

From the Preacher's Pen... In spite of what some people think, sin and death are not a preacher's favorite things to talk about. That idea is akin to believing that doctors just enjoy seeing blood, guts and disease because that's what they often have to work with. The reality is that we do this job to alleviate suffering and hopefully prevent death. And that is the real reason that our Great Physician deals in these same issues with us.

Consider an illustration that I've used several times in sermons and articles before:

Three Things Sin Will Always Do

In life there are two major ways that we learn. Some things we learn the hard way by personal experience. Some things we can hopefully learn from seeing the experience of others. We've all noticed that the lesson of personal experience is often far more effective at staying with us.

When it comes to the seriously deadly things in life, though, it is obvious that the lesson would be far better learned from the experience of others. That simple point brings us to much of God's reason behind numerous lessons that He includes in His word.

Consider three lessons about the dangers of the things that sin will always do.

1) Sin will always... take you farther than you want to go!

The Hebrew writer (Hebrews 11:24-26) reflected that Moses made a grownup, adult choice not to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. That intentional choice meant that he lost the prestige, power and authority of an Egyptian leader. That choice meant he would spend the majority of his adult life fleeing Egypt in the desert.

It would be easy and convenient for us to see his *loss* and miss the larger picture. Verse 25 reminds us that Moses made another choice: *choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin*. Why? Because he considered *the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward*.

Look at that last thought again. Reproach is literally the word for disgrace or insult. The *worst* thing that comes from faithfully following Christ is greater than the greatest riches of the treasures of this world!

Jesus put it this way, *For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?* (Matthew 16:26) I believe Moses would have said, *Amen!*

Clearly, the pleasures of sin for a season may yield a long and worthless harvest!

2) Sin will always... keep you longer than you want to stay!

Beware lest God gives up on you! One of the most frightening things that God may do to us is too simply allow us to have what we think we want. In Romans (cf. 1:24-32) the Apostle Paul repeatedly points out the consequences of God rejecting and abandoning those who choose sin over obedience to Him.

By choosing sin we force God to put us where we deserve. The result is dishonor (verse 24), degrading (verse 26), depravity (verse 28) and getting exactly what we earn with our sin. Our earnings (our wages of sin in Romans 6:23) include being filled with *all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful* (verses 29-31).

Having made that choice to live in sin God further declares that we are both ignorant and worthy of eternal death (verse 32). Remember that God uses exactly the same word for eternity in Hell that He does for the duration of Heaven. Eternity is a long time to stay where neither God nor any of His goodness exists!

3) Sin will always... cost you more than you wanted to pay!

If you really insist on choosing sin, then you have to pay for sin. Paul reminds the saints at Thessalonica that, if you don't choose salvation, then you choose for God to help you believe any false thing that will lead to eternal death (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12). That's an astronomically high price to believe what you want and enjoy wrong instead of right!

As we've already noted, the well deserved earnings of sin (Romans 6:23)... is death! But there's also one more part to that same verse and to the story of sin. There is the gift of God!

That brings us to one important final lesson about sin, and that is the one thing that God can do if you let Him. He will save you from your sins! Romans 6:23 says, *For the wages of sin*

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Opportunities to worship, study & serve:

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY 10 AM

WORSHIP 11 AM

EVENING WORSHIP 6 PM

WEDNESDAY 7 PM

THURSDAY LADIES' BIBLE CLASS 10 AM

Congregational Potluck 3rd Sunday
each month after morning worship
(except June, July & August)

Welcome to all!
We are glad you are here!

Enter to Worship...
Leave to Serve

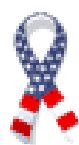
Welcome to our visitors today! We hope & pray you'll be blessed by your time with us & will join us again soon!

Our Prayer List: Keep the following in prayer this week as you "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17): Nora McNeil, Matthew Odom, Heather Ries, Hunter Shirley, Rene Turner, Ruth West, Everett Martin, Anna Mae Hardin, the Najera family, Bill Hall, Reta Wallace, Jim Holder, Kristi Martin, Wally Myers, Cindy Turpin, Millie Cunningham and...

Our Missionaries: Jack Farber and Aaron Knotts and families.

