

(Basics) 4. Sin Comes From Unbelief

by Zac Poonen

Sin is the result of unbelief in God's perfect love, and it leads to disobedience and separation from God.

Duration: 12:42

Scripture: Genesis 2:16

Topics: "Unbelief"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the deceptive nature of temptation. He explains how Satan tempts individuals by focusing on the immediate pleasure and disregarding the long-term consequences. The preacher highlights examples such as alcohol and drugs, where Satan entices people with the promise of enjoyment without revealing the destructive outcomes. He emphasizes the importance of considering the consequences of our actions and how they can impact not only ourselves but also future generations. The sermon concludes by emphasizing the need for faith in God's love and the importance of obedience as a response to that faith.

Transcript

Sin, what is it? Every religion in the world uses the word sin, but I think it's true to say that in the minds of many, many human beings who are religious, they don't really understand what it is. Even many who read the Bible, if you were to ask them, what is sin really, they don't understand. When we understand the sickness, we can find the cure as well.

The Bible speaks about how the first man and woman whom God created sinned, and essentially they sinned because they did not believe that God was a good God who loved them, who gave commands for their good. God had placed Adam and Eve in a garden where he told them they could eat anything, they could do anything except one thing, they were not to eat of one particular tree. There God wanted to test their obedience, and not only test their obedience, but to give them an opportunity to choose what was right and to say no to what was wrong, and thereby develop character.

We read here in Genesis chapter three how Satan came into that garden and tempted Adam and Eve to do what God told them not to do, and he tempted them by telling them that they could get certain advantages if they ate of that tree. They were told they will be like God, you will develop your personality. That's how Satan always comes.

When Satan tempts people to do something wrong, he never tells them about the consequences. When Satan tempts a person to take his first alcoholic drink, he is not going to tell him how he will finally become enslaved to alcoholic drink and become a drunkard and waste his money and destroy his family and bring poverty into his home and how his children will suffer and his wife will suffer. He doesn't tell them all that.

He just says you will get a kick out of it. When he tempts some young person to take drugs, he doesn't tell that person how finally you will destroy your mind and destroy your life and you will probably have a premature death and you will lose all your money, you will probably become a thief finally because you would want more and more money with this insatiable craving for drugs. He won't tell him all that.

He will just tell him how you are going to enjoy yourself if you take a little of these forbidden drugs and you will get a kick out of it. It is exactly like that, that Satan came to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. There we have an example of how he comes to all human beings today telling them what they can gain.

When he tells a man to steal, he doesn't tell him about all the potential dangers of how he could be locked up in jail and how he could have children who would grow up following his example and be thieves, etc. No. He just thinks of that immediate prospect of gaining some money.

The same way with adultery. Satan doesn't tell people about the consequences, only the immediate pleasure. Remember this thing, whenever you are tempted.

Temptation always offers a certain forbidden pleasure, but if you are sensible, you will think of the consequences. A sensible man always thinks about the future, not just about the immediate present. He thinks, what is going to be the result of my actions? And if you think about the result of your actions, there are many things you will not do.

Animals don't think about the results of their actions, though many animals do. That is why many animals are sensible, more sensible than human beings. But very often animals don't know what are the consequences of some things they do, but we do.

We have seen around us so many examples of people who have destroyed themselves by wrong actions. Adam and Eve took a very important decision that day that produced lifelong consequences, not only for themselves, but for their children and grandchildren and all their descendants. And from that we should learn one thing, that all the decisions we take in life produce consequences.

We have to reap what we sow. That's what the Bible says. And many times, it's not only we who are going to suffer the consequences, our children will have to reap the bitter fruit of what we sow.

But the same works the other way too. If you sow what is good, your children are going to reap the good fruit of what you sow. In Adam's case, he and his wife were sent out of God's presence from that garden for the rest of their lives.

So don't think that the little choices that you make today in life are unimportant, and that you'll never reap a harvest in the future of what you are sowing today. It's not true. I mean, the devil will blind you, make you think that such things won't happen, but they will.

But as we considered in an earlier study, why does God allow us to be tempted? So that our character may develop. He doesn't want robots, He doesn't want inanimate beings that just grow automatically according to certain laws of nature. He wants us to be moral beings who choose to do what is good.

