



# White Collar Sins

## Skip Heitzig

We say we want to be holy, yet we tolerate sin on a daily basis, comfortable with its permeating presence in our homes, our relationships—our very lives. And while we view murder, lust, and lying as unbearably wicked, we trivialize gossip, gluttony, and envy. In the series *White Collar Sins: Death in Its Sunday Best*, Pastor Skip Heitzig challenges us to view all sin as destructive and recognize its painful consequences.

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<b>SERIES:</b>	White Collar Sins
<b>MESSAGE:</b>	<b>Sin in a Three-Piece Suit</b>
<b>SPEAKER:</b>	Skip Heitzig
<b>SCRIPTURE:</b>	Matthew 23
<b>URL:</b>	<a href="http://CalvaryABQ.org/4268">http://CalvaryABQ.org/4268</a>

## MESSAGE SUMMARY

Someone remarked that *our sense of sin is in proportion to our nearness to God*. We're usually good at being aware of blatant wickedness, but what about less obvious infractions? Are we willing to point fingers at others for flagrant iniquity while coddling our own vices? The truth is that many are too Christian to enjoy sinning while being too fond of sinning to enjoy Christianity. My purpose in this series isn't to condemn anyone. I hope to stimulate a heart for holiness for a fulfilled life and happy relationships. To start off this series, consider five characteristics of sin.

## STUDY GUIDE

### Connect Recap Notes: January 14, 2018

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "Sin in a Three-Piece Suit"

Text: Matthew 23

## Path

Someone remarked that *our sense of sin is in proportion to our nearness to God*. We're usually good at being aware of blatant wickedness, but what about less obvious infractions? Are we willing to point fingers at others for flagrant iniquity while coddling our own vices? The truth is that many are too Christian to enjoy sinning while being too fond of sinning to enjoy Christianity. In this series called White Collar Sins, Pastor Skip hopes to stimulate a heart for holiness for a fulfilled life and happy relationships. To start off this series, Pastor Skip considered five characteristics of sin:

- I. Sin Is Detectable (vv. 1-3)
- II. Sin Is Dangerous (v. 23a)
- III. Sin Is Diverse (v. 23-26)
- IV. Sin Is Deceptive (v. 27)
- V. Sin Is Dismissible (v. 37)

## Points

### Sin Is Detectable

- Masks were part of ancient Greek theater, and the term *hypocrite* described the two-faced actors. Later it began to be used for someone who pretends to be something they are not.
- The phrase *white-collar crime* was coined by criminologist Edwin Sutherland. It referenced someone who committed a nonviolent crime for financial gain.

- White collar *sin* isn't what we think of as typical, obvious sin; it often wears a mask of decency, even religiousness.
- Hamartiology is the study of sin. We study sin because before we can understand salvation, we must understand how much we need it. Hamartiology explains the problem and points to the solution.
- In Matthew 23, Jesus confronted the religious elite, showing them the harm of their hypocrisy.
- Sin is detectable to a holy God; the word *hamartia* means *to miss the mark*. Sin is "any failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature."1
- The word *sin* is used 446 times in the Bible; *sins* is used 187 times.
- Today, sin has been explained away by psychology and sociology. Many religions disregard it as relative or illusory.
- **Probe: Because God knows everything, He knows every sin. But how can other people detect sin (actions, words, etc.)?**

### Sin Is Dangerous

- Jesus used the word *woe* eight times in Matthew 23 as an exclamation of grief to cry out against the Pharisees and scribes.
- Sin is so bad that it brings judgment and separation from God. God's entire activity on earth centers on curing the sin problem.
- Sadly, some recognize sin in others, but fail to recognize it in themselves.
- **Probe: Discuss this Martin Luther quote: "The recognition of sin is the beginning of salvation." Why is this true?**

### Sin Is Diverse

- In the Old Testament, some were so concerned with the details of giving, they forgot the big things—mercy, justice, and faith. In their legalism, they neglected what God desired for their lives. Sin is more than just actions; it is also attitude.
- There are two major types of sins:
  - Sins of commission: doing something we shouldn't
  - Sins of omission: not doing something we should (see James 4:17)
- Some sins are obvious, and some are not so obvious. Some are open and flagrant, and others are hidden and appear respectable.
- The less obvious are white-collar sins: gossip, selfishness, bitterness, anger, gluttony, prayerlessness, and envy.
- **Probe: Discuss the two types of sins and the different sins that fall within each group. Why are both types considered *sin*—missing the mark?**

### Sin Is Deceptive

- Many religious people are skillful at making appearances of right living: they're clean on the outside, but dirty on the inside (see v. 5), ensuring their works are seen by men.
- The greatest blasphemy isn't a person who doesn't know, walk with, or love God, but one who pretends to know, walk, and love God—but doesn't.
- This is why we need to "seek first the kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:33).

- Probe: Charles Spurgeon said, "If you're not seeking the Lord, the Devil is seeking you." Why is it important to seek the Lord with your whole person (heart, mind, soul, and strength), and not just one part of you? Will sin permit a half-hearted approach to God?

## Sin Is Dismissible

- As Jesus closed His last public sermon, He lamented His people's refusal to receive the cure for sin. He used tender language—"as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings" (v. 37)—showing His desire to forgive, heal, and dismiss sin.
- Sin is the problem, and Christ is the cure. Jesus came to forgive sin and demonstrate God's love (see Matthew 1; Luke 19).
- In verse 37, we see the greatest opportunity and the greatest tragedy:
  - Opportunity: "I wanted to gather your children together."
  - Tragedy: "But you were not willing" (the worst sin of omission).
- There's only one thing improved by breaking: the heart of a sinner. Jesus will improve your life for all eternity.
- Probe: Discuss Psalm 51:17: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit." Why does God desire a broken spirit? How does God restore your spirit? Jesus is willing and able to take care of your sin. Are you willing to let Him?

## Practice

**Connect Up:** Only a holy being can have complete fellowship with a perfectly holy God. How does Christ's righteousness make us holy, allowing us to come boldly before God's throne (see Hebrews 4:16)? Discuss this statement: Jesus' righteousness is imputed to us (He saves us—see 2 Corinthians 5:21), and by the Spirit we are sanctified (continually made holy over time).

**Connect In:** In church, it's easy to wear a mask and be a hypocrite. How can we guard ourselves from being like the religious elite in Matthew 23? Chip Ingram suggested three ways:<sup>2</sup> begin within (look at yourself), start with your own heart (your attitude), and weigh the consequences (your actions). How do you deal with hypocrisy in your heart?

**Connect Out:** How would you answer a nonbeliever who says, "The church is full of hypocrites. I've never found a Christian I can trust"?

<sup>1</sup>Wayne A. Grudem, *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1999, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup>Living on the Edge, "How to Overcome Hypocrisy in Your Heart, Part 1,"

<https://livingontheedge.org/broadcast/how-to-overcome-hypocrisy-in-your-heart-part-1/daily-radio#.WlqpOIUfHFY>, accessed 1/14/18.

