



Individual Responsibility Regarding Sin

Living in the Image of God
Module 03 Session 11

Banking Blessings Ministry
San Antonio, Texas
USA



Living in the Image of God

- God creates every person to represent him in interactions with others
- Be for others what God would be for them if he lived with us in human form
- He provides resources for people to perform the responsibilities and blesses those that do
- Program seeks to understand the meaning, resources, and human responsibilities and benefits of *Living in the Image of God*

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What We Will Learn

- Individual responsibility regarding sin
- Twofold
- Separate yourself from people, things, or events that may cause you to sin
- Don't instigate others to sin
- Based on Christ teaching to his disciples
- Matthew 18:6–9

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What We Will Learn

- Instigating others to sin
 - Cause other believer to turn away from God
 - Punishment could be inescapable
 - Matthew 18:6–7
- Sin by self
 - Thrown into eternal fire
 - Separate yourself from people, things, or events that may cause you to sin
 - Matthew 18:8–9

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Sin By Self

Matthew 18:8 If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire.

Matthew 18:9 And if your eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.

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Sin By Self cont'd

- Separate yourself from whatever may cause you to sin
- If people, separate yourself from them
- If things, separate yourself from the things
- If events, separate yourself from the events
- Better to endure the lack
- Than be judged a sinner and thrown into hell

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- Opposite of *Living in the Image of God*
- Christ provides several parables to explain sin and punishment for sin

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- Parable of the weeds [Matthew 13:24–29 and 37–43]
- Likens fate of sinners to weeds in a wheat farm

Matthew 13:40–43 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

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- Parable of the net [Matthew 13:47–50]
- Christ likens sinners to “bad fish” caught along with “good fish” in a fisher’s net

Matthew 13:49–50 This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

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- Parable of the Sheep and the Goats [Matthew 25:31–46]
- Christ explains God will judge people into two categories: the righteous and the wicked

Matthew 25:41–43 “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’”

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- God determines who is a sinner
- Will separate the righteous from sinners
- Eternal fire for all that God judges as sinner
- Eternal weeping and gnashing of teeth
- Repentance
 - Complete turnaround
 - To God and away from sin
 - Forgiveness

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Matthew 18:6 “If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

Matthew 18:7 Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to stumble! Such things must come, but woe to the person through whom they come!

- Don’t instigate others to sin

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Instigating Others to Sin

- Cause other believer to turn away from God
 - Person instigated to sin could instigate others
 - Causes others that cause others and chains of more others to turn away from God
- Repentance by an instigator
 - Does not guarantee repentance of others
 - Could be insufficient to reverse loss of souls
 - Could be insufficient for forgiveness

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Compare Two Sin Categories

- Instigating others to sin
 - Instigator repentance does not guarantee forgiveness
 - Forgiveness requires repentance of every instigated sinner (could be a long chain)
- Sin by self
 - Repentance means complete turn to God
 - Guarantees forgiveness

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What We Learned

- Do not instigate others to turn away from God
 - Those you instigate to sin may instigate others and chains of more others
 - Forgiveness requires repentance of all along the chain
- Separate yourself from people, things, or events that may cause you to sin
 - Eternal fire for all that God judges as sinner
 - Forgiveness requires repentance

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Individual Responsibility Regarding Sin

Living in the Image of God M03S11

Christ teaches two elements of the individual responsibility regarding sin. First, do not instigate others to turn away from God. Those you instigate may instigate others and chains of more others. Because forgiveness requires repentance of all along the chain, repentance by an instigator alone could be insufficient. Therefore, the punishment for instigating another person to sin could be inescapable. Second, do not commit sin, even if instigated by another. Separate yourself from people, things, or events that may cause you to sin. However, in contrast to sin committed by instigating others, repentance from a sin committed by self guarantees forgiveness.

We discuss Christ teaching to understand that the individual responsibility regarding sin has two elements. First, you should separate yourself from whoever or whatever that may cause you to sin. If these are people, separate yourself from them; if things, separate yourself from the things; if events, keep yourself far away from the events. You are individually responsible for any sin you commit, even if the sin is instigated by others. [Matthew 18:8–9]: “If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.”