Previously Announced Family & Friends: Robin & Marc Estabrook (Julie Evan's sister & nephew), David Reffner (Flora Doster's grandson with MS), Art Stoneking & wife (friends of Carl Catozzi, cancer), Jeremiah Haller (Flora Doster's grandson), Annette (Cindy Turpin's sister), Cole Myers (grandson of friend of Myers), Sheila Simpson, Lillian Wilhite & Mirlene Smith (relatives of Lynn Shirley), Teresa Acosta, Rosemary Glasier (Crystal Mora-Landroth's mother), John Hoover's relatives with personal difficulties, Shelly Cooper (friend of Carl Catozzi), Lucas Espinoza (Brian Campbell's friend), Kaesha Raffterfer (Gene Pinkston's cousin, cancer), Chuck Keels (friend of Grubbs with cancer), Terri Fillipski (cancer, Julie Evans' cousin).

Special Requests: WBS & WEI Bible study students; Kevin & Nancy Chambers & World Christian Broadcasting; Judy Hagner, son Preston, daughter Angela & son James. Brandi Schroeder (Flora Doster's granddaughter with MS); Dallas Purcella's mother; Paulina's father (Arnold); Julie's father; Laurel's father.



OUR MILITARY PERSONNEL: Nate Panka (Cleo Wise's grandson); Javier Najera; Fernando Najera, Frank Torres (Javier's brother & cousin); Eric Shirley; Trevor Farrow (Allen's son); Scott Hoover (John's son); Ariel Gomez; Paul Sipes & April Belovedstone (Sue Wolfe's son & daughter); Robert Strickland (Cleo Wise's grand-nephew); Ismael Lopez; Robinson Goldman (Cindy Turpin's son-in-law); Destanie Aragon; Nathan Bagley.

New: Jason: son of Carl Catozzi in need of prayers; Dr. Yanni: friend of John Hoover with cancer; Michael Lightheart: son-in-law of Flora Doster, health problems; Jimmy Handtegen: friend of David Davis following a stroke; Derwin Jackson & family: with his job; Sean & Vickie: Carl Catozzi's friends with struggles in their lives; Terri Hoover: John's daughter-in-law with serious health issues; Monica Lopez: George Mora's aunt with breast cancer; Jacob Shirley: struggles; Rhett Booher: Gary & Toni Pierce's grandson: Traumatic Brain Injury while in the Army; Ray Stephenson family: youngest son's cancer has spread; John Mark: in Afghanistan in danger for his faith; Jimmy Davis: friend of Mike Evans with melanoma; Adele Fink: recovering from colon cancer; George Ponter: Brian Campbell's cousin with multiple struggles; Amy Vestal: lupus and intestinal problems; Anna Price: via Kimberlee Myers; Chuck Hedrick family: with multiple health problems; Kathy Gonzalez: grandmother of Heavyn & Tatum with cancer.

Sue Wolfe; LaVerne Jackson's mother; Celeste Wallace: health

problems; Sandra Watson, Sue Shepperd & Elzie Shirley: Lynn's family with illnesses; Ed Baum; Chuck Hedrick; Ray Stephenson; Gene Pinkston: back problems; Delbert White's Granddaughter Jessica; Tom Hoover: (John's brother)

Steve McDonald: Jean Grubbs granddaughter's husband, tests.

Larry West: complications of diabetes.

Donald Helton: won't need a liver transplant but is on dialysis until he has a kidney transplant.

Kirrin Kerby: (Jean Grubbs grandson).

Thomas Vestal: Amy's infant cousin, head surgery February 12.

Jeff Davis: having tests for stomach problems.

Billy Sterling Sr.: Carlos' father with declining health.

Also Our New Christians, those travelling and especially those with spiritual struggles.

Urgent! Special prayers needed. For decades North Korea has been the most dangerous place in the world to be a Christian. Their leader has turned himself into their god. Pray mightily during the Olympics in South Korea that God will break down the bamboo-and-iron wall North Korea has had up against the gospel & freedom for the past 70 years.

Although North Korea has been banned by every country in the world from the Olympics, this year is an exception. Not only is North Korea being allowed to send its athletes, it is sending 400-500 "fans".

There is talk of an internet advertising blitz in South Korea during the Olympics by WEI & WBS to reach at least some of the hundreds of untouchable North Koreans & that they will take the gospel back with them when/if they return to North Korea.

After the Olympics, Malcolm Parsley, missionary of 57 years in Korea will follow up with balloon drops at the DMZ of short WEI notices that the prevailing winds will carry into North Korea.

Now is the time. We have waited 70 years to reach lost souls starving for the gospel in their vacuum. Pray hard. Pray mightily. Pray & do not stop praying for our efforts to break through to the masses of lost souls in North Korea.