## DETAILED NOTES

### I. Introduction

- A. In ancient Greek culture, actors wore masks as they delivered their lines in plays
  1. Sad mask for sad lines and happy mask for funny lines
  2. *Hypokrités*= somebody who wears a mask, an actor, a hypocrite

B. White collar sins

- I. Borrowed from the term *white collar crimes*
  - a. Mainly financial crimes: fraud, money laundering, etc.
  - b. A crime committed by someone of respectability and high social status
  - c. Can incur as much if not more jail time as some blue collar crimes
2. A short theology on sin
  - a. *Hamartiology* is the study of sin
    - I. *Hamartia* = a sin, failure
    - II. *Logia* = to study
  - b. You can never understand our great salvation until you understand how much you need it

C. The last recorded public sermon Jesus preached was a confrontation

1. He unmasked the Pharisees
2. He exposed their sin

II. Sin Is Detectable (vv. 1-3)

A. God always knows our sins (see Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8)

1. The word *hamartia* is used over 200 times in Scripture
  - a. Means *to miss the mark* or *to fall short*
  - b. There is a divine standard that we have missed
2. Sin = any failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature
3. You can essentially look anywhere in the Bible and be confronted with the idea of sin

B. Sin is not a popular concept because our culture views man mechanistically

1. It is explained away as psychological or social conditioning
2. It is explained as a way we deal with guilt

III. Sin Is Dangerous (v. 23a)

A. "Woe to you" (vv. 13-16, 23, 25, 27, 29)

1. Woe is an exclamation of grief
2. *Ouai* in Greek
3. *Oy* in Hebrew

B. Proselyte (v. 15)

1. A proselyte is a convert
2. Proselyte of the gate
  - a. A half-convert
  - b. Believed in the God of the Jews but was unable to sacrifice in the temple because they were uncircumcised
3. Proselyte of righteousness
  - a. A full convert
  - b. The Pharisees sought to win these converts

C. Sin in its undetected and unrepentant form bars one from heaven

1. All of God's activity on the earth was focused on curing this problem
2. Sin put the Perfect One on the cross

3. We are really good at spotting other people's sin and really bad at detecting our own

#### IV. Sin Is Diverse (vv. 23-26)

##### A. Sin takes on many forms

1. The law required the Jews to pay a 10 percent tithe to keep the nation of Israel going (see Leviticus 27:30-33)
2. There was an additional tithe to fund the worship system (see Deuteronomy 12:6)
3. Every third year, there was another tithe to support the Levites and widows
4. The Pharisees went above and beyond that, even so far as to divide up their spices
  - a. They were so concerned about the small, insignificant things that they were ignorant of the big things
  - b. Mercy, justice, and compassion

##### B. Sins of commission and sins of omission

1. Commission: doing something you shouldn't
2. Omission: not doing something you should (see James 4:17)
  - a. A man doesn't have to do anything to destroy his home
  - b. It must be nurtured

##### C. Some sins are obvious while others are hidden and "respectable"

1. Gossip, selfishness, bitterness, anger, gluttony, prayerlessness, envy
2. You will not ever keep the Ten Commandments
3. They aren't just about your actions; they are about your attitude (see Exodus 20:17)

#### V. Sin Is Deceptive (v. 27)

##### A. The Pharisees cleaned themselves up on the outside so people would look at them (see v. 5)

1. You can cover up a lot in a three-piece suit
2. You can cover up a lot with a Bible in your hand
3. You can cover up a lot with a cross around your neck
4. You can cover up a lot with a song on your lips and a smile on your face

##### B. The worst form of blasphemy is when one pretends to know, walk with, and love God, but doesn't

1. We must be intentional about seeking God
2. Matthew 6:33

#### VI. Sin Is Dismissible (v. 37)

##### A. Sin is the problem, but Christ is the cure

1. Jesus lamented that the Jews refused to take the cure to sin
2. He used tender language

##### B. This is the whole reason Jesus came to the earth (see Matthew 1:21; Luke 19:10; John 1:29)

##### C. The greatest opportunity and the greatest tragedy

1. The greatest opportunity
  - a. Jesus wanted to gather the children of Israel together

- b. Jesus wanted to give the cure to sin
- 2. The greatest tragedy
  - a. They were not willing
  - b. They were not interested in the cure

## VII. Closing

- A. Jesus is willing and able to take care of all our sin, if we are willing (see I John 1:9)
- B. God wants to bring you closer to Him (see Psalm 51:17)

**Figures referenced:** Billy Graham, John Lennon, Martin Luther, Bernie Madoff, Dwight L. Moody, Charles Spurgeon, Edwin Sutherland

**Greek/Hebrew words:** hamartia, hupokrités, logia, ouai, oy

**Cross references:** Exodus 20:17; Leviticus 27:30-33; Deuteronomy 12:6; Psalm 51:17; Matthew 1:21; 6:33; Luke 19:10; John 1:29; Romans 3:23; James 4:17; I John 1:8, 9

**Topic:** Sin

**Keywords:** sin, hypocrisy, hamartiology, confrontation, tithe, repentance





<b>SERIES:</b>	White Collar Sins
<b>MESSAGE:</b>	<b>The Lazy Life of the Couch Potato</b>
<b>SPEAKER:</b>	Skip Heitzig
<b>SCRIPTURE:</b>	Proverbs 6:6-11; Romans 12:11
<b>URL:</b>	<a href="http://CalvaryABQ.org/4270">http://CalvaryABQ.org/4270</a>

## MESSAGE SUMMARY

The first in our list of White Collar Sins will be *laziness*—showing a lack of effort or energy, the unwillingness to act or, in some cases, even care. Though many would smirk at this as being petty or trivial (after all there are much worse things in the world), the Bible itself addresses it as being substantial since many other lives can be affected by it. Laziness grows on people; it begins in cobwebs and ends in chains.

## STUDY GUIDE

### Connect Recap Notes: January 21, 2018

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "The Lazy Life of the Couch Potato"

Text: Proverbs 6:6-11; Proverbs 24:30-34; Romans 12:11

## Path

The first in our list of White Collar Sins is *laziness*—showing a lack of effort or energy, the unwillingness to act or, in some cases, even care. Though many would smirk at this as being petty or trivial (after all, there are much worse things in the world), the Bible itself addresses it as being substantial since many other lives can be affected by it. Laziness grows on people; it begins in cobwebs and ends in chains. Pastor Skip defined laziness, its effects, and its cure:

- I. What Laziness Is (Proverbs 6:11)
- II. What Laziness Isn't (Proverbs 6:10)
- III. What Laziness Does (Proverbs 6:6-10 & Selected)
- IV. What Laziness Needs (Romans 12:11)

## Points

### What Laziness Is

- Laziness has been around a long time. One of Sodom's sins was laziness, the "abundance of idleness" (Ezekiel 16:49). Sometimes called *sloth* or *sluggishness*, biblically, it is a sin.
- Laziness shows up in ancient lists, including the seven deadly sins of the Roman Catholic Church (pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath, and sloth).
- There are nineteen verses in Proverbs concerning laziness. A biblical proverb is not just good advice but God's advice, short aphorisms or axioms succinctly stating practical truth.

- A lazy person is a *sluggard*, someone who hates work. This is not a reference to the unemployed, but the mal-employed: those who see work as an inconvenience.
- Work was not part of the curse, but it existed before the fall in the garden of Eden. God gave Adam a job: caretaker.
- **Probe: Laziness is something many people face. When do you feel the laziest? What do you do to get out of the rut of laziness?**

### What Laziness Isn't

- Laziness does not mean leisure. As Benjamin Franklin noted, "A life of leisure and a life of laziness are two different things."
- People need free time to pursue other activities that provide rest and recharge.
- Time to spare spares the soul: it's good for health and mental well-being. It's the reason God gave the fourth commandment, Sabbath rest. The Hebrew word for *Sabbath* is *shabat*: *put to an end* or *intermission*. It's a deliberate time to unplug.
- Of all the Ten Commandments, this one is the tender commandment. God knows we need rest and recharge.
- **Probe: What do you do to unplug and relax? Do you have a set schedule for relaxation and hobbies? If so, when do you relax and pursue your hobbies?**

### What Laziness Does

- There are certain characteristics of a lazy person:
  - A lazy person won't focus on the task at hand (see Proverbs 6:9).
  - A lazy person won't finish what he or she started (see Proverbs 12:27; 24:30-31). The person may start out right, but there is no follow-through, only excuses not to finish. As Billy Sunday stated, "An excuse is the skin of reason stuffed with a lie."
  - A lazy person lives an unfulfilled life (see Proverbs 13:4; 21:25). Laziness can leave a person restless, unsatisfied, discouraged, and frustrated.
- It's a very unfulfilling life to be driven by love of ease.
- **Probe: Many people struggle with laziness, which is primarily a lack of diligence toward God. Read 2 Peter 1:5-8. According to Peter, how can you break the cycle of laziness?**

### What Laziness Needs

- Laziness needs a good shot of diligence.
- Proverbs speaks of diligence six times, as do several references in the New Testament (see Romans 12:11; Ephesians 6:5-8).
- Romans 12:11 can be translated as "never be lazy in your work, but serve the Lord enthusiastically."
- The phrase *fervent in spirit* means enthusiasm to the boiling point.
- Everything in life changes when you bring God into the picture.
- Your earthly work reflects how you serve your heavenly Master. We shouldn't just put in time to get a paycheck.
- Rather than living the lazy life of a couch potato, live the diligent life of a godly achiever.
- Though works do not save us, we are being evaluated by our work from the moment we are saved (see 1 Corinthians 3).

