



1 John 1:5-2:2

1 John 2:9-11

Sin. Sin biscuits, sin drink. PP

Of course sin in Spanish means without as they actually have another word for sin which is pecado.

That's lucky because there was a Cardinal in Spanish speaking Philippines who was once called Cardinal Sin. Actually to Catholics, one of the seven deadly sins is known as a cardinal sin: no connection!

What is sin? We've all heard the word and it conjures up all sorts of ideas in your mind. We all know it's something bad. But how bad is bad? PP

- 1. transgression of divine law**
- 2. any act regarded as such a transgression, esp. a willful or deliberate violation of some religious or moral principle.**
- 3. any reprehensible or regrettable action, behavior, lapse, etc.; great fault or offense: It's a sin to waste time.**

Sin is doing something wrong and in the Bible there are plenty of definitions of what doing something wrong is. The 10 commandments is a prime example. But it isn't just a case of doing wrong things that is sinful, but an attitude of mind. Here's the words of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel: PP (out of pos)

Matt 5:21 "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' 22 But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell. 27 "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' 28 But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart

So sin isn't just doing wrong things, it's thinking them too! Ouch. Why? Because in the end, the root of what we do starts out of a fundamental disrespect of others.

If you look back at the dictionary definition then we see that sin is also defined as transgressing divine or moral law. So what is divine law? PP There's lots about it in the Bible but actually it's summed up in just these words:

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. Love your neighbour as you love yourself. From Mark 12:30

What does it mean? Love God, love your neighbour. Love is one of the most important words in the NT. As you know in English, the word love means many other things

**"I love you" (romance)
"make love" (sex)
"I'd love to do that" (like a lot)
"I'd love to throttle him" (perverse!)**

In English, one word covers all (rather inadequately). But in Greek, they had different words to describe all those emotions. When it came to Christians talking about loving God and loving one another, they used a special word *agape* because they wanted it to be distinct and unique. What *agape* means is putting the needs of others before yourself, right to the point of laying down your life for them.

Take a look at the person next to you. What would you be prepared to do for them? Die for them? Tough one that. But that is what *agape* means. Now think of the person in the world you like least. What would you do for them? Would you die for them?

If you think that's a rather difficult idea then look at this verse. PP (back to pos) [1 John 4:9](#) This is what love is: it is not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the means by which our sins are forgiven.

Love is the greatest expression of what God is – God is love. He placed the needs of others before Himself – even people who rebelled against Him and ignored Him. He loved them and was prepared to go to the most extraordinary lengths to rescue them – that's you and me included.

Sin is ultimately the reverse of love – just pure selfishness – gratifying our own desires and doing what suits us at the expense of God or someone else. We might not think it even hurts anybody else. I saw an advert over Christmas. I'm not sure whether it was for drink-driving or smoking. It just says – I'm only hurting myself when I do it. It has the picture of a grieving family. Sin is ultimately destructive because it separates us eternally from God if it's not dealt with.

PP If I wanted to sum it up we can say that sin is – doing wrong things, thinking wrong things and not loving God or people.

But you may say to me – I don't do many sins. I'm a decent bloke, I'm a decent woman. The trouble is that the Bible says that the law of God is so tough that we have only got to break it one one respect and we have broken it all. Yes, but it's only a little sin – a white lie, thinking bad of someone, a naughty word. Look at this glass of water. Let's say I put one drop of cyanide in this glass? Would you drink it? I mean, it isn't much cyanide is it? Surely it can't do as much harm as a glassful. One drop will kill. One sin kills your relationship with God. Sin is missing the mark. PP

And how many sins do we get to do in life. Let's just say we do three sins a day. You do one wrong thing, think one wrong thing and aren't particularly loving to someone. Look how it tots up. 3 sins a day – 21 a week – 1092 a year. So that means if we have our allotted threescore years plus 10 – 70 years, then we'll commit over 70,000 sins – and it takes only one to keep us from God. PP He's more than just in saying that all have sinned and come short of His glory as we'll all score into the hundreds of thousands.

