

Understanding What Sin Is (Telugu)

by Zac Poonen

The New Testament standard of sin is higher than the Old Testament standard and requires us to depart from iniquity in order to live a holy life.

Duration: 59:28

Scripture: Psalm 1:2, Matthew 1:21, Matthew 5:22, Ephesians 4:31, 2 Timothy 2:19

Topics: "Sin And Holiness", "Sanctification"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of meditating on the law of the Lord day and night, highlighting the blessings and prosperity that come from delighting in God's Word. It contrasts the Old Testament standards of sin with the higher New Testament standards, urging believers to depart from sin and pursue holiness. The message stresses the significance of naming the name of the Lord Jesus and turning away from sin to be vessels of honor, sanctified and prepared for good works.

Transcript

The Bible says, someone, blessed is the man who meditates on the law of the Lord day and night. Not read the Bible day and night. We can't read the Bible day and night.

We may read the Bible just a few minutes. But meditate on it day and night. So, let me show you that verse first, Psalm 1. It's a very very good verse.

It says in verse 2, that if your delight is in the law of the Lord, meditate day and night, you'll be like a tree planted firmly by the streams of water, which yields its fruit in season, its leaf does not wither, whatever he does will prosper. So, whatever he does, he will prosper. Don't you want a life like that? I want a life like that.

Anything I do, God will bless it. If I speak, God will bless my speaking. If I go out to visit somebody, God will make me a blessing to that person.

If I do some business to earn my living, God will bless my business. If I have children in my family, God will bless the children. Whatever he does, whatever means whatever, he will prosper.

For whom is this? Those who read God's word and delight in it. Delight in it. You know, just like you are eating chocolate or ice cream, delight in it.

And then, whenever you get a chance to think about what you have read, even in the middle of the night, when you are travelling in a bus, anywhere, think about what you have read. When you are like that, this verse 1 will be true in your life. You will not walk according to the advice of ungodly people.

And you will not stand in the way that sinners are walking. And you will not sit with people who are despising the word of God. In other words, verse 1 means you will depart from sin.

Then you have the seal of God in your heart. Then you have a firm foundation in your life, the foundation of God. So, let's look at that verse in 2 Timothy 2 again, in the light of what we read in Psalm 1. How shall I depart from wickedness? If I know which side is the south, then I can turn towards the north.

I don't know here where is south, but if you tell me south is there, then I can turn away from that. So, how can I go away from sin unless I know what sin is? A lot of people do not turn away from sin because they don't know what sin is. The foundation is not strong.

Many preachers and pastors do not explain sin to the people because they themselves don't know what sin is. They think sin is just watching cinemas or adultery or murder and things like that. See, those are all the fruits that come out of the tree of sin.

But you can cut off one fruit and another fruit will come somewhere else. In the old testament, God gave Israel 10 commandments to show what was sin. All those 10 commandments were to show them what is sin.

So, if you want to turn away from sin, the Lord said, keep these 10 commandments. So, I want to show you the old testament standard first, then we will come to the new testament. So, turn to Exodus chapter 20 and see how God told the Israelites to depart from iniquity.

But for us, the commandment to depart is from within. Then it was on the outside. But for us, the commandment to depart is from within.

Then it was on the outside. Before I come to Exodus 20, let me read you a verse in Isaiah 52 verse 11. This is an old testament verse.

Depart from iniquity. Don't touch anything unclean. Isaiah 52 verse 11.

Go out of the midst of all that unclean thing and purify yourselves if you want to carry the vessels of the Lord. To carry the vessels of the Lord means to serve the Lord. If you want to serve the Lord, it says, depart and go away from everything that is sinful.

Don't touch anything sinful. Purify yourselves. But it was only on the outside.

Now turn to Exodus 20 and see what the Lord told, what sin they had to depart from. The first commandment, Exodus 20 verse 2 and 3, I am the Lord your God. You must have no other gods but me.

The second commandment, Exodus 20 verse 2 and 3, I am the Lord your God. You must have no other gods but me. So they were to only have Jehovah as their God.