- Probe: Most Christians show diligence in three areas of life: work (where you get money), family (those closest to you), and leisure (things you like to do). Why is it important to show diligence in every area of your life—not just those three? What are some areas in your life you can show greater diligence? What can you do to improve?

## Practice

**Connect Up:** How does a work-filled life reflect the Lord? Why do you think the Lord created work? Conversely, why did the Lord create—and demonstrate—rest (see Genesis 1)? How do the two go hand in hand?

**Connect In:** How does the church benefit from working people? How does the church benefit from resting people?

**Connect Out:** Should evangelism be considered work? Why or why not? If you think it is work, what makes it so? If it is a pleasure, why? If both, describe your thoughts.

## DETAILED NOTES

### I. Introduction

#### A. God takes laziness very seriously

1. One of the sins for which God judged Sodom was laziness (see Ezekiel 16:49)
2. It also goes by the term *sloth*
3. Seven deadly sins: pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath, and sloth
  - a. Compiled by Pope Gregory I in AD 600
  - b. The Catholic Church taught them as the unforgivable sins
  - c. This is incorrect, as all sin can be forgiven save the blasphemy of the Spirit (see Matthew 12:31)

#### B. White collar sins

1. Sins that many people see as not that bad
2. Gossip, selfishness, bitterness, anger, gluttony, prayerlessness, envy

#### C. Social scientists have noted that Americans are becoming addicted to entertainment and leisure

1. Binge-watching
2. Needing to have a screen in front of us

#### D. The book of Proverbs especially deals with laziness

1. Nineteen verses on the topic
2. The Proverbs were written by Solomon
3. Short sayings based on long experiences
4. God's advice

### II. What Laziness Is (Proverbs 6:11)

#### A. Proverbs 24:30-34

#### B. God's creation ought to be a classroom

1. It will give us lessons about God (see Psalm 19:1)
  2. Solomon challenged the reader to look at the ants
    - a. Solomon praised the ants for their work ethic
    - b. He wrote Proverbs for his son
  3. Solomon stated that lack of diligence leads to poverty
- C. Sluggard
1. *Atsel* = sluggish
  2. Hater of work
- D. Solomon was speaking to the mal-employed
1. The actively disengaged
  2. Work was something that came before the fall
    - a. It is not a curse
    - b. God gave Adam a job (see Genesis 2:15)
- III. What Laziness Isn't (Proverbs 6:10)
- A. It is not leisure
1. There is a time for resting activities (see Ecclesiastes 3:3, 7)
  2. We need time to be free of work
  3. Time to spare spares the soul
- B. This is why God commanded us to take the Sabbath (see Exodus 20:8-11)
1. *Shabbat* = Sabbath
  2. Also means *intermission*
  3. God wants us to rest; it restores our soul (see Psalm 23:2-3)
- IV. What Laziness Does (Proverbs 6:6-10 & Selected)
- A. A lazy person will not focus on the task at hand
1. Cannot give a set time when a task will be complete
  2. Distracted by useless things
- B. A lazy person will not finish what he started
1. Starts with the right intentions but never finishes
  2. Proverbs 12:27; 19:24
  3. Always has an excuse for why he won't finish
- C. A lazy person lives an unfulfilled life
1. The result will be poverty, restlessness, dissatisfaction, and discouragement (see Proverbs 13:4; 21:25)
  2. Unfulfilled appetites and desires
- V. What Laziness Needs (Romans 12:11)
- A. Diligence (see Proverbs 12:24)
- B. Serve the Lord enthusiastically (see Ephesians 6:7)
1. Work as though you are working for the Lord, not for people
  2. Enthusiasm to the boiling point
  3. Everything in life changes when you bring God into the picture
  4. Our work should reflect our heavenly Father
- VI. Closing

- A. Although we are not saved by works, we are evaluated by the work we've done since being saved (1 Corinthians 3:13-15)
- B. Purpose to have more to show God when you get to heaven than your Netflix account

**Figures referenced:** Benjamin Franklin, Pope Gregory I, Antonio Stradivari, Billy Sunday

**Hebrew words:** atsel, shabbat

**Cross references:** Genesis 2:15; Exodus 20:8-11; Ezekiel 16:49; Psalm 19:1; 23:2-3; Proverbs 6:6-11; 12:24, 27; 13:4; 19:24; 21:25; Ecclesiastes 3:3, 7; Matthew 12:31; Romans 12:9-11; 1 Corinthians 3:13-15; Ephesians 6:7

**Topic:** Laziness

**Keywords:** laziness, sloth, seven deadly sins, proverbs, leisure, rest, work, excuses, diligence



<b>SERIES:</b>	White Collar Sins
<b>MESSAGE:</b>	<b>Fighting the Green-Eyed Monster</b>
<b>SPEAKER:</b>	Skip Heitzig
<b>SCRIPTURE:</b>	Genesis 37; Acts 7:9-10
<b>URL:</b>	<a href="http://CalvaryABQ.org/4272">http://CalvaryABQ.org/4272</a>

## MESSAGE SUMMARY

Some attitudes can go undetected, at least for a while. You can't see someone committing envy or having resentful thoughts. But envy is detrimental because it blinds us and makes it impossible for us to think clearly. It discolors everything around us and steals our peace. Some know what it's like to be envied, like Marilyn Monroe who once quipped, "Success makes so many people hate you." But most of us from time to time struggle with envying someone else.

## STUDY GUIDE

### Recap Notes: January 28, 2018

Teacher: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "Fighting the Green-Eyed Monster"

Text: Genesis 37:1-11; Genesis 39:1-2; Acts 7:9-10

## Path

Some attitudes can go undetected, at least for a while. You can't see someone committing envy or having resentful thoughts. But envy is detrimental because it blinds us and makes it impossible to think clearly. It discolors everything around us and steals our peace. Some know what it's like to be envied, like Marilyn Monroe, who once quipped, "Success makes so many people hate you." But most of us from time to time struggle with envying someone else. In this study, Pastor Skip shared how to fight the green-eyed monster of envy:

- I. Envy Has a History (Genesis 37:1-2)
- II. Envy Has a Recipe (Genesis 37:2-11)
- III. Envy Has a Remedy (Genesis 39:1-2; Acts 7:9-10)

## Points

### Envy Has a History

- Envy is a spiritual toxin that poisons our soul and puts us at odds with others. *Merriam-Webster* defines it as "painful or resentful awareness of an advantage enjoyed by another joined with a desire to possess the same advantage."
- Shakespeare called envy the "green eyed-monster" in *Othello*, because someone is green—an allusion to sickness—with envy.
- Envy or its variation is used thirty-six times in the Bible.

- In Genesis 37, the heart of Joseph's story is about envy: "his brothers *envied* him" (v. 11, emphasis added). In Hebrew, it is the word *qanah*, meaning *to be jealous*. In Acts 7:9, the martyr Stephen summarized their behavior as *envious*. The Greek word is *zéloó*, meaning *to have feeling against* or *to be jealous*.
- Joseph's brothers resented him, following the recipe for envy to the letter. But he went from the pit to the pinnacle, becoming a powerful man.
- **Probe: Pastor Skip posed the following questions. Discuss how they make you feel. What's your initial reaction? What does envy do to your mind and spirit?**
  - If you lost your job and a coworker got a promotion and raise, would you be happy for him or her?
  - What if your son dropped out of school, but a friend's son was awarded a four-year scholarship?
  - What if you learned your spouse had an affair, but a friend called and he or she was going on a second honeymoon with his or her spouse?

