

## The Sin of Man – Part V

Those that have been here know that the motivation for the series was to bring Christians into the abundant life; to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. So the whole series albeit good for all, is primarily to bring us into the abundant life that Christ came to give and so few of us truly access. This is not meant to be all inclusive; but it's to bring us to what we're talking about today, which is a continuation of sin. Remember, God is love; love is relational, relational is choice. If one choice is God, every other choice is ungod or ungodly. That's so our relationship with our creator God is not simply mechanical, robotic slavery...relational choice. But every choice you make, the choice you make as you sit here today listening to me, moment by moment is a choice between God and ungod. As your calling is to discern all things and hold onto what is good and God alone is good. So if love gives origin to choice, that's what the human will is. It's our chooser and the choice is always, the way our will functions between God and ungod. So when our will looks at God and chooses Him, that's the feedback loop that tells us, we're functioning in the fear of the Lord, the awe and reverence of God. Because the only way you're going to choose God consistently is to be operating in awe and reverence of God. Remember, if you can't be in awe and reverence of God, Who created the Heavens and Earth, you can never be in awe and reverence of anything because there is nothing that comes close to the creator God of Genesis 1:1. And God says to whom will I be compared? So if there is nothing to be compared with God and you're not in awe and reverence of that God, there is nothing that's close to that God, then you can never be in awe and reverence of anything less than God if you can't be in awe and reverence of God; and if you can't be in awe and reverence of God, you are in awe and reverence of yourself. Because you declare there is nothing that I should be in awe and reverence of.

So, ungod, the way it plays out is self. So you're either in the fear of the Lord, awe and reverence of God, or you're in self worship. Self worship is what we call pride. So you're functioning either thought by thought and that's why Scripture says capture every thought, not an occasional thought, not a thought while you're reading the Bible, not a thought while you're listening to Buddy—but every thought. Because every thought is either God determined or self determined. God says, Jeremiah 10:23, it's not in man to decide his own ways; and we say, oh yeah it is, we can do this thing. That is self determination. So we are either worshipping God as New Testament Christians, in the spirit or in the flesh. So, self is the root of the flesh, flesh is the root of the system of this world, and this world has Satan as its god. Satan would never let you think you're worshipping him, but Satan would have you think you can do this thing and then he is manipulating you behind the scenes anytime you're functioning in self determination.

So you're either functioning in spirit and truth, worshipping God, being determined by God, with truth being what He is and what He thinks about everything else; or you're functioning in ungod which is self, self worship, which is pride. Pride is therefore an anti-God position of the human heart. Is it any wonder that God resists the proud and gives His grace to the humble who looks at the two choices and albeit consistently chooses God...to be God determined and not self determined. Self says truth is whatever I declare it to be. But when you're being God determined, you're saying no, I can't declare truth, I can't know truth, I must come to God, seek His face, and have Him reveal truth to me.

So in a nutshell, over here is sin. (Next poster) So we started looking at sin last week. Remember that we talked about four frames of reference to access understanding sin. If God is truth, anything contrary to God is lie; since sin is contrary to God, all sin is a lie and all lies are sin. Faith or unbelief: Scripture tells us, what is not of faith is sin because at every moment you're functioning either in faith in God or unbelief in God. Obedience or rebellion: Once you know the will of God, you're either going to

surrender to that or you're going to rebel against that. And in the final analysis, either God is the judge or you're pronouncing yourself as the judge of God. And that's where we'll go next week, our judging of God.

(Next poster) Now today we're going to take a few sins, and analyze them; put them under the microscope, to understand those sins and why God finds them so abhorrent; but also to trace the root to pride in each one; because pride is the sin that protects all other sins. We look at this sin, this sin, this sin, this sin, and this sin; but all sins are the same sin. They can be traced to the root of pride, which is functioning in self worship, choosing ungod rather than God and even look at itself versus God and declaring that self can decide what truth is rather than coming to God to see what truth is. Pride would say in various people, I can meet my own needs, thank you. Or, even more basic, I can determine what my needs are. And God would say, no, you can't know your own needs unless I tell you what they are. Pride might say there probably is no God; but if there is a God, He's certainly pleased with me. Pride would say I'm willing to give up nothing for some vague theologic abstraction called God. So at every step, pride is an anti-God state of mind because it is a self worshipful state of mind. So our two choices in every choice are always to operate in the fear of the Lord or human pride, declaring that I can determine what truth is regardless of what God says.