Then secondly, they said you shall not make an idol for yourself in verse 4. The third commandment, verse 7, you must never take the name of the Lord in vain. In verse 4, you must keep the seventh day, the Sabbath day, holy. Don't do any work.

That is verse 8. So this was the sin. If you worked on a Saturday, you were sinning. If you made an idol, you were sinning.

If you swore in the name of the Lord, that was a sin. If you made an idol, that was a sin. Then verse 12, the fifth commandment, you must honor your father and mother.

So to depart from sin means honor your father and mother. If you despise your parents, you are sinning. You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery. In verse 6 and 7. In verse 15, 8th commandment, you shall not steal. 9th commandment in verse 16, don't bear false witness against your neighbor.

And the 10th one, don't covet anything that belongs to your neighbor. Now, all the laws of the world are really based on these 10 commandments. Even in an atheistic country, if you murder, you will be punished.

If you steal, you will be punished. So, because of this standard, Israel was a much better nation than all the other nations. But when Jesus came, he raised the standard much higher.

See, Matthew chapter 5. Now he has told us how to depart from sin in the New Testament. Old Testament standard. That means you don't kill anybody.

That is good, but it's an Old Testament standard. You don't steal, that's good, but it's an Old Testament standard. You speak the truth in court.

See, that was the law. The law didn't say, don't tell lies. The law said, don't bear false witness against your neighbor in a court.

But Jesus said, in verse 5.20, if your righteousness does not go higher than that of the scribes in Paris, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. The people of Israel were offered a kingdom on this earth. The land of Canaan.

They had a king. In Deuteronomy 28, God promised them a lot of prosperity. That means a lot of money, plenty of crops.

Their cattle will multiply. They will not have any miscarriage. They will defeat all their earthly enemies.

They will be the greatest nation on the earth. The blessing was all earthly. The law didn't say to them, I'll make you holy.

No, he said, I'll make you rich. And I'll keep you healthy because I'm your healer. So all the blessings were relating to this body.

I'll be healthy and I'll be wealthy. And all my earthly enemies will be defeated. And I'll be a big man on earth if you keep my commandments.

That is, don't make idols. Keep one day and seven for me. Honor your father and mother.

Don't kill, don't steal, etc. But Jesus said, no, I'm offering you a kingdom in heaven, not on earth like the Israelites. Heaven is much higher than the earth.

So the standard of holiness is much higher than in the Old Testament. If you live according to the Old Testament standard, you can't follow Jesus. Then you are following Moses.

But Moses can't take anybody to heaven. So Jesus said, if your standard is only the standard of these Pharisees, you can't enter the kingdom of heaven. That was only for an earthly kingdom.

So all those ten commandments were okay for Israel. Now I have seen in some believers' homes a list of the ten commandments. That's good.

But that is an Old Testament standard. In the New Testament, it's much higher. For example, in the Old Testament, it said, you shall not make an idol.

You shall have no other gods but me. In the New Testament, that idol is money. It's not some idol made of wood or stone.

It's an idol inside, where I love money more than I love Jesus Christ. Where I will do something against my conscience to get some money. Where I will sacrifice the things of God in order to make some money.

But nobody can see it. It's in the heart. Maybe I don't go to the meeting because one Sunday I have to go and make some more money.

Nobody will say that man is worshipping an idol. But God says, he is worshipping an idol. Money is more important to him than God.

That is a New Testament standard. And then he said, there is another commandment in the Old Testament saying, you shall not murder. It's in verse 21.

That's what they said in the Old Testament. But I say to you, verse 22, that you shouldn't get angry. So, murder in the Old Testament is equal to anger in the New Covenant.

So, if you say that I don't murder, that's good. But that is Old Testament. That is like saying I got 100% in the kindergarten.

No, if you get 100% in the kindergarten when you are 4 years old, that's okay. But if your son is 16 years old and he is still sitting in the kindergarten getting 100%. Are you happy? But he says, mummy, I got 100%.