Upcoming Events...

Men's Business Meeting: TONIGHT after evening worship.

Potluck: February 18 — Group #2 [Toni Pierce's group] set-up, serve & clean-up

Monthly Singing: February 25 at 2:30 in Eloy

5th Wednesday Prayer & Song Meeting: May 30.

is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Did you catch all that? Sin will actually do all these horrible things for and to you. But God offers a choice. He offers hope and another way.

Yes, it IS a FREE GIFT! But don't let the price tag confuse you, as so many have. That gift, that promise is ONLY to those IN Christ Jesus. And the only way that you can be IN Christ Jesus today is to be born into the family, the body of Christ.

If we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection (Romans 6:5). There is NO promise for those of us living on this side of the cross for salvation from sin without baptism! Without that uniting with Christ in burial (baptism!) and death (to sin), there is NO uniting with him in resurrection (cf. Romans 6:3-7).

Without freedom from sin there is no life! Remember those three things that sin will always do for you. And make the choice to unite yourself with Christ in His way as the one thing that can save you.

— Lester P. Bagley



From Katheryn to all my Brothers & Sisters: I am so proud of you! There is not a more dedicated, loving, & sincere congregation anywhere. John Mark (not his real name for his protection) was able to pick up the funds a few days ago & has already started paying back all his friends & relatives who helped him support his family the year he was out of work. (He formerly worked for Save the Children, but they pulled out.) Along with \$2200 donated by 2 other individuals who "know" John Mark, our congregation rallied with the rest of the \$2800 to reach our goal of \$5000. Now, without the pressure of his creditors, he can be more at peace when he spreads the gospel in a hostile environment where he is always a moment away from being imprisoned, tortured, and/or killed for preaching Jesus to his countrymen. Such love. I think he is the bravest man any of us will ever meet. If you want to know what he is like "in person," ask Derwin Jackson who often speaks with him on the phone whenever he is in Afghanistan. He says things like, "That John Mark is fearless! He will plough into any situation, no matter how dangerous. He knows no fear!" Again, thank you for sharing in John Mark's work like this & for your prayers. He knows you pray for him.

Praise the Lord
Allen Comstock
came last Lord's Day asking for prayers that he better serve His Lord



Doing good to all people...
(Galatians 6:10)
Thus far in February, our clothing room workers have clothed over 59 people!
Next open to the public: March 5

Last Week: 13+ Pew-Packers



Be "in the picture" every week!

✓ Checkup ✓
How are we doing?

Attendance Last Week:
Sunday Morning Bible Class = 73
Sunday Morning Worship = 133
Sunday Evening Worship = 65
Wednesday Evening = 66

Giving
2018 Weekly Budget = \$3,015.00
Contribution Last Week = \$3,621.00

Church of Christ
805 East Racine Place
Casa Grande, AZ 85122

Postage

TO:

Privileged to Serve

Sunday Morning February 11

Adult Bible Class: • *Acts of the Apostles* Lester Bagley
Announcements: Curt Odom
Song Leader:..... Mike Evans
Prayer:.....David Davis
Serve Communion:....George Mora, John Hoover, Kim Myers, Tom Haney, Brian Campbell
Sermon: • *Divine Necessity*..... Lester Bagley
Closing Prayer:Allen Farrow

Count Contribution: Mike Evans & Bill Hall

Sunday Evening February 11

Song Leader:..... Mike Evans
Prayer:..... Chuck Hedrick
Sermon: • *Kept on Course by the Cross* Lester Bagley
Serve Communion:..... Kim Myers
Closing Prayer: Frank Campbell

Wednesday Evening February 14

Song Leader:..... Curt Odom
Prayer:..... Jim Holder
Devo:.....Lester Bagley
Closing Prayer:Ron Cook

Anniversaries



February 18: *Nick & Samantha Odom*
February 19: *Curtis & Jackie Odom*
February 23: *Sam & Sherri Fields*
February 23: *Bill & Phyllis Hall*
March 1: *Chris & Mickey Didelotte*
March 5: *Everrett & Jeanne Martin*

Birthdays



February 15: *Cheryl Campbell*
February 19: *Tom Haney*
February 25: *Jim Holder*
February 25: *Louise Terpstra*
February 27: *Matthew Odom*
February 28: *Kristi Ann Martin*
March 3: *Morgan Parry – Toni Pierce*
March 6: *Allison Chavez – Amy Vestal*