### Envy Has a Recipe

- There are four contributing factors that enable envy:
  - Natural dissimilarity (see v. 2): In Joseph's case, twelve brothers from four different moms created problems within the family, along with the fact that Jacob publicly favored Joseph. Differences can create division.
  - Social integrity (see v. 2): Social rejection can be devastating. Joseph was honest, but his brothers rejected his honesty. His brothers saw Joseph as a "pretty boy tattletale."
  - Parental partiality (see vv. 3-4): Jacob put pressure on Joseph with his favor, setting him up for tough days ahead. Partiality adds the dangerous ingredient for the recipe of envy.
  - Personal simplicity (see vv. 5-11): Joseph was being true to his vision. He was simple and straightforward in his communication, confirmed by dreams. But the brothers didn't like the meaning of the dreams.
- Blinded by these factors, the brothers couldn't see that God was working in Joseph's life, nor could they see any of His plans for them.
- The result of envy's recipe is a self-centered stew. This is one main reason why envy is such a sin: we replace God at the center of the universe with ourselves.
- Greed says, "I want more"; envy says, "I want you to have less."
- **Probe: Can you relate to any of the four points listed above (dissimilarity, integrity, partiality, simplicity)? If so, discuss the background that enabled envy in your life. How do you deal with envy?**

### Envy Has a Remedy

- For those targeted:
  - Envy doesn't have to have the last word because God is with you, like He was with Joseph (see Acts 7:9).
  - The jealousy surrounding Joseph didn't hinder the work of God, but rather, it furthered the work of God (see Acts 7:10).
  - Watch out if you envy. The Lord may allow you to watch the person get a promotion to show you that envy doesn't deliver (see Acts 7:10).

- When you don't envy, it shows that you can live honorably regardless of environment and you can be pleased with what the Lord has provided.
- For those inflicting:
  - Realize how destructive envy is to you and others (see Proverbs 14:30).
  - Live a better life than the person you envy. Envy puts you at the center, but recognizing envy toward another person enables you to shift that person to the center of your focus, allowing you to pray for them, encourage them, and bless them (see 1 Peter 2:1-2).
  - Let gratitude be a long-term strategy in your life. Replace envy with love.
- **Probe: Have you been the target of envy? What were the circumstances? How did you overcome the situation?**

## Practice

**Connect Up:** The Bible calls Christians to be holy (see 1 Peter 1:15-16). How does envy—or any sin—separate us from the mark of completeness God desires for our lives? Discuss what Jesus meant when He said, "Be perfect" (Matthew 5:48). The Greek word for *perfect* is *teleios*, meaning *complete, full, or perfect*. How does Christ perfect our lives and lead us to Christlikeness?

**Connect In:** How would you deal with a fellow believer who's struggling with envy, whether toward you or someone else? (See Matthew 18 for insight.)

**Connect Out:** How would you practically handle envy in your own life so it doesn't affect others you reach out to? Discuss these suggestions: Shift your focus to the goodness in your life. Remind yourself that nobody has it all. Avoid people who habitually value the wrong things. Spend time with grateful people. Understand that marketers routinely fan the flame. Celebrate the success of others.

Joshua Becker, "A Helpful Guide to Overcoming Envy," <https://www.becomingminimalist.com/ungreen-with-envy> accessed 1/28/18.

## DETAILED NOTES

- I. Introduction
  - A. Envy is an insidious sin
    1. Paul listed it as one of the works of the flesh (see Galatians 5:19-21)
    2. It poisons our soul and clouds our ability to see things clearly
      - a. The *green-eyed monster*
      - b. Term originated in Shakespeare's *Othello*
  - B. Envy is the art of counting other people's blessings instead of your own
    1. The story of Joseph is a story of envy
    2. It was envy that began all his troubles
- II. Envy Has a History (Genesis 37:1-2)
  - A. The whole history of Jacob and his family is a story of envy
    1. He learned envy from his mother, Rebekah (see Genesis 27)



2. Esau envied Jacob
  3. Laban envied Jacob
  4. It even goes back to Cain and Abel (see Genesis 4)
  - B. Envy is part of the human heart (see Matthew 7:20-22)
    1. Every time someone around us has something good happen to them, we deal with feelings of envy
    2. We are called to rejoice with others (see Romans 12:15)
    3. Other people's successes seem to amplify our own perceived failures
- III. Envy Has a Recipe (Genesis 37:2-11)
- A. Natural dissimilarity
    1. Jacob had sons from four wives: Leah, Rachel, Zilpah, and Bilhah
    2. Envy grows when we compare ourselves to others
    3. Joseph was handsome (see Genesis 39:6)
    4. Envy always compares and asks, "Why them?"
  - B. Social integrity
    1. All people need to feel accepted, especially young people
      - a. The idea of rejection is devastating
      - b. Leads to groupthink
    2. Joseph's moral compass was stronger than his need to be accepted
      - a. Like Daniel (see Daniel 1:8)
      - b. Over-developed sense of honesty
    3. Perhaps Joseph had learned to be brutally honest by watching the result of his family's dishonesty
      - a. Jacob had tricked his own father into giving him his blessing (see Genesis 27)
      - b. Joseph's brothers tricked their father and killed an entire village because their sister had been raped (see Genesis 34)
    4. Joseph's brothers saw his honesty as malice
  - C. Parental partiality
    1. Partiality adds the dangerous ingredient for the recipe of envy
    2. It can come from different sources
      - a. A boss
      - b. Friends
      - c. Teachers
      - d. Coaches
    3. Joseph was the son of Rachel, the only woman Jacob ever really loved
    4. The coat Jacob gave Joseph signified that he was giving him the rights and privileges of the firstborn son (see 1 Chronicles 5:1)
  - D. Personal simplicity
    1. Joseph's dreams did not earn him any points with his brothers
    2. He was naïve
  - E. Envy puts us at the center of the universe
    1. Greed says, "I want more;" envy says "I want you to have less"
    2. Resenting others' happiness (see Proverbs 27:4)
- IV. Envy Has a Remedy (Genesis 39:1-2; Acts 7:9-10)

- A. For Those Targeted
  - 1. Envy does not have to have the last word
    - a. The brothers' jealousy did not hinder the work of God
    - b. It furthered the work of God (see Psalm 76:10)
  - 2. If you are prone to envy, God may give you first-row seats to His work in others' lives
    - a. Your envy does not stop God's work in another person's life
    - b. You can live honorably regardless of your environment
    - c. You cannot blame where you are today on the actions of other people
- B. For Those Inflicting
  - 1. Envy does not destroy the person you are envious of; it only destroys you (see Proverbs 14:30)
  - 2. Live your life better than the one you envy
  - 3. If you have a healthy spiritual life (read your Bible, go to church, serve, etc.) but are holding on to toxins like envy, it will destroy you (see 1 Peter 2:1-2)
  - 4. If you say you love God and other people but are envious, you really don't love, because "love does not envy" (1 Corinthians 13:4)
  - 5. Let gratitude be your long-term strategy
    - a. Replace envy with thanksgiving
    - b. It will transform your heart

**Figures referenced:** William Shakespeare, Paul Tripp

**Works referenced:** *Othello*, *Leave It to Beaver*

**Cross references:** Genesis 4; 27; 34; 39:6; 1 Chronicles 5:1; Psalm 76:10; Proverbs 14:30; 27:4; Daniel 1:8; Matthew 7:20-22; Romans 12:15; 1 Corinthians 13:4; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Peter 2:1-2

**Topic:** Envy

**Keywords:** envy, coveting, jealousy, honesty, greed, resentment, thanksgiving



<b>SERIES:</b>	White Collar Sins
<b>MESSAGE:</b>	<b>The Destructive Harvest of a Bitter Heart</b>
<b>SPEAKER:</b>	Skip Heitzig
<b>SCRIPTURE:</b>	Hebrews 12:14-15
<b>URL:</b>	<a href="http://CalvaryABQ.org/4274">http://CalvaryABQ.org/4274</a>

## MESSAGE SUMMARY

We all know someone who has become embittered in life. They have planted kernels of unresolved anger and resentment and have become entrapped by the overgrown jungle of the bitter fruit it has created. To choose the bitter path (and it is a choice) is to walk down a self-destructive road that banishes peace and promotes self-centeredness. Let's consider several Scriptures and the four attributes of a heart poisoned by bitterness.