Yeah, you got 100%, but why are you still sitting in the kindergarten? So, Old Testament was like kindergarten. That's what the Bible says. I will show you.

See Galatians in chapter 3. We read here about the law in verse 24. The law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ. That word tutor, we can today translate as ayah.

When the mother is not at home because she has gone to work, an ayah looks after the children. Ayah is not the mother. Ayah is to look after the child till the mother comes.

Then the ayah will take the child to school and bring the child back from school. And says the whole Old Testament law was like an ayah. And finally he wants to bring us to Christ.

That is the law. He says here the law has become the tutor to lead us to Christ. And once you come to the mother, you don't need the ayah.

Once you come to the mother, you don't need the ayah. Then God treats you like a son. But before that, it says in verse 3, we were like little children.

In chapter 4 verse 3, we were like children. That's being under the law is like being like a child. But now verse 5, he has delivered us from the law so that we can become sons.

You know the difference between a child and a grown up son? That is 4 years old, this one is 25 years old. He is in the kindergarten and this fellow is doing post graduation. So there is a difference between a child and a son.

You love a child but the child can't help you in your work. But a grown up son can do that. So here the Bible says there is a difference between Old Testament law and New Testament like a child and a son.

And he says in verse 1, a child is like a slave. See if you have a servant in your home, your servant does not own any of your property. Your child who is 3 years old may be inheriting of all your property.

But he cannot enjoy anything because he is 3 years old. He cannot write a cheque. He cannot give a house on rent.

So there is no difference between him and the servant. So the Bible says there is no difference. But now Jesus has come so that we don't remain children.

We become sons. Then verse 7, you are no longer a slave but a son. Or we can say you are no longer a child but you are a son.

So there you see the Old Testament says that the law was like kindergarten lessons. In the kindergarten, don't commit murder. Jesus said you want to come to the New Testament? Are you a child or you are a son? If you want to be a son, don't get angry.

See Matthew 5. So in the Old Testament when you said depart from sin, it meant depart from killing people. That is Old Testament. In the New Testament when you read in 2 Timothy 2.19, depart from iniquity, what does it mean? It means depart from anger.

Have you understood that? How many of you have killed your wives? You know that when you get angry with your wife, you are killing her. When you get angry with your husband, you are killing him. Now if I ask how many of you have killed your husband and wife, I think we all have to raise our hands.

I also have to raise my hand. But I stopped killing my wife long ago. Because I came to the New Covenant.

In the beginning as a believer, I was also like all the Old Testament kindergarten students. Many husbands and wives are like that. The dagger is not made of steel.

It's in the mouth. The dagger we use is our tongue. We hurt each other with our tongue.

Jesus calls it murder. You don't kill the body, but you are killing the person inside. Do you know that you can hurt a person with your words? Accidentally we may hurt.

When you deliberately hurt somebody, it's very serious. So what do we mean by this verse, depart from iniquity? Are you going to live by the Old Testament kindergarten standard? Or the New Testament college standard? How many of you parents will be happy if your children only study kindergarten? That's

all. What a lot of money we spend to give our children a college education.

How many of you sit down with your children and give them a spiritual college education? My son, my daughter, you should not get angry. You must overcome that. But you can't say that.

Because they will say, you yourself get angry. How are you telling me not to get angry? Then our mouth is shut. So in order to help our children to come to spiritual college level, we must go to college first.

And you know sometimes it takes many years to get a college degree. You put your child in school today at four years of age, you know that it will take him 18-20 years before he becomes a post graduate. Okay, it takes time.

But okay, little by little you will get it. In the same way, don't get discouraged if you don't get victory in anger in one day or one year. I want to ask you, are you striving for it? That is new testament, depart from iniquity.

Then Jesus said, verse 27, you heard it said you shall not commit adultery. That was commandment number 7 in the old testament. That is a kindergarten lesson.

Two plus two is four. Don't commit adultery. What about now? Now the standard is higher.

If you look at a woman, maybe in a poster or a billboard or television, you see that woman. Or a magazine. And you lust for her body.

