

## THE SERIOUSNESS OF SIN

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John 16:5-11

1. Several weeks ago we looked at the person and work of the Holy Spirit as outlined by Jesus in John 13-16.
2. This morning I want us to revisit the passage we just read and expand on the thoughts I had shared previously.
3. It is imperative that we understand the Holy Spirit's work in relationship to convicting people of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

NOTE:

- a. Jesus had previously told the disciples, "When the Helper comes...He will testify about Me." 15:26
  - b. Here Jesus declared, "When He comes He will convict the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment."
  - c. The Gospel, properly presented, involves both bad news (man's hopeless situation) and good news (God's remedy for man's hopeless situation).
  - d. Genuine repentance takes place when the Holy Spirit convicts a person of the hopelessness of his situation while making it possible for that person to embrace God's Remedy (the Lord Jesus Christ) through faith.
4. One of the weaknesses of many approaches to evangelism is that they ignore or downplay the issue of sin.

### **I. He will convict the world concerning sin...because they do not believe in Me.**

A. The root cause of all sin is rebellion. Isaiah 53:6

"All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him."

B. The ultimate act of rebellion is to refuse to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Paul told the Athenians, "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that **all people everywhere should repent**, because **He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in (based on) righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.**" Acts 17:30-31

2. Jesus began His preaching ministry by declaring, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." Mark 1:15

C. Note how Paul described the previous condition of the Christians in Ephesus prior to their conversion. Eph 2:1-3

"And you were (all) dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you (all) formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience (rebellion, obstinacy). 3 Among them we too **all** formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest."

NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

1. Sin is embracing the world's thoughts and ways (the course of this world) rather than God's thoughts and ways. Isa 55:6-9

6 "Seek the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near. 7 Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the LORD, and He will have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. 8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. 9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts."

2. Sin is being under the control of the devil, the prince of the power of the air; the spirit that exploits our disobedience or rebellious natures.

3. Sin is indulging the desires of the flesh and the mind.

4. Sin places us in the category of "children of wrath." John 3:36

"He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, **but the wrath of God abides on him.**"

D. In commenting on Ephesians 2:1-3 John MacArthur wrote, "Total depravity does not mean that every person's lifestyle is equally corrupt and wicked, or that sinners are always as bad as they can be. It means that mankind is corrupt in every regard. The unredeemed are depraved in their minds, their hearts, their wills, their emotions, and their physical beings. They are utterly incapable of anything but sin. Even when they perform humanitarian, philanthropic, or religious deeds, they do them for their own glory, not God's (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:31). Sinners may not always sin as grotesquely as possible, but they cannot do anything to please God or earn His favor. Sin has tainted every aspect of their being. This is what it means to be spiritually dead." (*The Gospel According to the Apostles*, pg. 65)

**II. He will convict the world concerning righteousness...because I go to the Father, and you no longer behold Me."**

A. Jesus is God's standard for righteousness because He was and is the perfect reflection of that righteousness. Heb 1:1-3

"God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. 3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power."

B. All men are sinners before God because they fall short of His standard for righteousness-the righteousness of Christ. Romans 3:23

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

C. The righteousness God requires is not a high level of human righteousness, but rather the righteousness of Christ. Matthew 5:20

"For I (Jesus) say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees (the epitome of human righteousness), you shall not enter the kingdom of God."

D. We need to be convinced that the righteousness God requires is not of this world.

E. When we are convicted concerning sin and the need for righteousness, and subsequently repent and embrace Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, God imparts to us, or clothes us with, the righteousness of Christ.

### III. He will convict the world concerning judgment...because the ruler of this world has been judged.”

A. Those who are a part of the Domain of Darkness will be judged, along with its ruler who has already been judged, because they have not been transferred to the Kingdom of God’s Beloved Son. Colossians 1:13

“For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

B. No one will escape judgment according to Hebrews 9:27

“It is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.”

C. The Bible speaks of two judgments.

1. The judgment seat of Christ where only Christians will be present. 2 Cor 5:8-10

“Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”

NOTE: Here there will be no reference to sin. Heb 9:27-28

27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, 28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation **without reference to sin**, to those who eagerly await Him.

2. The Great White Throne Judgment reserved for the lost. Rev 20:11-15

“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

a. Those who stand before Christ in this judgment will be judged from the things that were written in the books (of the Bible). John 12:48

Jesus said, “He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.”

b. They will be judged according to their deeds (works of the law by which no one will be or can be justified). See also Gal 5:19-21

“Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

c. They will be judged based on whether their names are recorded in the book of life.

D. Which appointment with judgment will you keep?

## **APPLICATION**

1. Those in whom the Holy Spirit does His gracious work of conviction manifest the godly sorrow that leads to repentance and the genuine faith that embraces Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
2. Apart from the convicting work of the Holy Spirit no person can be genuinely converted.
3. Having convicted us of sin, righteousness and judgment the Holy Spirit lifts up the Lord Jesus Christ before our formerly sin-blinded minds and hearts and grants to us the grace to repent towards God and to embrace Jesus by faith as our all sufficient substitute in whom all of our needs are met.