

Assurance of Salvation
Part 33

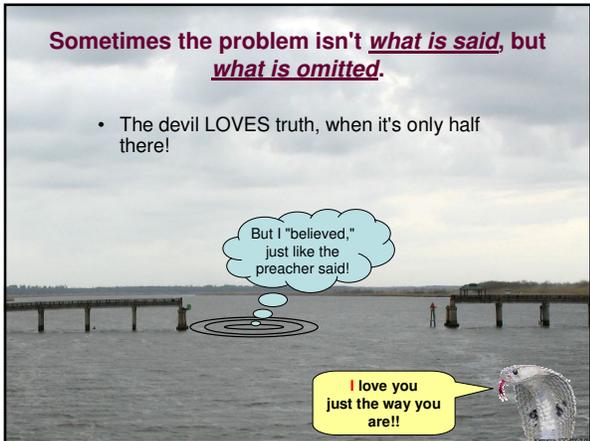
Repentance
(#3)

The **false** gospel 

- It wants you to *feel good* about **yourself**.

The Good News (**true** gospel)

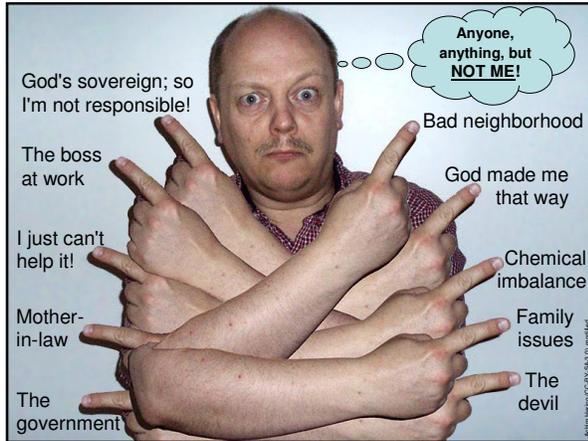
- It wants you to be *truthful* about **everything**.



- Three Characteristics of **GENUINE** Repentance:
1. **Abhorrence of sin** as being *against God*.
 2. **Abhorrence of self** as the *willful agent* of sin.
 3. **Actual change** in one's life, reformation.
- (Our focus today is on #2.)

A question we ALL need to answer for ourselves.

Who do you blame for your sin?



People or things may influence us, but it is we ourselves who must take the final blame for what we do.

- People who encourage us to sin will answer to God for their own actions.
- But that won't allow us to escape our own judgment, based on our own willful choices.

THE REAL ISSUE is not just sin, but us.

- It's not some ambiguous "sin" floating around.
- It's we ourselves, not someone else, who chooses to do our sinning.

SIN HAS BECOME OUR VERY NATURE

- We should associate the word "sin" not only with what we **DO**, but with what we **ARE**.
 - Not just "I do evil," but "I am evil."

We sin by **NATURE**

- The inclination to sin is in our genetics!
 - It is "us" – each of us, not someone else.
- This refers to our DESIRE to sin, our ability to develop habits and addictions, etc.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

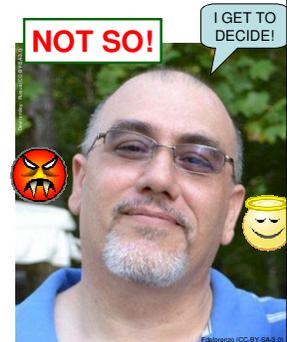
- These inclinations do not FORCE us to sin. We must still make the decision to do so

We sin by **CHOICE**

- Sin permeates our *attitudes* and *actions*!
- This refers to our determination
 - to *follow* our inclinations, and
 - to *suppress* what our consciences tell us is right.
- It is a deliberate act on our part
 - Deliberate, until we become *enslaved* by our sins.

Our struggle against (or for) sin:

- It's NOT:
 - the *devil* whispers into one ear ...
 - an *angel* whispers into the other ear...
 - and *we* are "neutral" and get to decide who we listen to.
- Rather, it's a fight between **DESIRES** and **CONSCIENCE**.



CONSCIENCE:

God has given ALL people a basic understanding of what is right.

- This awareness is inescapable, because we were created in God's image (Genesis 1:26-28). Also:

... what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.

Romans 1:19 (NIV)

By **CHOICE:**

We *suppress* that knowledge, and go our own way.

- We *choose* to do what our sinful inclinations desire.
- In doing so, we slowly *deaden* or *harden* our consciences.

By constantly **FOLLOWING** our **INCLINATIONS:**

- Our sinful desires become **stronger**.
- Our consciences become **weaker**.
- We can become so *calloused to the truth* that we reach the point we **no longer care about it**.
 - We even lose the ability to *recognize* it as true!

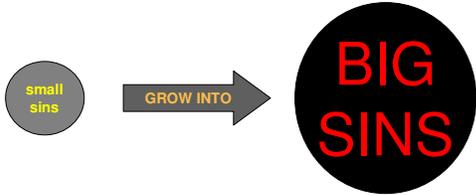
Eventually, we may **"fulfill" Scripture:**

- *Our consciences may be too deadened to know it.*

[People] ... whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. (1 Tim. 4:2b NIV)

... both their minds and consciences are corrupted. (Titus 1:15b NIV)

How people become "horrible sinners":



- Sexual predators begin with lust.
- Murderers begin with anger and hate.
- Chronic liars begins with "white lies."
- (Etc.)

You aren't there yet? Then **THANK GOD!**

- The only thing that keeps it from happening is the restraining power of the Holy Spirit.
– He even restrains the sin of UNSAVED people!
- It is because of God's restraining grace that **YOU HAVE NOT LIVED UP TO YOUR POTENTIAL FOR SIN.**

[PAUSE]

Time to thank God

- For his restraining influence in the world.
- For his restraining influence in us.
- Consider all the sins you *could have done, but didn't*. And **thank God** that it happened this way.

In all this, our only hope is **JESUS**.

- Without him, we are SLAVES to sin.
- But he offers to give us a NEW (and wonderful) MASTER!

Don't you know that ... you are slaves to the one whom you obey--whether you are **slaves to sin**, which leads to death, or **to obedience**, which leads to righteousness?
Romans 6:16b (NIV)

Jesus offers us **FREEDOM** from our slavery to sin!

- *But this change will not occur until we **repent** and **follow Jesus**.*
– Then, by the power of God, this change will occur.
- Without it, all we have to look forward to is a "DEAD END."

YOUR MISSION: **Questions to think about.**

- Do you have a burning awareness that ALL sin is against God?
– Do you abhor sin and love righteousness?

YOUR MISSION: Questions to think about.

- Do you have a burning awareness that ALL sin is against God?
 - Do you abhor sin and love righteousness?
- Do you have a burning awareness that humans are, by nature, rebels against God?
 - Do you abhor self and love God?

(About these questions)

- These questions relate to the first two aspects of repentance.
- IF your answers are a demonstration of REPENTANCE, there will be CHANGE in your life. (This is the topic for next week.)

THE ULTIMATE QUESTION:

After all that we did and are...

- **WHY** would God choose to have pity on us? (Obviously, it's NOT because we *deserve* it!)

[God] predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. (Ephes. 1:5-6 NIV)

Credits (1)

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