You have already committed adultery. You don't even know who that woman is. But you have committed adultery.

That is the new testament standard. Where are you today? Are you in the kindergarten or you are coming to this new testament standard? Now again I want to tell you, you can't get this college degree in one year. But if you work at it, work at it, you will get it.

Think of so many of our children who were just in kindergarten 10-14 years ago. But today they are in college. In a few years they will get a degree.

That didn't take only one or two years. But they got it. In the same way, you can get this also.

But if your children had said, I am not interested in any more studying, then they will never get it. So, it's alright that you are struggling against lusting with your eyes. I say don't give up.

You know how hard these children have to study for their examinations? They sit late at night. They are studying, studying, studying to get a degree. It's not easy.

But then once they get it, they can get a good job. It's the same way here. If you battle it and say, Lord give me grace that I want to have this in my life, I want to depart from all lusting with the eyes.

And if it takes me 15 years to get this degree, I am going to get it. I am going to get better and better and better and one day I will get the degree. So, what I want to say to you is this.

The new covenant depart from iniquity is much higher than the old testament depart from iniquity. Then the Lord said to them in verse 33, see in the old testament it was don't make a false vow unto the Lord. That means when you go to the court, you put your hand on the Bible and say, now I will speak the truth.

What is the meaning of that? Now I will speak the truth. The meaning is, most of the time I tell lies, but now I am going to speak the truth. But Jesus said it must not be like that with you.

Always you must speak the truth. You don't have to put your hand on the Bible and swear. Verse 37, your yes must be yes, your no must be no.

See the standard is so high in the new testament. Old testament was don't make a false witness against your neighbor in the court. But in the new testament it says don't tell lies.

Anytime. It is so easy to tell lies and make money now a days in some offices. You just sign a false statement and get some money.

That money will be a curse in your family and a curse upon your children. You know that? Supposing your children are hungry, how many of you will go and steal some food from somewhere? Pray to God and say Lord I don't have any money to buy food for my children. You said the righteous will never be forsaken.

Please take care of my children. Give them some food to eat. God will do a miracle.

He can multiply 5 loaves to feed 5000 people. That children will be blessed. But if you go and steal food from some shop and give it to your children, that will not be a blessing to them.

You know that and you won't do it. But the same thing when you cheat in the office, sign a false statement and make some money, that money will be a curse for you and a curse for your children. If you have a fight with somebody over property and try to take property that doesn't belong to you, that property will be a curse to your children.

Many Christian parents are bringing a curse on their children. I have one word to all such people. Depart from iniquity.

Run away from it. Further the Lord says, in the old testament it said if somebody takes your eye, verse 38, you take out his eye. If somebody knocks out one tooth of yours, you hit him and knock out one tooth of his.

What he meant was, don't take out two teeth if he took out only one tooth of yours. That is old testament standard. You can hit him but make sure only one tooth comes out because he took out only one tooth of yours.

That means if somebody fights with you, you can fight with him. If he gets angry with you, you get angry with him. But don't fight more than him.

But many Christians are living like this. Are you like that? When your husband gets angry with you, see how your father and mother are. Then you say, see how your father and mother are.

That is like this, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Then you are not a Christian. You are following Moses.

But Jesus said, no you must not do that. If somebody slaps you, verse 39, on one cheek, you just turn the other cheek. And another commandment in the old testament was, love your neighbour and hate your enemy.

But I say to you, love your enemies. What I am trying to tell you is, everything in the new testament, sin is in a higher standard. And if you want to have a new testament life, you must understand this new testament definition of sin.

If you want a new covenant home, in other words you want a heavenly home, not an earthly home. See, not a good earthly home, but a heavenly home. Then you must see what is the new testament standard of sin, so that you can turn away from it.

I told you that many people can't turn away from sin because they don't know what sin is. I showed you today from Matthew chapter 5, the few things that Jesus spoke were sin. But in my 50 years of being a believer, I have seen very few people who take these things seriously.

I found even preachers didn't take it seriously. I sat in so many churches. I never heard anybody preaching against the lust of the eyes.