## STUDY GUIDE

### Recap Notes: February 4, 2018

Teacher: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "The Destructive Harvest of a Bitter Heart"

Text: Hebrews 12:14-15

## Path

We all know someone who has become embittered in life. They have planted kernels of unresolved anger and resentment and have become entrapped by the overgrown jungle of the bitter fruit it has created. To choose the bitter path (and it is a choice) is to walk down a self-destructive road that banishes peace and promotes self-centeredness. In this teaching, Pastor Skip considered several Scriptures and four attributes of a heart poisoned by bitterness:

- I. Bitterness Begins with Small Seeds (vv. 12-14)
- II. Bitterness Requires Right Soil (v. 15a)
- III. Bitterness Develops Deep Roots (v. 15b)
- IV. Bitterness Produces Bad Fruit (v. 15c)

## Points

### Bitterness Begins with Small Seeds

- In this text, the writer uses a metaphor: the Christian is running a race of faith.
- The biggest challenge to our race and peace is people.
- Sometimes people can be the chastening rod of God. But if we don't choose to see frustrating people as God's correction, we tend to see them as Satan's aggravation.
- Bitterness is internalized anger that festers. It begins from a seed of anger planted by one who hurt you. When that pain goes untreated, it turns to anger, which turns to bitterness.
- Hebrews 12 is a picture of discouragement that has planted a seed of hurt.

- Pastor Skip gave Dr. Diamond's definition of bitterness: "a chronic and pervasive state of smoldering resentment." Notice two key words: *chronic* and *pervasive*. How is bitterness both long-lasting (chronic) and widespread (pervasive)?

### Bitterness Requires Right Soil

- We never have a need that can outstrip the grace of God. When we forget the grace of God in our lives, we become susceptible to bitterness.
- We need to grow in grace or bad things will grow in us, like bitterness.
- Sadly, some hearts are fertile ground for bitterness, and it becomes an essential part of their life (Naomi is an example; see Ruth 1:20-21).
- Bitterness turns you into a perpetual victim.
- When a hurt comes, don't let it take root in your heart. If you hold on to that hurt, the hurt will get a hold on you.
- **Probe: What are some types of soil in which bitterness takes root? Consider the following: mind, soul, relationships, work, family, and friends.**

### Bitterness Develops Deep Roots

- Deuteronomy 29 warns not to turn your heart from God, "that there may not be among you a root bearing bitterness or wormwood" (v. 18). *Wormwood* is a reference to someone going back to paganism, someone who has forgotten God's grace and covenant.
- People who let such seeds grow in the soil of their heart develop a root system that feeds on bitterness. These roots grow underground and are undetected—for a time. It grows through the roots to the branches, becoming stronger and moving from thoughts to words and actions.
- Bitterness will choke off the fruit of the Christian's spiritual life. This is why Paul said, "Get rid of all bitterness" (Ephesians 4:31, NIV).
- When bitterness hides in your heart, God will not be real to you because hatefulness and holiness cannot dwell in the same heart.
- The remedy to bitterness: be grounded in love, built up in Christ (see Ephesians 3:17-18). Once we grow in the right root, we'll get the right fruit.
- **Probe: If you're comfortable with sharing, discuss a time you were bitter. How did it take hold of your heart, causing you to lose sight of the Lord?**

### Bitterness Produces Bad Fruit

- Bitterness grows in two directions: toward you and toward others.
  - Toward you: Note the phrase *cause trouble*. It's like taking poison and hoping your enemy will die.
    - Bitterness is a form of emotional suicide. It slowly destroys hope and peace of mind.
    - Bitterness ruins your relationship with God (see 1 John 4:20).
  - Toward others: Note the phrase *many become defiled*.
    - *Defiled* is *miainó*, meaning *to sully or taint*. Bitterness contaminates relationships, costing more than you ever want to pay.

- The words *bitter* and *better* start with *b* and end with *-ter*. The only difference is one letter: *I*. Bitterness focuses on I, me, and mine—the self. But *better* focuses on God and others. Life is better when you let go of bitterness.
- **Probe:** Continuing your story from the previous section, what was some of the fruit from your bitterness? How did you resolve or how are you resolving the bitterness in your life?

## Practice

**Connect Up:** One of the hallmarks of God's character is His holiness (see Psalm 99), so we're called to pursue holiness. In Greek, *holiness* is *hagiasmos*, meaning purification and sanctification. How do we pursue God's holiness? How are we sanctified when we pursue God's holiness, "without which no one will see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14)?

**Connect In:** Sadly, bitterness is found in the church, causing "trouble" (Hebrews 12:15). What steps should Christians take to overcome bitterness in life and the church? One person recommended the following steps: forgive, make a plan, stop dwelling and retelling, seek grace, and seek help. <sup>1</sup>Discuss these five steps.

**Connect Out:** Because the Lord is our peace (see Ephesians 2:14), how shall we pursue peace with all people (see Hebrews 12:14)? What does a peaceful life look like in the world today? How can being an effective peacemaker (see Matthew 5:9) be a witness to a watching world?

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Greg, "Overcoming Bitterness: 5 Steps for Healing the Hurt that Won't Go Away," November 20, 2013, <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/faithonthecouch/2013/11/overcoming-bitterness-5-steps-for-healing-the-hurt-that-wont-go-away>, accessed 2/4/18.

## DETAILED NOTES

### I. Introduction

- A. Most people say they know a bitter person; few are willing to admit that they are a bitter person
  1. More people struggle with bitterness than we think
  2. Of all the human emotions, this is the one you should fear the most
- B. Bitterness is emotional cancer
  1. Bitter people are hard to get close to
  2. Anger that has morphed into something
  3. Cold, aloof

### II. Bitterness Begins with Small Seeds (vv. 12-14)

- A. The biggest challenge to your peace is people
  1. People can hurt us
  2. What we fail to see is that perhaps God is using those difficult people to get our attention (see Hebrews 12:3-6)
- B. Bitterness comes from a seed of anger planted by someone who has hurt you
  1. It germinates when something happens to you that you don't think you deserve

2. Bitterness is internalized anger that festers
3. All bitterness starts as hurt
4. Smoldering resentment

### III. Bitterness Requires Right Soil (v. 15a)

- A. You can never outrun the grace of God (see Romans 5:20)
  1. You can lose sight of the grace of God
  2. When you forget how gracious God was to you, you cease being gracious to other people
  3. We need to grow in grace or bad things will grow in us, like bitterness
- B. Some people's hearts are ripe for growing bitterness, like people who hold on to things and never let them go
  1. If we hold on to the past, it affects the present and becomes an essential part of who we are
  2. Naomi was like this (see Ruth 1)
    - a. Her name means *pleasant*
    - b. She blamed God for the bad things that happened to her
    - c. She identified herself as a bitter person by taking the name *Mara*
- C. Bitterness turns you into a perpetual victim
  1. If you are always the victim, you can justify your anger
  2. It's always someone else's fault
  3. Bitterness is really a form of pride
- D. When a hurt comes your way, don't let it take root in your heart
  1. If you hold on to it, it will grab hold of you
  2. People who do not deal with past hurts are critical, notice bad things around them instead of good things, are fault-finders and sin-sniffers, and put people down

