

Lesson 9, May 23/24**Sin, *the* Gospel, and *the* Law**

Memory Text: Psalm 119:93, 94

“I will never forget Your precepts, for by them You have given me life.
I am Yours, save me; for I have sought Your precepts”

- Without doubt = SIN = greatest barrier to = close relationship w/ God

Isaiah 59:2 Your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

- Sin separates us from God / deceives us / wounds us
 - ultimately destroys both life / faith.
- Our battle against sin / self = carries eternal consequences
- Yet society often treats sin lightly
 - Normalizing indulgence = avoiding honest confrontation
- More comfortable we become w/ sin = further we drift from God
- Though all people sin= in thought / motive / word / action = God has lovingly revealed His law to expose sin = guide us back to Him
- This week = we will explore why God gave His law
- How broken relationships w/ Him can be restored

SUNDAY**Distractions and Temptations**

- Story of Samson = both powerful / sobering
- Called by God before his birth = endowed by God w/ extraordinary strength = Samson was meant to be / deliverer for Israel
- Yet **Judges 14 / 16** reveal tragic pattern = Samson served God
 - while repeatedly giving in to temptation
- He flirted w/ danger = underestimated / enemy
 - Assumed his strength = would always be enough
- In end = very distractions / temptation he tolerated
 - became instruments of his downfall

Song of Solomon 2:15 Scripture warns us, “Catch for us the little foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines”

- Foxes don’t destroy vineyards overnight
- Quietly gnaw at / roots = slowly ruining what once promised fruit
- Same way = it is often not / obvious sins = but **small compromises**
 - **Daily distractions** = that weaken our spiritual lives
- Great controversy is real = Cosmic battle that began in heaven
 - Now being played out in our own hearts / habits
- Satan knows his time is short = strategy is not always
 - to make us outright rebellious / but **comfortably distracted**
- Many distractions = not sinful in themselves
- Work / social media / shopping / sports / entertainment/ even food
- But overconsumption / imbalance can crowd out prayer
 - silence Scripture = leave little room for God / others

Luke 21:34 Jesus warned, “Take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life”

- Notice = “cares of this life” = listed alongside obvious sins
- Anything that dulls spiritual alertness
 - becomes dangerous = when it takes = first place
- Samson fell = because he trusted / his own strength
- He assumed yesterday’s victories
 - Guaranteed tomorrow’s protection

1 Corinthians 10:12 Scripture reminds us, “Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall”

- The enemy studies our weaknesses
 - patiently works to dull our sensitivity to God
- Often thru guilt / shame / creeping sense of unworthiness
 - That drives us away from / very One who can restore us
- Jesus understands our human condition
- While on Earth = He knew fatigue / He knew pressure
 - He knew temptation
- Yet He never treated time w/ His Father as optional

Luke 5:16 “Jesus often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed”

Luke 6:12 Before major decisions, “He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God”

Mark 1:35 Early in the morning, “while it was still dark,” He sought solitude with God

- Jesus knew = communion w/ the Father = not luxury / but survival
- Distractions lead to = temptations / spiritual apathy
- Apathy = dangerous heart condition
- **Revelation 3:14–22** shows us how seriously Christ views spiritual apathy = rebukes lukewarm hearts not to condemn / but to awaken
- His invitation is still tender

Revelation 3:20: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock.”

- Distraction dulls / ear His knocking = devotion opens / door
- Good news is this = victory does not depend on our strength
 - but on our surrender

2 Corinthians 12:9 “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.”

- Victory begins when we stop relying on ourselves
 - allow God’s power to work / thru surrendered weakness

Philippians 2:13 “For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.”

- God does not merely command obedience
 - He **empowers** it = thru His Spirit
- Even / desire to obey = gift empowered by God
- True obedience / lasting victory = come thru Spirit’s power
- Surrender invites divine direction / strength
 - where human wisdom fails.

Romans 8:13–14 “If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”

- Victory over sin = Spirit-led / Spirit-empowered work
 - not self-discipline alone

Romans 10:17 “Faith comes by hearing / hearing by the word of God”

- God’s Word exposes / foxes = strengthens / roots
 - Restores fruitfulness

Matthew 6:33 Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

- So ask yourself today = What are the little foxes in my vineyard?
- What distractions are quietly draining
 - Time / focus, /or affection = meant for God?
- Bring those honestly to Lord = He is not surprised by weakness
 - He is more than sufficient for your victory

Romans 8:37 “Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”

- Our victory over distractions / temptations
 - flows from **union w/ Christ** = abiding in Him/Word
- Sustained by Holy Spirit = expressed thru daily surrender