I never heard anyone preach about you must always speak the truth every day. And you must love all your enemies. And if you love money, you are worshipping an idol.

Have you heard these messages? But it's all in the bible. See for example in Colossians 3, here it speaks about how, what does it mean to be greedy for more and more money. Do you know what the new testament says? Colossians 3 verse 5. The last part.

He says one of the things you must get rid from your life is greed, which is the same as idolatry. Have you read that? That if you are greedy for more and more money, that is like worshipping an idol. You see other people in our country making some idol and bowing down to it.

Would you do that? Would you go into some temple full of idols and bow down to that? No, no, no. I am a Christian. But according to this verse, if you are greedy for more and more money than you need in your life, it is exactly the same as going into a temple and bowing down and saying, oh idol I worship you.

Have you heard anybody preach that message to you? This is not only in my bible, it is in your bible also. How is it you don't read it? Because the devil does not want you to read it. The devil wants you to be an idol worshipper all your life.

And you know God hates idol worshippers. You know in the old testament how he used to punish people who worshipped idols. And once you see that greed is idol worship, you will hate it just like you hate idol worship.

So what I am trying to say is, depart from sin means something much more in the new testament than in the old testament. But for many of us, we have been believers for so many years, we are satisfied with turning away from sin according to the old testament. That is why I say, we are sitting in the kindergarten.

Now God is speaking to you now, saying my son, my daughter, I want you to come up to a higher class now. I don't want you to be like the other Christians around you. I want you to follow my word.

I want to show you something further in 2nd Timothy 2. See what it says, we read in verse 19. Everyone who names the name of the Lord abstains from sin. What is the name of the Lord? Jesus.

Do you name the name of the Lord? Then you should turn away from sin. Why? Because of the meaning of the name of Jesus. If you name the name of Jesus, what does that name mean? See Matthew chapter

1 verse 21.

Now Jesus does many things for us. He blesses us materially. He blesses our families with children.

He blesses us with health. When we are sick, we can pray and he heals us. He gives us jobs to support ourselves.

He gives us houses to live in. He gives us good partners for our sons and daughters. Like now, he gives us a good fellowship of believers.

He gives us good messages. But the main meaning of the name of Jesus is not all these things. Matthew 1 verse 21.

The angel told Joseph, you shall call his name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins. Whenever you say in the name of Jesus, you pray in the name of the Lord Jesus. What is the meaning? In the name of one who came to save me from my sins, not in the name of one who came to give me money or who came to give me healing or who came to give me a house to live in or who came to give good partners for my sons and daughters, not one who helps my children pass examinations.

He will do all that. But his name means one who saves from sins. In other words, that is the main thing he does.

So when we read in 2 Timothy 2 verse 19, if you name the name of the Lord, that is the name of Jesus. If you take the name of Jesus in your mouth and you do not turn from sin, you cannot take the name of Jesus. You can ask the Lord for a thousand blessings in your life.

But first of all, you must say, Lord save me from sin. Not forgive my sins, more than forgiveness, save me from my sins. So if you name the name of the Lord, run away from sin.

And if you do that, then it says, verse 21, if you cleanse yourself from these things, you can be a vessel for honour, sanctified, useful to the master, prepared for every good work. If you want to be a useful vessel in God's hand, I have to turn away from all sins. Now there are many preachers who do not turn away from sins.

You may think that they are very useful because so many people come for their meetings and they preach so many wonderful things. But if they have not turned away from sin, one day when they stand before the Lord and they say, Lord we preached so many messages, He will say, get away from me, you who work sin in your life. So dear brothers and sisters, let us take these matters very seriously.

Ask the Lord to give you a very sensitive conscience to sin. Lord, most important in my life, I am going to be very sensitive to sin in my life. I believe one way we can test it is this.

In the old testament, there was no teaching on being saved from sin. There was no promise, I will save you from all your sins. But there is a promise, I will heal you from your diseases.

That is old testament. It is good, He heals us today also. But there is something more than that.