### IV. Bitterness Develops Deep Roots (v. 15b)

- A. The author of Hebrews referred to what God said to His people in the Old Testament
  1. Deuteronomy 29:18
  2. Referred to those who were superficially identified with God but returned to their pagan lifestyle
- B. People who let bitterness grow eventually develop a root system that becomes immovable
  1. A root is hidden
  2. As it grows, hidden, it becomes stronger
  3. Ephesians 4:31
- C. People can be bitter toward many things and people
  1. Parents
  2. Churches
  3. Leaders
  4. Spouses and ex-spouses
    - a. Bitterness destroys homes
    - b. Colossians 3:19
- D. Bitterness is a big problem among God's people
  1. It holds back the power of God

2. When your heart is bitter, God will not be real to you
  - a. Hatefulness and holiness cannot dwell in the same heart
  - b. Instead of letting bitterness grow, plant your life in better soil (see Ephesians 3:17-18; Colossians 2:7)

V. Bitterness Produces Bad Fruit (v. 15c)

- A. The root of bitterness always grows in two directions
  1. Toward you as you harbor it
  2. Toward others who are defiled by it
- B. Bitterness is like taking poison and hoping your enemy will die
  1. It is a form of emotional suicide, a slow form of destroying peace of mind
  2. You are the one being corroded
- C. Bitterness can ruin your relationship with God (see 1 John 4:20)
- D. It grows toward others
  1. Acts 8:5-23
  2. The difference between *bitter* and *better* is *I*

VI. Closing

- A. We must surrender our bitterness to God
- B. Though Jesus was tortured and crucified, the cross was the best thing that ever happened to humanity
- C. God can use the bad things in our past to make us better

**Figures referenced:** Lady Astor, Winston Churchill, Stephen Diamond, Michelangelo, Raphael, Dr. Leon Seltzer

**Cross references:** Deuteronomy 29:18; Ruth 1; Acts 8:5-23; Romans 5:20; Ephesians 3:17-18; 4:31; Colossians 2:7; 3:19; Hebrews 12:3-6; 1 John 4:20

**Topic:** Bitterness

**Keywords:** anger, bitter, resentment, hurt, grace, pride



<b>SERIES:</b>	White Collar Sins
<b>MESSAGE:</b>	<b>Psst! Have You Heard...?</b>
<b>SPEAKER:</b>	Skip Heitzig
<b>SCRIPTURE:</b>	Leviticus 19:11-18
<b>URL:</b>	<a href="http://CalvaryABQ.org/4276">http://CalvaryABQ.org/4276</a>

## MESSAGE SUMMARY

The sin of *gossip* has never made it into the same lists as murder and manslaughter. It's regarded as one of the "little sins" that even Christians are unwilling to avoid. But gossip is in the same family as murder because it assassinates a person's character. It destroys reputations, disrupts families, divides friends, and causes heartbreak. And the problem isn't just in the speaking but in the hearing as well. Let's look at a direct command *not* to gossip.

## STUDY GUIDE

Recap Notes: February 11, 2018

Teacher: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "Psst! Have You Heard...?"

Text: Leviticus 19:11-18

## Path

The sin of *gossip* has never made it into the same lists as murder and manslaughter. It's regarded as one of the "little sins" that even Christians are unwilling to avoid. But gossip is in the same family as murder because it assassinates a person's character. It destroys reputations, disrupts families, divides friends, and causes heartbreak. And the problem isn't just in the speaking but in the hearing as well. Pastor Skip looked at a direct command *not* to gossip, sharing four practical observations about our words:

- Words Are Personal (vv. 11-12, 14, 16)
- Words Have Potential (vv. 11-15)
- Words Are Powerful (v. 16)
- Words Should Be Purposeful (vv. 17-18)

## Points

### Words Are Personal

- The word *you* is used fifty-four times in Leviticus 19, where God gives a direct command not to gossip along with other general rules drawn from the Ten Commandments about how to use our speech.
- The average person spends one-fifth of his or her life talking. We have incredible capability to express ourselves verbally and lots of opportunities to do so. But that brings up a challenge:



because our words are also written—on paper and computers, on social media and in texts—we are moving toward progressively less personal ways of communicating.

- We must beware of thin relationships—"friends" we've never met and people we follow without knowing more than what they ate for breakfast.
- **Probe: Pastor Skip noted that "real fellowship isn't limited to 140 characters." What are the pros and cons of social media and texting? What efforts do you make to ensure you are developing deeper relationships with people?**

### Words Have Potential

- In Leviticus 19, God focused mainly on the negative potential of words, giving commands on how not to use them. We need to use restraint with our words.
- If we reverse those negative commands, we can see positive ways to speak. For example, "you shall not swear by My name falsely" (v. 12) can be seen conversely as a command to pray, worship, intercede, and bless in the Lord's name.
- Proverbs 18:21 says, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit." Proverbs 12:18 says, "There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, but the tongue of the wise promotes health." Some words encourage; others discourage. Some impoverish; others enrich.
- James 3 describes the incredible potential of the tongue, making it clear that only God can help us control ours.
- **Probe: Read James 3:2-12. What points stick out to you? Discuss why we should seek God's help in controlling our tongues.**

### Words Are Powerful

- God directly commands us not to be talebearers. A talebearer wants you to have a negative opinion about the person they're telling you about.
- The difference between a talebearer and a concerned friend is the difference between a butcher and a surgeon; both cut the meat, but with totally different purposes in mind.
- It's easy in church circles to bear tales, couching gossip in holy-sounding language—a "concern" about someone or a prayer that casts the person being prayed about in a bad light. Because it's a prayer, people will tend to think it must be true, whether it is or not.
- How do you know if you're spreading gossip or not? Do you raise your voice to share it, or lower it? "A whisperer separates the best of friends" (Proverbs 16:28).
- **Probe: Review the list in Proverbs 6:16-19 of things God hates. How many of them have to do with words? Which do you think is most dangerous, and why?**

### Words Should Be Purposeful

- God describes gossip as "[hating] your brother in your heart" (Leviticus 19:17). Our words reflect what's going on inside our thought life. Words are a gauge of the heart.
- As Jesus said, "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks" (Luke 6:45).
- Washing a mouth out with soap doesn't get to the root of the problem—but love does. Love "does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth" (1 Corinthians 13:6).

- Gossip comes from people who hate, not people who love their neighbors as themselves (see Leviticus 19:18). We love others when we go to them directly with the issue we have with them. Matthew 18 lays out Jesus's protocol for nipping gossip in the bud.
- The reason why so many mouths are opened in gossip is because there are so many open ears wanting to hear it.
- Review Pastor Skip's five questions to ask when someone gives you a bad report on someone else:
  - "Why are you telling me?" Have they already gone to the person directly and need your help as a witness? Or do they just want to gossip?
  - "Where did you get your info?" Direct experience or hearsay?
  - "Have you gone to that person directly?" Matthew 18 tells us to.
  - "Have you checked the facts for yourself?" Always a good idea.
  - "Can I quote you on this?" This is the real litmus test for their intentions.
- **Probe:** Have you ever applied this list to a situation? If so, what were the results? If not, what effect do you think it would've had on a gossipy conversation?

## Practice

**Connect Up:** Knowing that God hates words that are divisive, discouraging, and destructive, are you willing to ask Him if you need to work on any of these types of speaking? Read Matthew 5:11-16. If you are the light of the world, how should that affect your speech? What does it mean to bear God's image instead of being a talebearer?

**Connect In:** What are the effects of talebearing in the body of Christ? Read Matthew 18:15-17. What would happen to gossip if Christians put Jesus' words into practice in everyday life? Will you commit to trying it out the next time you face such a situation?

**Connect Out:** How you deal with gossip as a Christian can really set you apart from the pack, whether it's at work, at the gym, or in your neighborhood. And how you handle it (especially when it affects you personally) matters to God. Read 1 Peter 2:12. Discuss when to tell the truth, when to be silent (see Exodus 14:14), and when to confront (see Matthew 18)—but remember: do it all with love (see Colossians 3:14).

