

Announcer

Welcome to transformed by the word, a podcast about discovering how to live your life with gratifying purpose. God created you for a reason and the Bible contains the keys to unlock your transformed life. Now, here's your host, Debora Barr

Debora

Thanks for joining me for Episode Seven of transformed by the word. Today we are exploring the topic. What is sin?

When you hear the term Sin City, what comes to mind?

Well, if you live in the United States, you likely know that Las Vegas, Nevada is called Sin City. Vegas is well known for its casinos, gambling, quick and easy marriage and divorce 24 hour liquor sales, and much, much more. There is a saying what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas, alluding to the fact that you can do just about anything in Vegas, that you wouldn't do elsewhere. Nor would you want people in your life like your parents, your teachers, or your spouse to know what you did there.

But what is the Bible say about sin?

To discover that question, we need to go to the Bible, the Word of God and read about sin in the scriptures. In the very first few chapters of the Bible, we discover how sin entered into the world.

You see Adam and Eve were the first two human beings created by God. And they lived in the Garden of Eden, which was a beautiful and perfect environment created by God for their flourishing. And for them to tend the garden. God provided trees with fruit for them to eat a freely and commanded only one thing that they not eat from one specific tree in the garden.

Well, in chapter three of the book of Genesis, we learn that there is a creature, the serpent, who we later know is the devil began a conversation with Eve, resulting in her doubting the goodness of God. And Adam and Eve both ended up disobeying God by eating fruit from that one tree that was off limits in the garden. That was the very moment that sin entered into the world. That was the moment that everything changed for humanity.

In the story, we see that Adam and Eve were now separated from God because of their sin. And God ended up expelling them from the Garden of Eden, so that they wouldn't eat also from the tree of life and end up living forever, totally separated from him. The perfect unity and intimacy that Adam and Eve had with God was now broken. But in that same brokenness, God had a plan for them, and for us, the rest of humanity, to restore fellowship with Him through a required sacrifice. We also see in chapter three of Genesis, that Adam and Eve realized for the first time that they were naked, and they hid from God because they were ashamed.

But the Bible says that God covered them.

He sacrificed an animal and covered their nakedness with the skin of the animal. This was a shadow or a preview into what God would do for you and I thousands of years later, but more in that in a few moments.

Sin is a serious offense against God. He is holy, and our rejection of him as the ultimate authority in our lives, keeps us in a state of continual separation from him.

In the next chapter of Genesis, after we read about Adam and Eve and their sin against God, we also see that their oldest son whose name was Cain, ends up killing his brother, Abel. Sin is passed from the first generation of humans to the second and on down the line all the way to our generation. The Bible says in the book of Romans, that we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. There has never been a person on earth that has not sinned, except for Jesus.

Jesus tells us in Matthew chapter 15, that out of our hearts, proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, depths, false witness and blasphemies. Sin begins in the attitudes and the intentions of our inner person. And it begins at our very youngest age, when we can begin to make choices on our own.

In John chapter eight, Jesus says that everyone who sins is a slave to sin. If you are addicted to anything, like food, drugs, watching TV, sex, alcohol, pornography, gossip, shopping, anything at all, you know firsthand that you are a slave to that addiction.

At the beginning of Jesus's ministry, after he had fasted 40 days, Jesus was confronted by Satan who had who tried to tempt him to sin. The full story is told in the books of Matthew and Luke, Satan ended up tempting Jesus in three different areas.

The first was physical needs and desires. You see, Jesus hadn't eaten anything in 40 days, and he was hungry. So Satan said to him, if you are the Son of God, tell the stones to become bread. But Jesus answered, It is written, Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

The second area that Jesus was tempted was pride. Satan took him up to the top of the temple, and said, if you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here. For it is written, he will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. But Jesus answered and said, it is said, Do not put the Lord your God to the test.