So I look at it like this, that if I am more afraid of sickness than of sin, then I am like an old testament believer. But if I am more afraid of sickness than of sin, then I am like an old testament believer. For example, you go to a doctor for a check up and he says you got cancer.

You go to a doctor for a check up and he says you got cancer. Maybe you are a young mother with small children. Or a father, young man.

And the doctor says you got cancer. You will live only for 3 months. You will die.

What will you do? You will go and weep before the Lord. Oh God, please heal me of this cancer. Won't you be disturbed if you know that you are going to leave all your children alone and die in 3 months? Won't you be disturbed if you know that you are going to leave all your children alone and die in 3 months? How much will you weep before the Lord? You don't like that cancer.

You hate it. That is how we treat disease. Now let me take another example.

Supposing you get angry. Do you weep like that? Do you weep and say, Oh God, please deliver me from this anger. This anger is worse than cancer.

No, we won't pray like that. We pray, Oh Lord, I slipped up today. I am a little sorry.

Tomorrow also I will do it, but please forgive me. Next week also I will get angry, but please forgive me. Do you really believe that anger is worse than cancer? How many of you can honestly say? Don't tell me, tell the Lord.

Lord, I believe that anger is worse than cancer. I will tell you why it is serious. See, in Matthew 5, Jesus said in verse 22, you are angry with your brother.

In verse 22, you will be guilty of the court. If you say you are a fool, then you will go to hell. You see three steps to hell.

First step is anger. Then it comes out of your mouth. Something more comes out of your mouth.

And it says, you go to hell. What do you learn from verse 22? Anger will not take you to hell in one day. But finally it will take you to hell.

Is that the word of Jesus or not? I say, if you don't believe it, take a pen and scratch it out from the Bible and say, I don't believe that. And write down on the side, Lord Jesus, I don't believe this. This is wrong.

But I believe. I believe what Jesus said. If I get angry, I won't go to hell tomorrow.

But I am going step by step by step by step. Finally I will be in hell. Ok, now tell me, how many of you believe that cancer will take you to hell? Cancer may take you to the grave, but not to hell.

There are many people in heaven who died of cancer. Do you know that? Many believers, I know them myself, who died of cancer. They did not go to hell, they went to heaven.

So cancer cannot take anybody to hell. But anger, what is it saying here? Step by step it will lead you to hell. Now you tell me, which is more serious? Anger or cancer? You understood? Which should you hate more? Which should you run away from more? Which should you take more seriously? If you name the name of Jesus, turn away from sin.

I told you, I used to get angry. Because nobody preached against it in any church. How can they preach? The preacher himself is getting angry, how can he preach against it? Then I studied the word of God.

I saw, this is a very serious thing. I saw words like Ephesians 4.31. It says, put away all anger. Ephesians 4.31. Put it away.

All anger. And I said, Lord, I don't know how many years it will take for me to get rid of it. It's like getting a PhD degree.

It may take 20 years. But I am going to get it. If you take it seriously like that, don't just read that verse everyday.

That was a nice verse. Depart from iniquity. You can go home and say, we had a good series of meetings.

The subject was depart from iniquity. And if you don't give up all anger, these meetings will not help you at all. I want to encourage you, take God's word seriously.

Say, Lord, I want to turn away from all anger in my life. I want to depart from it. I want to run away from it.

I mean, if you see a lion chasing you. Suppose you went to the zoo. And somehow the lion broke out from the cage and is chasing you.

How will you run? Even if you are an old man, you will run. Do you run away like that from anger? Depart from all iniquity. You see, that lion will kill me.

I have got to run. Anger can kill you too. That lion can't send you to hell, but anger can send you to hell.

You know, I have preached against this for 30 years. But I find very few believers who take it seriously. It's a great grief to my heart.

So many preachers, so many believers, they read it in scripture, but they still are more afraid of cancer than anger. And God sees that. God says, I am not going to help them.

They are not serious about my word. My prayer is that all of you will become serious about God's word in these 2-3 days. God bless you.

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