## DETAILED NOTES

- I. Introduction
  - A. The human tongue can inflict a lot of damage through gossip
  - B. We are given a direct commandment from God not to gossip
  - C. The book of Leviticus is about holiness
    1. Holiness is God's least attractive attribute
      - a. We want to talk about God's love, power, grace, etc.
      - b. Holiness scares us
      - c. We don't really know what it means
    2. Of all God's attributes, His holiness is mentioned most
  - D. In Leviticus 19, the Ten Commandments are repeated and fleshed out (see vv. 1-10)
  - E. In verses 11-18, the author talked about our speech
- II. Words Are Personal (vv. 11-12, 14, 16)

- A. They convey who you are as a person to others
- B. The word *you* occurs fifty-four times in this chapter alone
- C. God has given us the capacity to communicate with our words
  - 1. Men and women communicate differently
  - 2. Zacharias was made mute for not believing his wife would conceive (see Luke 1:5-20)
- D. We not only speak words, but we also write them down
  - 1. Letters, email, social media, texts
  - 2. Written words are harder to understand
    - a. You cannot hear intonation or inflection
    - b. You also cannot see body language
  - 3. The fullest form of communication is in person
  - 4. Social media has revolutionized the way our culture communicates
    - a. Our language is changing meaning
    - b. We are cultivating thin relationships

### III. Words Have Potential (vv. 11-15)

- A. We can choose to use our words for good or for bad (see Proverbs 18:21)
  - 1. Some words can destroy—others can delight; some words can enrich—others can kill (see Proverbs 12:18)
  - 2. James acknowledged the potential of the tongue (see James 3:2-10)
- B. The tongue can bless or curse

### IV. Words Are Powerful (v. 16)

- A. Talebearers
  - 1. There may be traces of truth in what they say
  - 2. They are not trying to reveal truth; they are trying to ruin the person they are talking about
  - 3. The difference between a talebearer and a concerned friend is the difference between a butcher and a surgeon
  - 4. Words can ruin one's reputation by bearing a tale
  - 5. *Rakil* = slanderer
- B. As believers, we have become very crafty at the sin of gossip
  - 1. We package it not as gossip, but as concern
  - 2. We package it in prayer
  - 3. To discern whether what you are sharing is gossip, ask yourself whether you raise or lower your voice as you tell it (see Proverbs 16:28)
- C. Of the seven things God hates, three of them have to do with the tongue
  - 1. If God hates something, we should pay attention so we don't do it
  - 2. "One who sows discord among brethren" (Proverbs 6:19)

### V. Words Should Be Purposeful (vv. 17-18)

- A. Words are just a gauge of the heart (see Luke 6:45)
  - 1. If you speak good things, it reveals good things are in your heart
  - 2. If you speak bad things, it reveals bad things are in your heart
- B. If you really love people, you don't slander them (see 1 Corinthians 13:6)
  - 1. If someone hurts you, you must go to that person directly and talk about it

2. Don't talk *about* that person—talk *to* them (see Matthew 18:15)
- C. The problem is not just that people love to say gossip; it's that people love to hear it
  1. There wouldn't be so many open mouths if there weren't so many open ears
  2. We enjoy hearing gossip (see Proverbs 18:8)
- D. When someone wants to bring you gossip:
  1. Ask them why they are bringing it to you specifically
  2. Ask them where they got their information
  3. Ask them if they have gone directly to that person
  4. Ask them if they have personally checked out the facts
  5. Ask them if you can quote them on it

**Figures referenced:** Tim Challies, Billy Graham, Bill Grayolis, Erik Jan Hanussen, Adolf Hitler, Gervase Markham

**Works referenced:** "Solomon on Social Media"

**Hebrew words:** rakil

**Cross references:** Leviticus 19:1-10; Proverbs 6:19; 12:18; 16:28; 18:8, 21; Matthew 18:15; Luke 1:5-20; 6:45; 1 Corinthians 13:6; James 3:2-10

**Topic:** Gossip

**Keywords:** gossip, holiness, social media, tongue, prayer, love



<b>SERIES:</b>	White Collar Sins
<b>MESSAGE:</b>	<b>Gluttony: Society's Most Acceptable Sin</b>
<b>SPEAKER:</b>	Skip Heitzig
<b>SCRIPTURE:</b>	I Corinthians 6:19-20
<b>URL:</b>	<a href="http://CalvaryABQ.org/4284">http://CalvaryABQ.org/4284</a>

## MESSAGE SUMMARY

Overindulgence has become a hallmark of our modern American culture. Our bodies are constantly alive with conflicting desires and drives. The temptation to eat too much, drink too much, or indulge in any number of things is constant. And it is also trivialized. So what if a person eats a little too much? It's his body! It's her life! Or is it? How can we bring honor to God with our bodies? Is caring for them carnal, or is it a responsible activity of stewardship?

## STUDY GUIDE

**Recap Notes: March 11, 2018**

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "Gluttony: Society's Most Acceptable Sin"

Text: I Corinthians 6:19-20

## Path

Overindulgence has become a hallmark of our modern American culture. Our bodies are constantly alive with conflicting desires and drives. The temptation to eat too much, drink too much, or indulge in any number of things is constant. It is also trivialized. So what if a person eats a little too much? It's his body! It's her life! Or is it? How can we bring honor to God with our bodies? Is caring for them carnal, or is it a responsible activity of stewardship? In this teaching, Pastor Skip unpacked four affirming truths about our bodies:

- I. Your Body Is a Holy Place (v. 19a)
- II. Your Body Has a Holy Person (v. 19b)
- III. Your Body Had a Hefty Price (vv. 19c-20a)
- IV. Your Body Has a Heavenly Purpose (v. 20b)

## Points

### Your Body Is a Holy Place

- Christians are quick to judge what they think are blatant and obvious iniquities, such as smoking, drinking, and the like. But what about gluttony? The basic idea of gluttony is not just overeating, but overconsumption of anything.
- We must be careful not to judge a person for what we see on the outside. Not only are there various reasons why people overindulge, but only God knows the heart.

- In this text, Paul spoke about people's pursuit of pleasure (see vv. 12-20). Many in Corinth were living a lifestyle of hedonism.
- Paul reminded us that our body serves a higher purpose than pleasure. We have a holy place in God's kingdom; we are His temple. Seeing our body as His temple raises life to a higher plane.
- Probe: Knowing that your body is a temple, name two things you can do to improve your body, keeping it healthy and holy?

### Your Body Has a Holy Person

- God does not dwell in temples made of hands (see Acts 7:48-50), but in His people. As Jesus noted, our bodies contain the person of the Holy Spirit (see John 14:19-23), and they are the base of operations for Him to work.
- Often, a glutton's top priority is pleasing the senses, whether through food, drink, or sex. Yet for others, gluttony fills a void, an emotional scar. It is often an emotional cry for help.
- Consider this: Satan often tempts us with food (see Genesis 3; Matthew 4), trying to take our eyes off God. In the end, the stomach might be full, but the heart can still be empty.
- Each person's heart has a God-sized hole, and only God can fill it—not food, fantasies, or frivolous living.
- Christians are filled with the right stuff: the Holy Spirit.
- Probe: What pleasures do you crave? Are you able to balance your cravings in a biblical and godly way? Pray for one another's weaknesses.

### Your Body Had a Hefty Price

- Before you say, "My body doesn't matter, only my spirit matters," remember that God created both body and soul. And both were bought at a price (see 1 Peter 1).
- As Vance Havner stated, "Salvation is free, but it's not cheap."
- As a Christian, you can't claim independence or self-determination, because you are not your own. You belong to Jesus. Make lifestyle choices reflecting this great truth.
- Gluttony lowers the quality of life, a health hazard of huge proportions, with roughly 300,000 deaths per year in the US.
- Probe: Discuss Pastor Skip's statement about both the body and soul being important. Read 1 Peter 1:17-25 in *The Message*. What perspective on bodily temptations do you see there?