When we look at judgmentalism, we tend to define informally; judgmentalism is what we call it when someone judges us. When we judge someone else, we tend to call it discernment. But recall Matthew 5:8 – “Only the pure in heart can see God.” Well why do I toss that Scripture in? Because to discern at its root is to see as God sees. And if only the pure in heart can see God, then only the pure in heart can discern. That's why we, as New Testament Christians need to be driven over here so we can begin to see God, see as God sees, and then see to discern as opposed seeing to judge. We must see God to see as God sees and we must see as God sees in order to discern rather than to just function in judgmentalism. So what we call discernment is often only thinly veiled judgmentalism. Well why do we take judgmentalism and call it discernment? Pride. See when we're functioning in judgmentalism, it's simply a mechanism for us to remain unchanged while declaring ourselves as holier than the next person. Pride is the motivation because when we're functioning in judgmentalism, it allows our unchanged selves to remain, in our view, as holy enough for God while God's time and attention are better focused on someone else that we have judged to be less holy than ourselves.

When you look at judgmentalism, many of our thoughts, as New Testament Christians, are invested in comparing ourselves to others. We tend to do that until we find at least one area in which we feel spiritually superior and then pronounce ourselves as holier than them. But there is no Scriptural basis for that human-to-human comparison and we're constantly warned to the contrary because Jesus, alone, is the standard of what perfection is, and we can never compare one person with another to declare ourselves as perfect enough to satisfy God. Matthew 7:1-2 says, “Judge not that you be not judged.” Now judge in that context means to pronounce a sentence of condemnation. Well why are we not to judge? Well to tie a few threads together in that regard, I Corinthians 13:12 – “Now we (speaking to Christians) see through a glass dimly.” Well if we see dimly, how can we see clear enough to judge perfectly? Psalms 44:21 – “God knows the secrets of the heart” and we do *not* know the secrets of the heart. That may include secret sin such as that done in the basement of the home with internet pornographic addiction, or that may be secret good where a person has given 90% of their income away for the Kingdom of God, but not letting the right hand know what the left hand is doing, secret good that we can't access, but we think we can see the 10% above the surface and judge accurately. Romans 2:16 – “God will judge the secrets of men.” But if we don't know the secrets, how can we judge the secrets and if we can't judge the secrets, how do we think we can judge accurately? Romans 2:12 – “For all

have sinned without the law, they will also perish without the law and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law.” In other words, we’re accountable in some way before a Holy God for the light that we have; and we can never judge the amount of light that someone else has perfectly accurately.

So the fruit of operating in a heart of judgmentalism is usually only excusism for keeping the focus off ourselves and our own sin so that our sins can remain secret from those around us. But what does God say? Romans 2:1 – “Therefore, you are without excuse. Every man of you who passes judgment for wherein you judge another, you condemn yourself for you who judge practice the same things.” Now the reason, I hope we will see as we go forward through this, is the root of all these various sins is really pride. So when we are judging another, the root of the sin that we’re judging is pride; but the root of all sin in our own life is also pride. So that’s what is functioning in ourselves the same as it’s functioning in others; but so long as we keep the focus on them, we keep the focus off ourselves, you see. So what we see in our self righteousness given that frame of reference and method of thinking, as an opportunity to see out to determine the state of holiness in others is really in reality a window of opportunity to see in, namely that we do the same—the saint. So when we see sin, we’re seeing pride and when we’re seeing pride in them, we also have pride in ourselves, commonly the pride to even think that you can judge them accurately, you see.

How about fear? Now I’m not speaking of the fear of the Lord, the awe and reverence of God. Remember, we’re told in Scripture simply stated, to consolidate our fears. One fear is legitimate—the fear of the Lord. All other fears are illegitimate. Luke 12:7 – “Fear not.” We’re told that repeatedly throughout Scripture. “Fear not.” You see the Kingdom of God runs on the fuel of faith. Fear is inversely related to faith. As faith in God increases, fear of all else decreases. As fear increases, faith decreases. The two are inextricably yoked in that kind of a relationship. Fear is really only a word that we use that when properly translated, according to how God views reality; it means little faith in God. Fear is the revelation of unbelief in God. Fear actually is faith, because the whole world runs on faith, it’s a question of what is your faith in? So fear is faith in something other than God. Isaiah 42:8 – God says through the prophet, “I will share My glory with no one.” Well, whatever we fear, we are giving glory to; because in the arena of our fear, we are proclaiming God as inadequate. Either His power isn’t enough, or His knowledge isn’t enough, or His love isn’t enough, or His righteousness isn’t enough, or His faithfulness is not enough. We can’t fear something other than God without declaring God to be inadequate in some arena operating in the circumstances in which we’re holding in fear.