Finally, Jesus was tempted in the area of possessions and power. Satan offered to give the kingdoms of the world to Jesus, if he would only bow down and worship Him. Now, this is absolutely ludicrous. Satan tried to offer the Son of God, the kingdoms of the world. Nonetheless, Jesus said to him, away from me, Satan, for it is written, worship the Lord your God, and serve him only. Don't you know that we are tempted to sin in these same areas, physical needs and desires, pride, possessions and power. Let's talk about physical needs and desires that lead to sin.

Now, we live in a society in time in history, where we are encouraged to satisfy every desire of our fleshly bodies. Think about it. We live in a sexually charged environment where the world tells us in every way to satisfy the desires of our flesh with anyone anything at any time.

Now God created sexuality, but he also put guardrails around how and when we are to indulge in sex. It is only within the confines of marriage. That is biblical marriage between one man and one woman who have made a lifelong commitment to one another. Anytime we engage in sex outside of these

parameters set by God, it leads to emotional pain, broken relationships, disease, and even many unhealthy sexual addictions.

What about indulging our bodies with excessive amounts of food and drink? Well, God created our bodies with the requirement to take in food and water for our very survival. But when we indulge in excessive amounts, we indulge in the sin of gluttony and not caring for our body which is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Now, gluttony leads to obesity, addiction, poor health and premature death.

The fact that something is not wrong in itself does not mean it is good for you at a given time. Many people sin by attempting to fulfill even legitimate desires outside of God's Will or his timeline, like engaging in sex before marriage.

A second area where we are tempted to sin is the area of pride. The Bible says that God opposes the pride but he gives grace to the humble. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled. And all those who humble themselves will be exalted.

You see, God loves humility.

But in so many areas of life today, we are tempted to be prideful, as if all of our accomplishments are solely based on our own desires, our own abilities, our own hard work, and our own wisdom. If we would just be honest, God is the one who gives us the gifts and the talents to do what we do. He is the one that sets circumstances and situations into motion, so that we can accomplish all that he purposes for our lives.

That third area where Satan tempted Jesus, and we are tempted today as well, is the area of possessions and power. The world tells us that we should climb the corporate ladder scratching and clawing our way, way to the top to make a name for ourselves, pride so that we can get the big paycheck the huge house, the expensive clothes and cars and other visible signs of wealth and power. We are encouraged to lead rather than to serve to give commands rather than obey commands. But Jesus said, Take heed and beware of covetousness for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things a person possesses. covetousness is the strong desire to acquire material possessions.

The Bible says in the book of James, if you have any bitter envy and self seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above but is earthly, sensual and demonic. For where envy and self seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

Satan has been tempting man to sin since the beginning of time. He was cast down from heaven himself, for rebelling against God, trying to make himself higher and more esteemed than God. And he has been trying to tempt and deceive humanity since he succeeded with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Since we are talking about temptation and sin, I want to be clear about one thing.

temptation itself is not sin.

Temptation can actually fulfill God's purposes

times of testing show the evidence of our true obedience

When the Israelites were brought out of Egypt, the Bible says in Deuteronomy, chapter eight, verse two, that God led them into the desert to test them. It says, and you shall remember that the Lord your God, led you all the way these 40 years in the wilderness, to humble you, and to test you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.

Think about it. If you never had the opportunity to disobey, you have never demonstrated true obedience. It is only when God gives us a choice to make, that we can choose to obey.

And Hebrews chapter four, this recounts the temptation of Jesus in the desert that I mentioned to you earlier. It says, For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points, tempted as we are, yet he was without sin. Satan tried to block God's purpose for Jesus's life. He tried to make him circumvent the plan and the purpose that God had sent His Son to Earth to fulfill.

When you are tempted, it might be that Satan is trying to block God's purposes for your life. How you deal with temptation, your response to it determines whether you have sinned or not. There's good news though. The Bible tells us that God makes a way of escape for us when we are tempted. First Corinthians chapter 10, verse 13, says, no temptation has overtaken you, except such as, as is common to man. But God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make a way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

Temptation itself is not sin.

The Bible says in first John chapter two, for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it, but he who does the will of God abides forever.

