



Christ's Commission Fellowship

Los Angeles

DISCUSSION GROUP GUIDE
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WORD:

But people who depend on following the law to make them right are under a curse. As the Scriptures say, "They must do everything that is written in the law. If they do not always obey, they are under a curse." So it is clear that no one can be made right with God by the law. The Scriptures say, "The one who is right with God by faith will live forever." The law does not depend on faith. No, it says that the only way a person will find life by the law is to obey its commands. The law says we are under a curse for not always obeying it. But Christ took away that curse. He changed places with us and put himself under that curse. The Scriptures say, "Anyone who is hung on a tree is under a curse."

Galatians 3:10-13

A thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy. But I came to give life—life that is full and good.

John 10:10

We have been studying Christ-likeness these past months. . . and although it is impossible on our own efforts alone, but with the grace and molding of God it is possible. Christ-likeness is a state of being, a process by which we continue to grow, and although challenging it can also be enjoyable. A life full of CHRIST is a life that is:

- C - Conquest over sin and trials
- H - Hope not despair
- R - rejoicing and not defeated
- I - inspiration not discouragement
- S - Success not a wasted life
- T - Thankfulness, not grumbling

These are the products of a life aligned with God's will, a life that is surrendered to God's molding.

HOPE AND NOT DESPAIR

What is Hope? Hope is to believe that something desired may happen while Despair on the other hand, is the opposite, it is a feeling of being lost. It is to give up, to lose hope.

In our world today, many are in despair. . . many are lost. There are so many circumstances, factors and influences that can directly or indirectly bring us to hopelessness, to despair . . . to being lost. But these are the outside factors, the biggest factor that leads us to despair and being lost is actually SIN. *As the Scriptures say, "There is no one doing what is right, not even one. There is no one who understands. There is no one who is trying to be with God. They have all turned away from him, and now they are of no use to anyone. There is no one who does good, not even one." Romans 3:10-12*

This tells us that many are in need of hope and it then becomes an utmost urgency to bring to them the hope of Christ.

Romans 3:23 says “ All have sinned and are not good enough to share God’s divine greatness.” Until we fully and completely understand what sin is, what it does to us and what the consequence is — we will not fully and completely understand Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross. We will not be able to comprehend the importance and the magnitude of the effect of His sacrifice is to our life, not this earthly life but our eternal life.

Sin has devastated every known relationship — man and God, man and man, and even man and nature. It has generated cosmic chaos in the heavens between angels and demons. It only waits to attack every baby born into this world. It rules every human heart, and intends to bring every soul to damnation. It has turned beauty into ugliness, form into deformity, greatness into nothingness. Worse of all, the sinner continues to eagerly excuse his sin than admit it, his concern is to cover it rather than cure it.

Man calls it an accident, God calls it an abomination.

Man calls it blunder, God calls it blindness.

Man calls it defect, God calls it disease.

Man calls it chance, God calls it choice.

Man calls it luxury, God calls it leprosy.

Man calls it mistake, God calls it madness.

Man calls it weakness, God calls it sin.

Let us stop fooling ourselves and start calling it what it is SIN. Because until we do, we will never be able to fully appreciate what Jesus has done for us.

What then is SIN?

1 John 3:4

NAS ⁴ **Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.**

NLT ⁴ **Everyone who sins is breaking God’s law, for all sin is contrary to the law of God.**

TLB ⁴ **But those who keep on sinning are against God, for every sin is done against the will of God.**

This simply means that anything done against God’s laws. God has laws and sin is going against these laws . . . going against God’s will leading to chaos and disobedience. . . completely ignoring the divine moral laws of God. It is living as if there is no God . Disobedience. Violation. Ignorance. Total disregard of God’s laws. That is sin.

What does it do to you and me?

1. Sin defiles, pollutes, degrades. *Isaiah 64:6* “For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment.” Sin destroys us and no matter what we do, even the good we do will remain unclean.

2. Sin makes us rebellious. *Psalms 12:4* “ with our tongues we prevail; our lips are our own to command at our will - who is lord and master over us?”

3. Sin makes us incurably disobedient. *Jeremiah 13:23* “can the Ethiopian change the color of his skin? or a leopard take away his spots? nor can you who are so used to doing evil now start being good.” John Flabbe, the Puritan said “all the tears of a penitent sinner should he shed as many as there have been fallen drops of rain since the creation, cannot wash away one’s sin. All your sorrow, all your self-effort is useless. The everlasting burnings of hell cannot purify the flaming conscience from the least sin.” This in itself is the picture of hopelessness... because no matter what we do we cannot wash away our own sin. That is why hell is forever because our sin is incurable.

4. Sin condemns to hell (spiritual death). *Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death." John 8:23-24 "Then he said to them, "You are from below; I am from above... that is why I said that you will die in your sins" Because our God is just and holy, sin will always be condemned. He cannot tolerate this uncleanness that is why we are doomed to an eternity in hell.*

The sad truth is that even though we are aware of sin and the consequences of sin, it has become a way of life. Like cancer, it will slowly eat us up and destroy us. . . this is the curse that is the result of sin. Sin has laid on every human being a curse with brutal implications for present day and eternity. In the present, we will experience pain, suffering, sorrow and troubles while in the future it will bring us an eternal judgement in hell. *Isaiah 48:22 says "There is no peace for the wicked, says the Lord."*

But instead of avoiding sin, man continues to fall into its traps. *Jeremiah 9:5 says "with practiced tongues they fool and defraud each other; they wear themselves out with all their sinning."*

And that is why God gave man the law so that we can see our sin and how cursed we are. *Romans 3:20 "for the more we know of God's laws, the clearer it becomes that we aren't obeying them; His laws serve only to make us see that we are sinners."*

We are truly damned. . . UNTIL we understand the curse and humbly open our eyes and hearts to the Gospel so that it will have true meaning and value in our lives. ***Roman 5:8-11 (NAS) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.***

Works: Journaling task

1. What does sin mean to me? Do i still have sin in my life that i am unwilling to give up? Do i still have a favorite sin?
2. What has this sin done to my life? As i reflect on my life, what are the consequences of this sin?
3. What does Romans 5:8-11 mean to me? How do i understand this verse?
4. Have i truly understood the importance of the Gospel in my life? Do i truly understand the result of what Jesus did for me?
5. What do i commit myself to as i continue to grow into Christ-likeness?