So we speak of facing life. But to use a little lisp, Christians are never to face life; we’re to faith life. We can face life on Earth including adverse circumstances, because we have faith life that transcends life on Earth. Why? Because our God is a transcendent God. He transcends everything including physical death and all other fears are just little miniature versions of the fear of death ultimately. So whatever I am facing, including physical death, this transcendent God transcends. So how can you fear anything other than God without declaring that your God is not transcendent in the area of which you are fearing? That’s why Romans 14:23 says, “what is not of faith is sin” and that’s of course, speaking of faith in God. Fear is not of faith; and therefore, is sin. So when we fear in the arena of our fear, we have more faith in our circumstances than we do faith in our God. How can you have faith in something else more than faith in God Who in the beginning spoke the Heavens and the Earth into existence? What comes close? To what will He be compared? So when you fear something else, you’re taking your circumstance, comparing it to God and deciding your circumstances are bigger than your God, you see.

So make no mistake about it. Fear is sin. We need fullness of repentance of that leading to deliverance and not back-patting consolation from fellow Christians to make us temporarily feel better about it. It's one thing to give empathy; it's another thing to give people back-pats when they're operating contrary to the Kingdom of God, you see. So how can we approve sin? God can't. Habakkuk 1:13 – "He cannot look on wickedness with approval." He cannot; so if He cannot, and He tells us fear not, how can we go around approving fear in ourselves or in our fellow Christians?

At its root, fear is pride. Well, how can that be? It's pride because we function in self determination when we pronounce what we should be afraid of rather than letting God determine what we should be afraid of. He says be feared of nothing. We say, "I fear this." That's self determination because we are determining what we should fear. That's pride.

How about laziness? Remember love is defined as a passion for oneness. So laziness must be understood in the context of love. Laziness is love. Laziness is a preference for maintaining the status quo; for maintaining the circumstances as they presently exist. So laziness is a passion to remain one with the status quo; thus laziness is love of the status quo. But Scripture tells us to love God, love man, and never to love the status quo; because no one comes to God while approving the status quo. The status quo always has unholy elements in it. So if we're in love with maintaining the status quo, remaining unchanged in our laziness, what we're doing is refusing to seek the face of God. No one comes to God while loving the status quo. Remember, I said we can't go to Iowa City without leaving Cedar Rapids. So if your status quo isn't disappearing in the rearview mirror, you are not coming to the face of God. So we want the abundant life without leaving our laziness, without leaving our status quo.

Laziness is apathy. And remember the sequence of thoughts. Apathy means I do not care; I do not know; I do not care that I do not know; I do not care to know; I don't even care to care. That's laziness. Apathy. But Scripture tells us in Jude verse 3 – "Contend earnestly for the faith." Contend—that's an activist word as are all things in the Kingdom of God. There is nowhere in the Word of God that laziness is given approval. There is nowhere that the status quo is given approval, you see. Not even in your own mind; because remaining untransformed without renewing your mind is just another form of laziness.

Laziness is pride. We know them by their fruits and the fruit of the lazy is the status quo. It says I have no need to change, because there is nothing better than me to change into or at least nothing worth any effort on my part to change into it. Laziness is pride at its root; because to self determine that the status quo is acceptable, rather than letting God determine what in the status quo is acceptable and what is not. So the spiritually lazy Christian is functioning in self determination to determine that the status quo is acceptable before a Holy God rather than coming to the Holy God and let the Holy God tell him what is and is not acceptable in the status quo. So laziness at its root is pride because it is self determination and is to choose ungod rather than God.

Laziness is a reflection of lukewarmness. Revelation 3:15-16 – "I know your deeds that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or hot; so because you are lukewarm, I will spit you out of My mouth." Now in my old creation self, I couldn't understand the order of that at all; because using the spiritual model, the best is hot, in between is cold, and the worst is lukewarm. That's the way God looks at it. But in the physical, it would be cold, hot, and between, lukewarm. So the descending order, you would think, would have lukewarmness in the middle. But God approves both extremes in the physical world and then spits out the middle. Well let's go to see why that is. Romans 1:28 – "They did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer." Now recall that not to acknowledge means to know that something

exists and to behave as if it does not exist. Like when you walk into the cocktail party, nobody pays attention to you. They pretend as if they didn't see you; but they saw you, because everybody's eye gives a quick dart to the door every time they see motion to see who's coming in, to see if it's somebody they'd rather talk to than the one they're talking to, you see. So when you walk through the room and nobody acknowledges you, it doesn't mean they don't know you're there; they know you're there, but they're just choosing to behave as if you're not there. And then the relationship to God...that's how it plays out also.