PP And God is just and must punish sin. If you think that is mean, then think on this: PP the bank robber illustration. However sorry you may be, however much you would like to pay the bank back, if you rob a bank, you've transgressed the law and the judge will send you to prison – and rightly so.

God is just to do that. But we have already learned that He is a God of love too. He's a God that does not want anyone to perish – to be lost, but give an opportunity for everyone to turn to Him. PP God's love and justice came together in one person – His Son, Jesus Christ

PP

1 John 4:9 This is what love is: it is not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the means by which our sins are forgiven.

And how's that done – by accepting Jesus. God is prepared to offer us forgiveness of sins and a new life in Him as a gift – all we have to do is receive it. PP So how do we deal with sin?

◆ **God accepts those who accept Jesus PP**

Have you accepted God's free gift of forgiveness and life yet. If not, you can here, today. No-one is ever too bad to become a Christian. Jesus death was sufficient to deal with all our sins. Let's put it another way: PP

Here it is in a nutshell: Just as one person did it wrong and got us in all this trouble with sin and death, another person did it right and got us out of it. But more than just getting us out of trouble, he got us into life!

Romans 5:18 (The Message)

Here's the second point PP

◆ **God freely forgives**

The amazing thing about God is that when He says He forgives, He forgives. And that's it. He doesn't bring it up again. God says of people He forgives: your sins and iniquities I will remember no more. He doesn't forget what we've done – but He promises to never hold it against us – we're forgiven and the slate is clean.

I have known people who go down years carrying burdens of sin with the. Something they have done wrong many years ago. Maybe it was a dramatic fall from grace as a Christian. Maybe it was the breakup of a relationship that was their fault. Maybe it has been a past which they are deeply ashamed of.

When we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Maybe you've been a Christian but you've slipped away from the Lord. Maybe you've been away from Church, maybe you were once on fire for the Lord, now you burn cooler. You feel chained and shackled by your sin. Can God really accept me back?

If we confess our sins god is FAITHFUL and JUST and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Come before Him and confess your sins to Him this morning. Break the chains. Walk free again.

This is for real. I'm not kidding. Forgiveness before God is really just that. God forgives and allows you to turn a new page in your life. I know that sin can be harmful to our lives and it is sometimes hard to deal with the consequences of sin. But when you are forgiven, God gives you the grace to deal with that and we shall explore that in the next couple of weeks.

But start with this – if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. PP

◆ **Don't live with sin**

Finally we need to deal with sin by not living with it. Because sin get's in the way of our relationship with God.

PP

The story is told of a water supply that developed a leak and a frog managed to get into the system. It crawled up the pipe which began to get narrower and narrower until it got jammed. As a result, the water no longer flowed very well so lots of the frog's chums also went into the pipe and got stuck too. Eventually the water stopped flowing completely and the workmen had to dig up the pipe and remove the remains of the frogs and the water flowed again.

One sin leads to another. But sin, as believers, cuts us off from our relationship with God. And as a result we go cold and drift away from Him. And it starts with one sin – that piece of gossip, that stolen stationary from work, that sickie, that look at late night porn – and it always escalates. Why do we sin? I've kind of made sin out to be bad but the truth is sin can be fun, it's convenient because it covers our back, it gives us a buzz, it's daring, it gives us personal satisfaction.

But as a Christian it will shipwreck you. Maybe you already know that God is challenging you about something in your life or your lifestyle that keeps you from Him. Maybe it is something only you know about – but you know it is keeping you from Go. It is keeping you from His presence. It is keeping your from His power in your life. Maybe it is damaging your relationships with others.

Don't live with it. Break free. Look at this verse. PP God does not want us to sin. But we do – but we must need to deal with it because Jesus did to deal with it and He's still dealing with it before God today.

Come before Him and confess your sin and find forgiveness afresh. Next week we shall see how God has given us His Holy Spirit so we have the power to live in the way that we should.

As an aside and to close. PP What can we do so that we know we aren't sinnig? There's plenty covered in this verse and by the power of the Spirit this is what we could and should be.

Appeal.

Preached at MRBC, Felixstowe

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