

The Confession of Sin

Written by Dr. Harold R. Carpenter -



Dr. Harold & Myrna
Carpenter

TEXT: Luke 15:11-24

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons: 12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them [his] living. 13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. 14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. 15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. 16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. 17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, 19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. 20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. 21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. 22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: 23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: 24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

INTRODUCTION:

Of all the stories told and all the parables related by our Lord, this is perhaps the most commonly known even among non-Christians. "The Prodigal Son" has come to be a cliché indicating youthful rebellion, wasteful habits, and immoral conduct. Much could be said about

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this wayward son and even about his brother who was wayward in other ways. However, this morning I want to focus on just four words from our text, "**Father, I have sinned!**"

These are the four most important words the Prodigal Son, you, or anyone else can ever say. These four words are the key that unlocks the door to eternal life. And, strange as it may seem, they seem to be the four most difficult words we can bring ourselves to utter.

Let me briefly list some of the sinful attitudes and actions of this young man and then proceed to deal with the larger problem of sin that cannot be overcome without these four words.

1. Disrespect for his parents
2. Rejection of wise counsel
3. Greed
4. Lust
5. Immorality

The Lord indicated that the inability to recognize the sinful qualities in the life of this young man was a form of insanity, for the story says, "**And when he came to himself,**" a clear indication that the person who walks in sin is not in his right mind.

The psalmist David declared, "**The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.**" (Psalm 14:1)

I would like for us to consider some clear implications regarding sin in this story:

1. Don't sin. (The best advice is not even to begin to sin.)
2. If you are sinning, stop it!
3. The first step in overcoming sin is to recognize it.
4. The second step is to confess it in sincere repentance.
5. The third step is to root it out and change your attitude and conduct.

I. DON'T SIN!

A. The biblical term for sin is *hamartia*, meaning "to miss the mark."

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B. The mark for which we strive

1. To keep the commandments of God:

Deuteronomy 11:1 **Therefore thou shalt love the LORD thy God , and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, always.**

1 John 5: 3 **For this is the love of God , that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.**

2. To do the will of God

3. A sanctified life:

1 Thessalonians 4: 3 **For this is the will of God, even your sanctification.** C. Some sinful conduct in many cases is clearly specified in Sacred Scripture by the phrase, "

Thou shalt not....

"

D. In other cases sinful conduct is simply a violation of the principles related to love, mercy, justice, and compassion.

E. If you do not take the first bite of the forbidden fruit you will never develop an appetite for it!

1. Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden:

a. They had everything they need and nearly everything they could desire.

b. But, just this one thing, "**Thou shalt not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.**" (Genesis 2:17)

c. Rom. 5:12 "**Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:**"

2. Samson and the girl from Timnath

a. A Nazarite from the womb

b. Get me this girl!

c. Lord, just one more time, give me your strength. F. What would the world be like today if Adam had not taken that first bite and Samson had not gone on that first date?

II. IF YOU ARE SINNING, STOP IT NOW!

A. Paul's admonition

1. Rom. 5:1 **Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:**

2. Rom. 6:1-2 **What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?**

3. Rom. 6:12-14 **Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13 Neither yield ye your members [as] instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members [as] instruments of righteousness unto God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.**

B.

John's assurance

1. God's ideal—Matthew 5: 48 **Be ye therefore perfect , even as your Father which is in**

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heaven is perfect.

2. The human reality—Romans 3: 10 **As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:**
3. God's provision—1 John 1: 8-9 **If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**
4. The four-word declaration of the Prodigal Son brings forgiveness, righteousness, and justification

III. ROOT OUT THE REMNANTS AND REMINDERS OF SIN!

A. Justification is an act of God on our behalf

1. Romans 3: 28 **Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.**

2. Titus 3:7 **That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.**

B. Sanctification is the product of our will and actions

1. Romans 6:12-14 **Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.**

2. Hebrews 12:1 **Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,**

responsibility for righteous living is ours!

1. Don't frequent sinful places.
2. Don't keep sinful company.
3. Don't fill your mind with sinful things.
4. Don't subject yourself unnecessarily to temptation.
5. Replace the negatives with positives:

a. Good role models.

b. Good company-the fellowship of the Saints.

c. Good habits.

d. Good attitudes.

CONCLUSION:We live in a sinful age.

It seems that the intent of the producers of the current TV shows is to see how vulgar and shocking they can be, not what values they can instill in society.

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It seems that the fashion rage is to see how much of the human body can be placed on display, not how well it can be dressed.

It seems that the goal of contemporary music groups is to see how sensuous they can be, not how well they can sing.

That which is most highly valued in our society today is for the most part what the Bible calls sin.

Jesus warned in the Parable of the Sower that the things of this world would choke off the very spiritual life of the believer:

Mark 4:18-19 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, 19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

Do you remember the words of Jesus concerning the unfruitful tree? It is to be cut down and thrown into the fire.

Jesus indicated to his disciples in the Upper Room that there is a natural enmity between the believer and the cultures of this world. We are children of the Kingdom, the cultures of this world for the most part are devoted to the prince of this world:

John 15:19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

Don't sin! Don't keep on sinning! Don't allow the cares of this world to choke off your Christian life and testimony.

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This is the outline of the sermon Dr. Harold Carpenter preached 05 October 2003. Dr. Carpenter

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