So listen to the following: Hot is to know that God exists and to behave as if He exists by worshipping Him and contending for the faith and seeking his face. Cold, the opposite of hot, is to know that God exists, to behave as if God exists by hating Him and resisting Him like Satan. But at least both acknowledge Him; they behave as if He exists. Lukewarm is to know that God exists, yet not to respond as if He exists. This one behaves as if God does not exist. So the cold and the hot at least respond, even with opposite responses. The lukewarm doesn't even respond as if God exists; so God detests that one most of all. That's the one that doesn't see fit to acknowledge God any longer. Satan at least acknowledges God. How much worse is the lukewarm one who knows He exists and then behaves as if He does not exist?

There is one more level to it. The one who hates God and resists God, is in rebellion against God; but at least the rebellion is overt, transparent like the world rulers in Psalms, chapter 2 – who were overtly in rebellion against the Godhead. The lukewarm one is hating and resisting God in rebellion; but he's wearing a camouflage suit. He's pretending not to know. This one is what we would call in modern language passive aggressive. He is passive but his passivity is camouflaged aggression against God. He's camouflaging his rebellion in passivity. Thus, he's not transparent; so he's in rebellion while wearing camouflage which God detests even more because He loves transparency. So he's even more sinister and more worthy of the contempt of God by being lukewarm as opposed to being overt rebellion. That's the one that God simply spits out of His mouth. So, lukewarmness is also pride; because it self determines that God is not even worth responding to and behaving as if He exists. Can you imagine what an affront to a Holy God that represents? To have man self determine that the creator of the Heavens and the Earth is not even worth responding to? Not even worth behaving as if He exists?

Well how about grumbling? Grumbling in a nutshell says I deserve better than I am getting at this moment. Now we don't understand grumbling until we understand God's basic math. Remember? The Holiness of God plus the sin of man equals the reality of Hell. If you understand that basic math, then you'd understand that everything this side of Hell is mercy. Just as with sin, when we grumble, we don't grumble unto man, we grumble unto God. When we grumble unto man, you see the camouflage suit that we're wearing is we're behaving as if God doesn't know, so I'll call it to His attention that He's misbehaving while pretending as if I'm talking to a human being. Exodus 16:8 – Moses said to the children of Israel: “You do not grumble against us; you grumble unto God.” So just as all sin is against God, all grumbling is against God; because grumbling is always a symptom of a deeper sin. Grumbling is always the language of unbelief. To understand grumbling, we need to look at it in that first frame of reference. That's what I call the cocoon of carnality. That's how the flesh functions; it's all “C's” to help me remember it. We constantly are assessing the circumstance in terms of comfort, convenience, cost and control. We grumble when it causes us discomfort, causes us inconvenience, costs something from us and we lose control over it.

But underneath that are other sins that head toward the root. The fear, the pride, and the laziness. Fear is because if it takes something from me, I may never get that something back. I may end up with less than I had before; so I live in fear of the psychology of scarcity.

Pride, we've looked at. Pride would look at it and say; well I'm far too good to merit being caused discomfort and inconvenience and certainly, who is there better to maintain control over this situation than myself? So pride always resists whoever has authority; because pride always presumes it could exercise the authority better.

Or laziness: I'm in love with the status quo; so that which causes me discomfort, inconvenience, or costs me something, or loses control over the situation may interfere with my status quo. Underneath that, there's really pride and its revelation of self worship and it's two sides of the same coin: self worship or unbelief; because anytime you're in unbelief against God, you're in self worship. You are man determined, self determined rather than being God determined. So the root of all grumbling in a nutshell is unbelief in God.