Second, you should not instigate others to sin. Instigating another person to sin means doing something that causes a person that believes in God to turn away from God. Turning away from God means turning to sin [Matthew 18:6–7]: “If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to stumble! Such things must come, but woe to the person through whom they come!”

The punishment for instigating another person to sin could be inescapable, because those you instigate may instigate others and chains of more others. In that case, forgiveness would require repentance of all along the chain. Therefore, whereas repentance from sin committed by self means a turn to God and guarantees forgiveness, repentance from instigating another to sin could be insufficient for forgiveness because of the other lost souls along the potential chains of instigated sinners.

Sin by Self

Christ message regarding sin by self is that every person is individually responsible to separate himself or herself from any situation that may cause them to sin [Matthew 18:8–9]: “If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.”

If the situation is about a person, separate yourself from the person; if a thing, separate yourself from the thing; if an event, separate yourself from the event. It is better for you to endure the lack of whatever that may cause you to sin, than to be judged a sinner and thrown into hell.

Sin by Instigating Others

Instigating another person to sin means doing something that causes a person that believes in God to turn away from God [Matthew 18:6–7]: “If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to stumble! Such things must come, but woe to the person through whom they come!”

A person that you instigate to sin could instigate others and chains of more others. That is, instigating another to sin may lead to the person causing others that cause others and chains of more others to turn away from God. That is a big problem because repentance by an instigator does not guarantee repentance of others along the chain. As a result, repentance of an instigator could be insufficient to reverse the loss of souls along the chain. For this reason, repentance by an instigator could be insufficient for forgiveness, which implies that the punishment for instigating another person to sin could be inescapable.

Final Judgment Regarding Sin

In other interactions, Christ describes sinful living as the opposite of *Living in the Image of God* and provides several parables to explain sin and the punishment for sin. For example, in the **Parable of the Weeds**, he describes the fate of sinners through the relationship of weeds versus the wheat crop in a farm [Matthew 13:40–43]: “The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”

In another example, the **Parable of the Net**, Christ describes sinners as “bad fish” caught along with “good fish” in a fisher’s net. When the net is pulled up, the bad fish is separated from the good fish [Matthew 13:49–50]: “This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

In a third example, the **Parable of the Sheep and the Goats**, Christ explains God will judge people into two categories: the righteous (i.e., people that complete responsibilities in a call to compassion), or the wicked (i.e., people that decline responsibilities in a call to compassion) [Matthew 25:41–43]: “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’”

Sin by Self Compared with Sin by Instigating Others

Christ uses the three examples described in the foregoing section to drive home the message that God determines who is a sinner and will separate the righteous from sinners. Every person that he judges as sinner will be thrown into the eternal fire, where there will be eternal weeping and gnashing of teeth. Punishment for sin applies to sin by self and sin by instigating others.

However, there is a difference. In other teaching not discussed in this study, Christ provides a message of repentance and forgiveness of sin. Repentance means turning away from sin and turning to God. Repentance guarantees forgiveness for sin committed by self alone. However, the punishment for instigating others to sin could be inescapable, because those that a person instigated to sin may instigate others and chains of more others. In that case, forgiveness would require repentance of all along the chain.

Therefore, whereas repentance from sin committed by self means a turn to God and guarantees forgiveness; repentance from instigating another to sin could be insufficient for forgiveness, because repentance by an instigator does not guarantee repentance of the other lost souls along the potential chains of instigated sinners.

Summary of What We Learned

Christ teaches two elements of the individual responsibility regarding sin.

First, do not instigate others to turn away from God. Those you instigate may instigate others and chains of more others. Because forgiveness requires repentance of all along the chain, repentance by an instigator alone could be insufficient. Therefore, the punishment for instigating another person to sin could be inescapable.

Second, do not commit sin, even if instigated by another. Separate yourself from people, things, or events that may cause you to sin. However, in contrast to sin committed by instigating others, repentance from a sin committed by self guarantees forgiveness.