he ate the tree, she would die. And the condition would pass off to her offspring and offspring and offspring. And here we are sinners together, hanging out, trying to make sense of this world.

And this might all sound hopeless to you. And you might be thinking, man, you're telling me that I'm a sinner who keeps on sinning. And that not only that sometimes I don't know I'm sinning. And that I also might be thinking, I'm doing good things when I sin. And that if I do get caught in a sin, I'm gonna justify that sin. Goodness gracious, that's so hopeless. I mean, and God is just gonna leave me out here like this, and I'm gonna be wrestling with this? I didn't ask for this sin. How could good could God be if he's gonna let me go -- see that's the serpent's character assassination coming back into play. He takes the truth about God, and he sprinkles in a little doubt and all of a sudden become a full blown unbeliever based on what he says. It's just like that.

And what's funny is our sin is our responsibility and our fault. And still somehow we're blaming God. How could God allow genocide? Those are people. Those are people. It's not like he just threw genocide into the mix. This is us.

Sin doesn't have to be the end of anyone's chapter. Jesus comes into the world for this very reason because your sin intends to kill you. That's its goal. And the serpent is trying to help it. And yet Jesus says, you know what? I see your sin in your life. And I didn't cause any of this, but hey, I'm gonna come down, I'm gonna live perfectly as your example. I'm gonna take the bullet for you, and you can have my righteousness in return. And you can live perfectly and freely before the Father and your sin is gone. I don't care how bad you are. I don't care how many drugs you've done. I don't care what you're addicted to. I don't care how sinful you think you may have been in the past. Trust me, I can handle it on the cross. It's not a big deal.

The only requirement is that you place your faith in me, and you let my Holy Spirit transform you. So that way the sins that rule your life can actually be conquered because you're wandering, wandering around, trying to solve all these problems you're on your own. And the power to do that is actually with me.

And so if you adjust for a second here, put down your pride that you can't do this alone, humbly submit. Let me give this righteousness to you, the Spirit, and then you can live your life, instead of a slave. Doesn't that sound nice? That's what he's asking.

Sin doesn't have to be the end of anyone's chapter. The resurrection -- that from the death -- Jesus's death, and his resurrection eternally saves us and helps us flourish in this life as well.

Now you might be thinking, wait a second, but Christians still sin though. So how does that work? Well, make no mistake. Make no mistake. The power over sin has been removed from those who follow Jesus. But in order to overcome sin, we need the power of the Holy Spirit to wage war in us on our behalf with our progressive sanctification, going at the sin in our hearts.

You don't just change through osmosis. When Jesus comes back a second time, he will remove sin and put it in the dirt, once and for all. But until then, we've got a wage war, friends. We've got things in our heart that want our destruction. We've got -- there's things in our heart right now, just anger, pride, arrogance, sorrow, self-loathing, which is a form of pride. We're all in here, just we're wallowing in stuff. Guess what? We need to put that to death and we need a savior to help us do it.

So will you leverage the power of the Holy Spirit in your life to help you overcome those things? And if you're here and you're not a Christian, you need the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome those things, because you've tried for a long time. And here's one of two things -- either it's working, which means you're probably really young or younger, and you're very proud of that, or it's not working and you're in despair, and you're trying to figure out how you make sense of your life.

Jesus is the answer. Or as John Owen says, friends, we need to wage war, be killing sin or sin be killing you. Which is why we're doing this series. So I've got the, I've got the graphic up here and this is our schedule for coming up. Now I want you to do a few things. Yeah, there it is. So I want you to do a few things while this is up here, but I don't want you to do is look at the sin and then identify a friend in your, like a friend that you have and go <laugh> Hey, uh, and you call him up and you go, hey, my brother in Christ, uh, October 16th, um, uh, we're gonna hang, cuz I've seen you eating a lot at the lunch line recently. I'm gonna need you there. Or, Hey, my brother, you haven't been to church in six months. Uh, October 23rd. I'm gonna need you to show up. That's not, that's not what we're doing.

Here's what you need to do. Examine your own heart because sin hides from sinners. And we love to go, I don't have that. I don't have that. I don't have that. Oh yeah, you got 'em all. They're just a bit, just depends on which degree it is. So let's go help put our sin to death together through this series and let's let the Holy Spirit do that for us. Can I pray over us? Okay.

Lord, you are good. You are gracious. You're kind. You're gentle. Many of my friends here, we're just sitting in our sin trying to figure out how we get through this Lord, but you're a good God and a good Savior who loves us. And so we pray for your power on their lives, that they might experience your power through the Holy Spirit. That they might feel energized and ready to conquer the sin that's in their heart. And Lord Jesus, for those of my friends here, that just feel like they've been running the marathon of life, would you give them rest? This is hard work, putting to death what is earthly in us. And so we ask for your goodness and your peace on them as they go to war. But Lord, we all know that the battle's already won. We're stepping over shrapnel, we're stepping over shell casings, but Lord, the battle's won. Jesus, you've won it and you're coming back a second time to put it in the dirt. Until then we wait. We love you. In Jesus' name, amen.