Now we would profess horror, as Christians, at cursing God. But grumbling is really only camouflaged cursing. We are in reality, shaking our fists at Heaven while pretending not to and shouting I deserve better than you're giving me at this very moment. But the word of God, which tells us how God views reality, in Lamentations 3:39 says – “Why should any man offer complaint in view of his sins?” So whenever tempted to grumble, the first question that should pop in the Christian's mind is which side of Hell am I on? And if I'm on this side, then you're receiving grace, not injustice. You're receiving better than you deserve, whatever your circumstances on Earth because no circumstance on Earth ever approximates the horror of Hell that you truly deserve. So there is never a legitimate reason for a Christian to grumble. Now grumbling is pride. How is that? Because grumbling self determines what one should be receiving and judges what God should be doing rather than what He is doing. Grumbling is to take offense at God while pretending not to. Grumbling is to take offense and taking offense at God says one of two things. It says either He's not here and He ought to be or He is here and He's misbehaving. Because if He were behaving, He would be taking care of the circumstances which I'm grumbling about. That is self determination because it's to judge what God should be doing.

So in summary about sin; never forget that all sin is a lie; God is truth. Remember, that's how we even define truth. That's how Jesus could say I am truth because I am God and I'm here to show you and tell you how God views all other things. Sin is contrary to God; so therefore, sin is a lie. Sin is a poison that calls itself medicine. Sin is fools gold; remember fools gold looks like gold, looks like something of value, but it's worthless. And that's what sin is. Now borrowing the next phrase from Tony Evans; it's a catchy way of summarizing some of that. He uses the term pros and cons. Remember, pros are reasons to do something. Cons are reasons not to do something. So what are the pros and cons? So his summary phrase was with the pros and cons of sin, the pros are cons; because any reason you can think of to tolerate sin in your own life, or to justify sin in your life, or to excuse sin in someone else's life, any reason you can think of to justify sin before a Holy God is a con job; because it's deception, it's untrue and it's not based on how God views reality. That's why we're to pray as David prayed In Psalms 19:12 in the King James Version – reveal to me my secret sins. Because if You don't reveal them, I won't know them. See we tend not to want to deal with the ones that we do know, much less praying to have secret sins revealed. But when you're made aware of your sin, you're to rejoice. You don't rejoice that it's there, but the truth is, it is there. And you rejoice now that you know that it is there. You can repent of it, confess it, and be cleansed of it. That leads you into closer communion with God. And then you become a living epistle that tells a truer story of God as He is rather than how your

sin is representing Him to the world. Now there is a beautiful positive upside to knowing your secret sins. Romans 8:28 – “God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” Remember love is a passion for oneness. So the one who loves God is one that has a passion to be one with God; that one wants nothing between him and his God; that one is eager to have his secret sins revealed; because he can confess them, be cleansed of them, delivered of them and come into closer oneness with his God.

Luke 7:47 – “He who is forgiven little, loves little.” Well that’s true for the opposite also. He who is forgiven much, loves much. Here’s the point. Our knowledge of our forgiveness is proportionate to our knowledge of our sin. If we know little sin is forgiven, we will have little knowledge of the love of God which paid the price for that little sin. And our knowledge of our little sin is proportionate to our revelation of the Holiness of God; because we can only see anything else by seeing God as He is. And when we see God as He is, then we can see ourselves as we are in comparison. That’s why the one who sees God the clearest says I am chief among sinners. So we pray to have secret sins revealed. They are revealed. We confess them. They are forgiven. We are delivered of them. The knowledge of our forgiveness by God grows; our knowledge of the love of the God that didn’t just forgive, He forgave because He paid the price for them Himself. So now we learn millions of sins that He paid the price for on the Cross. Heretofore we were totally ignorant about because they were secret because we didn’t want to look at them and pray to have them revealed. That’s when you grow in the knowledge of the forgiveness, thus the grace, thus the love of your God. And then you begin to fulfill, he who is forgiven much, loves much. So the reason we function in such a little revelation of the love of God is we’re functioning in such a little revelation of our own sin. Until you get the revelation of His Holiness, the revelation of your sin, you think you’re forgiven little, therefore you love little. So the pathway to growth in love, fuel for love is to receive the revelation of your secret sin, you see. That’s how God makes that work together for good; so you temporarily feel bad, but you end up looking at the face of God, beaming with the joy that flows out of the knowledge of the love of God for you; because He didn’t just excuse them, He paid the price for them. And now you see the nails and the thorns and the forsakenness of the Father and so on as bigger than you previously thought it to be. So the pathway to see that Cross of Christ as so much bigger than you thought, is to see that He paid for billions of your sins that you didn’t even yet know existed. That’s why knowing your secret sin is something to be cherished and embraced. You don’t feel good they’re there; but they are there and you know your God is going to make it work together for good to fulfill His love for you and have you grow in the love for Him.