That's the only way we can be children of God. We are as moral beings we choose. I choose what is good, and there's no virtue in choosing what is good unless there is an alternative choice which is also attractive.

See, when Adam and Eve were put into that garden, if God had made that forbidden tree ugly, repulsive, full of thorns and thistles and in every way hideous, then Adam and Eve would not even have been tempted to go near it. But we read the Bible says that tree was very attractive. It made Adam and Eve's mouths water.

They longed to eat of it. Temptation has to be attractive for it to be temptation. Otherwise it's not temptation.

If you find something in the world unattractive, you'll never be tempted by it. Character is developed through temptation that is attractive and yet which you know is wrong and you're resisting it and saying no to it. And that's why God has allowed many things in the world to be attractive.

Some of those things are forbidden. For example, an attractive woman who is not your wife, you're not to lust after her. You're not to admire her beauty.

It will destroy you. It will destroy your marriage relationship. Money is attractive.

But if you place money above God and pursue after money to the exclusion of God, like many people do, their lives will be destroyed. So everything we do, every decision we take is like sowing a seed. From that comes a harvest.

Now when we look at the sin of Adam and Eve, God loved them, gave them their bodies, gave them health, gave them life, gave them a garden, gave them each other. I mean they should have thought, well God is so good. Everything good for us, he will give us.

And if he forbids us from taking part of something, it must be with a very good reason. If they had that faith, they would not have gone astray. But they lost faith in God.

They did not believe that God was good. When Satan told them, see God does not want you to be like him. There's some reason why he's not allowed you to eat of this tree.

He doesn't want you to develop. They believed that lie. And it's when people believe the lie of Satan that they fall into sin.

Sin begins with unbelief in the perfect love of God. That leads to disobedience. That's why in the Bible, faith in God and obedience to his commandments are linked always close together.

And unbelief and disobedience to God's commandments also go together. Disobedience is the fruit of unbelief, just like obedience is the fruit of faith. If I believe, for example, that everything that God has forbidden is things that will harm me, I will be very happy to avoid all of them.

Why? Because I believe that God is a good God. And whatever God tells me to do, if I believe that that's really for my good that he tells me to do it, I'll obey it. Why? Because I believe.

So, when I don't have faith in God's love, I sin. That leads to disobedience. Consider our children, for example.

We tell them to go to school. But when they're small, four or five years old, they're not eager to go to school. We have to force them.

And sometimes they go weeping to the school, perhaps thinking that father and mother or daddy and mommy are so hard on me, forcing me to go to school. They don't allow me to sit at home and play. But we know what's good for them.

They don't know what's good for them. One day when they grow up, they'll realize what daddy and mommy forced me to do was good for me. It's the same way.

If we can believe in God, we'll realize everything he tells us is for our good. And then we will do it. So, the first step to God is faith.

Then comes obedience. That's what we see in the New Testament. And that's why in the New Testament salvation comes by faith.

You must believe in God. Believe that he's good, that he's kind, that he's interested in you. Sin is unbelief.

You don't believe that God is good. And therefore you do the things which he tells you not to do, which he through the conscience within you tells you to avoid. You don't obey in the things which he tells you to obey.

Why? Because you don't believe. We can say that sin is also choosing creative things and ourselves and our own way above God, instead of God's way. Seeking to please ourselves instead of pleasing God.

That's what Adam and Eve did. There was this tree that would satisfy their longing. And even though God told them not to take part in it, they did it.

Why do people commit adultery? It's because they want their own way. They want to please themselves. They don't believe what God says is going to harm you.

Once our minds are enlightened to see this truth, that God is a good God, everything he forbids us from taking part of is for our good. Everything he tells us to do is for our good. We will submit to God.

We'll submit to Jesus Christ. We'll open our hearts to the teaching of Christ in the scriptures and say, Lord, I want to obey your word. I want to encourage you to turn to the Bible and read it.

Will you pray and say, Lord Jesus, help me to give up everything you tell me to give up and to do everything you tell me to do. I believe you are a good God.

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