We have a choice. We can resist temptation and obey God in the instructions that we find in His Word. In Romans chapter six, it says, Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lust. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourself to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law, but under grace.

In John 10:10, Jesus says, The thief, meaning Satan, does not come except to steal and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. Satan convinced Adam and Eve, that disobeying God would gain them everything. But in reality, their disobedience robbed them of all that they had. They only got to experience a small shadow of what they would have had had they remained faithful to God.

The world wants you to believe that you will find fulfillment in all that it has to offer. sexual pleasure, wealth, status, material possessions, but in reality, it all leads absolutely nowhere good. It all leads to death. James 1:15 says that when desire has conceived, that is the desire of our hearts. It gives birth to sin and sin, when it is full grown, brings forth death.

The truth of the matter is that every human being is born into sin. And sin has eternal consequences, as it separates us eternally from the God who loves us. How long is eternity? Have you ever thought about that?

Think about it like this.

Imagine a tiny bird, a Sparrow, and a giant mountain, Mount Everest.

A Sparrow flies past Mount Everest, brushing its wing against the granite of the mountain. One time 1000 years later, another Sparrow flies past Mount Everest, brushing its wing against the granite of the mountain.

And one time, each thousand years thereafter, a sparrow flies past Mount Everest, brushing its wing against the granite of the mountain.

When Mount Everest is worn down flat, from the brushing of a sparrows wing against its surface, one time every thousand years, only one second of eternity has passed. That is how long you will remain separated from God, if you choose to live in sin!

Jesus said that he who believes in the son has everlasting life. And he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.

I said at the beginning of this message, that God did something amazing for Adam and Eve, when he sacrificed an animal to cover their shame. This was a shadow and a foretaste of what God would do in sending His Son Jesus Christ, to be sacrificed for the sins of the world.

Jesus came to earth to overcome sin and die a sacrificial death for you and for me. Jesus stepped in as the acceptable sacrifice for our sin because Jesus never sinned. The Bible says that God made him who knew no sin, meaning Jesus, to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. Jesus sacrifice on the Cross was the acceptable sacrifice needed to take away our sins. His Holy Blood atoned for our sins and washes us clean.

If we will only accept this free gift of salvation. The most important prayer that you can pray, concerns your eternal destiny. If you have never surrendered your life to Jesus Christ, you've never confessed that you're a sinner, and that you have faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. You can do that right now. For you four, it is by faith that we believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sins.

Would you pray this prayer with me?

God, I confess that I'm a sinner, and I need Jesus in my life.

I repent of my sins and I turn to you.

I believe I believe that Jesus died on the cross for my sins, was buried and rose from the dead. And I accept this by faith. And I invite Jesus to be the Lord of my life, to reign and rule in my heart. Thank you, God, for forgiving me and saving me so that I can have eternal life with you. Amen.

Now, if you're a Christian, you've already been saved, you surrendered your life to Jesus at some time in the past, but you've gotten off track and you've slipped back into sinful habits of letting sin actually control your life. You can repent and recommit your life to the Lordship of Jesus.

The Bible says in first John one nine, that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness if you repent of your rebellion, and confess your sins to Him, He will forgive you and wipe your slate clean.

If you just accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, or you recommitted your life to him, I would love to hear from you.

Please visit my website at TBTWPodcast.com that stands for transformed by the word podcast. And let me know that you made a decision for Christ today so that I can encourage you and support you with next steps in your faith.

My prayer for all of you today is that you will surrender every area of your life, each and every day, to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. That you will resist the plots and the schemes of the enemy of your soul who wants to lead you into sin and break your fellowship with God. That you will remain strong in your faith, even when you are tempted by the temptations of this world and that God will wrap his loving arms around you and give you his peace. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

Stay tuned for our next episode of transformed by the word where I will have a very special guest. Joining me to explore the topic. Why is salvation important?

Announcer

Thank you for listening to transformed by the word with your host Debora Barr Be sure Subscribe to our podcast on iTunes or Google Play and connect with us at TBTWPodcast.com. Until next time, be blessed.