### Your Body Has a Heavenly Purpose

- Your body is a billboard to glorify God. You can use your life to point people to the Lord. Your mouth can preach the gospel. Your hands can help the needy. Your feet can go to the lonely. Your ears can listen to the heartbroken. Your lips can smile at the oppressed. Your eyes can give attention to the forlorn. All these ways tell the world that God cares.
- When we think of life this way, life doesn't become about our pleasure, but His purpose.
- Instead of "foods for the stomach," our motto should be: My life for His glory.
- The more you do as you please, the less you're pleased with what you do. But the more you do as God pleases, the more you're pleased with what you do.
- Probe: Discuss Pastor Skip's overcoming plan:
  - Say yes to the Word of God. You can't conquer temptation to overeat by merely saying no; first say yes to His Word (see Psalm 34:8; Matthew 4:4; 1 Peter 2:2).

- Say *no* to certain kinds of food, large portions, and second and third helpings.
- Say *go*—maintain your ability to serve God. Get up and move. We live in a highly sedentary culture, desk-bound. Don't be inactive, but interactive.

## Practice

**Connect Up:** Pastor Skip mentioned that gluttony was once on the historic list of the seven deadly sins. Why do you think the Bible, and therefore God, views gluttony as a serious problem? What does placing anything higher than the Lord do to your relationship with Him?

**Connect In:** Though some people may struggle with gluttony within the church, why is it important not to base our thoughts on outward appearances? How can we change the mindset of fellowship from "When we meet, we eat" to "When we meet, let's eat His Word and meet one another's needs?" What practical things can we do to encourage one another away from gluttony and toward God?

**Connect Out:** In a day and age where excess (in food, money, etc.) is seen as a virtue, why is it important to live simply before the Lord and others? How can simple living be a witness to a watching world?

## OUTLINE

- I. Your Body Is a Holy Place (v. 19a)
- II. Your Body Has a Holy Person (v. 19b)
- III. Your Body Had a Hefty Price (vv. 19c-20a)
- IV. Your Body Has a Heavenly Purpose (v. 20b)



<b>SERIES:</b>	White Collar Sins
<b>MESSAGE:</b>	<b>When You Haven't Got a Prayer</b>
<b>SPEAKER:</b>	Skip Heitzig
<b>SCRIPTURE:</b>	I Samuel 12:19-25
<b>URL:</b>	<a href="http://CalvaryABQ.org/4288">http://CalvaryABQ.org/4288</a>

## MESSAGE SUMMARY

The great mission worker Hudson Taylor was often refreshed by times of prayer. His son noted, "For forty years the sun never rose on China that God didn't find him on his knees." Someone called prayer the gymnasium of the soul. When was the last time you had a good "workout"? Today we delve into the mysterious cooperation of the divine and the human and consider the last topic in our White Collar Sins series--prayerlessness.

## STUDY GUIDE

### Recap Notes: March 25, 2018

Teacher: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "When You Haven't Got a Prayer"

Text: I Samuel 12:19-25

## Path

The great mission worker Hudson Taylor was often refreshed by times of prayer. His son noted, "For forty years the sun never rose on China that God didn't find him on his knees." Someone called prayer *the gymnasium of the soul*. When was the last time you had a good "workout"? Today we delve into the mysterious cooperation of the divine and the human and consider the last topic in our White Collar Sins series—prayerlessness. Pastor Skip gave us four facts about prayer to encourage and guide us into prayer:

- Prayer Is Needed (v. 19a)
- Intercession Is Powerful (v. 19a-b)
- Obedience Is Essential (vv. 20-22)
- Prayerlessness Is Sinful (v. 23)

## Points

### Prayer Is Needed

- Samuel was a man of prayer, going back to his childhood, and people knew it (see Psalm 99:6; Jeremiah 15:1). They sought Samuel when they rejected God by asking for a king. At this point, they felt convicted. Their realization shows us that God wants to raise you to the highest possible level in life, but He will only take you as far as you will let Him.



- On average, people pray for ten minutes or less. Some never pray unless it's an emergency; there are few atheists in cancer wards or unemployment lines.
- If you make prayer for your first response, it will never have to be your last resort.
- Even though God is sovereign and ultimately does what He wants, we must pray because in His sovereignty, God voluntarily links Himself to human cooperation, often binding His work to our prayers.
- Samuel Chadwick said, "The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, and prayerless religion...but trembles when we pray."
- Probe: Read Ezekiel 36:37, Matthew 21:22, John 14:13-14, James 4:3 and 5:16, and Revelation 5:8. How do these verses show the relationship between our prayers and God's work? How is prayer needful for us?

### Intercession Is Powerful

- There are four different kinds of prayer:
  - Adoration—it's easy to find things to praise God for in His awesomeness.
  - Petition—it's easy to bring our needs to God.
  - Imprecation—it's easy to ask God to bring our enemies down (though He is likely to say no since we're supposed to be praying *for* them).
  - Intercession—it's hard to look past ourselves and pray for others.
- Interceding for others is hard but helpful (see James 5:16). *Standing in the gap* (see Ezekiel 22:30) has many biblical and historical precedents (Abraham and Abimelech, Moses and Pharaoh, Job and his friends, Paul's nine requests for it, John Wesley's "Holy Club" and the Great Revival, Evan Roberts and the Welsh Revival, among others).
- Intercession works, but it's a battle. Distractions will arise because you just brought a gun to a knife fight—bringing God into a situation brings the real power to bear.
- Probe: When have you battled for someone else in prayer? What challenges did you face to keep at it? What did you see God do as a result of sticking with it?

### Obedience Is Essential

- Samuel told the people, "Don't be afraid. Yes, you've sinned, but keep seeking God with all your heart. He's listening, but don't expect me to shoot up a prayer while you live any way you want."
- We should never use someone else's prayers as a crutch for our disobedience, or someone else's holiness for our unholiness.
- Probe: Read Exodus 19:5-6, Romans 1:5, 2 Corinthians 10:5, and Revelation 14:12. How is prayer a form of obedience to God?

### Prayerlessness Is Sinful

- Samuel said it would be a sin against God for him not to pray for them. Let that sink in: not to pray is a sin.
- Think about it this way: Almighty God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, has invited you to come to Him in prayer. He wants you to engage with Him, praising Him, bringing needs to Him, and spending time with Him. How amazing is that?

- Prayerlessness is a sin in three ways:
  - It insults God: He wants to show us amazing things (see Jeremiah 33:3); who are we to shrug Him off?
  - It impoverishes us: we miss out when we fail to partner with God in the work He wants to do in and through us.
  - It injures others: we rob others of the blessings God wants to bring through our intercession.
- Regarding all the recent backlash on people sending "thoughts and prayers," it depends on who is praying and to whom the prayers are being directed. Prayer is action—the first action we should take. God prompts us to act after we pray—and we should act, at that point. We can always do more after we pray, but we can't do more before we pray.
- Peter Marshall, former chaplain to the Senate, prayed, "Forgive us for thinking that prayer is a waste of time, and help us to see that without prayer, our work is a waste of time."
- Probe: Think of how you spend your time. How can you reallocate your time to include more regular prayer?

## Practice

**Connect Up:** Billy Graham talked about wishing he had spent more time in study and prayer, just telling God that he loved Him. Take time now to do that and commit to taking time each day just to let God know how much you appreciate Him.

**Connect In:** The needs around us, even in the church, can feel overwhelming. We want to pray but the thought itself is exhausting. What are some ways you can discipline yourself to intercede for your brothers and sisters in Christ? Ask God to give you a heart for prayer. Consider making a list and dividing it into prayers for each day, setting a regular time and sticking to it, like you're keeping a meeting or appointment. What other tips have worked for you?

**Connect Out:** Billy Graham also said that the three most important things when undertaking any ministry are prayer, prayer, and prayer. He believed that prayer works. Prayer is your connection to God as your power source. What does it mean to make sure you've got a tight connection with God before you head out into the world?

## OUTLINE

- I. Prayer Is Needful (v. 19a)
- II. Intercession Is Powerful (v. 19a-b)
- III. Obedience Is Essential (vv. 20-22)

#### IV. Prayerlessness Is Sinful (v. 23)