

SEPARATION FROM SIN:  
The Neglected Doctrine  
Message 5

INTRO: Our subject is not the most palatable, to put it mildly. It is what I have called the neglected doctrine; the doctrine of sin. Our first main point has been separation from sin in the world. The point to follow that will be separation from sin in the Church. At first I intended to cover this subject in brief. But once I got started I sensed the urgency of doing a more thorough coverage of this subject.

In the area of separation from sin in the world, we looked at what the term 'world' generally means in Scripture. It speaks of lost mankind, not the earth. It speaks of that realm which lies fully in the hands of Satan. And so the world is all of lost mankind; atheists, secularists, Mormons, Catholics, Muslims, Budhists, etc.. etc.. All of that makes up the world, and all of that we are positionally separated from the moment we become Christians. But the practical separation is another thing. Just like Israel of old, as hard a time as God had of getting Israel out of Egypt, He had a harder time getting Egypt out of Israel.

Then we spoke of worldly appearances. I was given some messages to listen to by S. M. Davis on dress. He says dress is a language. He certainly is right. When you stop to ponder this, there is much that can be read out of the way a person dresses. I mentioned in the last message the picture on Music covers. Most times that is all you have to see and you know what is in the music.

Then we began looking at separation from sin, and we have been looking at broad categories of sin. They are notoriously hard to define. To find the common denominator in words like wickedness is difficult, if it is possible. But in general, and I am certainly not expert in this area, I might define them as follows: To transgress is to overstep some bound which makes the act wrong. Iniquity is to twist the truth to suit our wishes. Error is to inadvertently do that which is not right. Wickedness is generally moral evil, but it is moral evil that is not satisfied to stay alone. It wants to pull others into its sinfulness as well.

Disobedience is to fail to hear under, and do that which has been required or requested. The hearer is instructed by someone in authority in an area, and refuses to obey. Unbelief is to not

be persuaded by truth. Lawlessness is to fail to obey general revealed laws. Ungodliness is to fail to distinguish the holy from the mundane. It is to dabble in the holy with that which does not belong there. Such things as, "Christian Rock" are prime examples of this sin.

This morning we want to look at one more large category of sin, and then move into specific sins. So our next subject is unrighteousness.

#### h. Unrighteousness

Unrighteousness is an act against or contrary to that which is just as it relates to others. The Hebrew word for righteous is *tsadeek*. We have seen that God destroyed the world with a flood because of wickedness. Righteousness is to do that which is just or lawful or right or correct and so on. Unrighteousness is the opposite. In Genesis 6 God said He would destroy man because of man's wickedness. Now go to Genesis 7 (read 1). Mankind at this time, was saved because one man was found righteous.

A Hebrew word that speaks of unrighteousness is the word 'awval'. It means to deal unjustly. It means to deviate from a righteous standard. Like other broad terms it covers all kinds of things like, and the Theological Wordbook of the OT gives these examples: being partial in judgment (Lev. 19:15); dishonest trade deals (Deut. 25:16), robbing, murder and other such sins. In dishonest trade deals you could put not paying your bills. Not paying one's bills without talking to the other person about it is stealing. You see, this is an injustice to the one to whom money is owed.

In the NT, a key thought underlying righteousness is justice; that which is just, that which is right. That which is an injustice is unrighteousness. This subject of justice, negatively and positively is vast subject. One of the attributes of God is righteousness. He is a just God.

Consider some related words in the NT to get a taste for this word. Matthew 1:19 says that

Joseph, the husband of Mary was a *just* man. The word is *dikaïos*. He paid his bills. He did not lie etc... Matthew 5:10 says Christians are blessed when they suffer for righteousness sake. The word is *dikaïosunee*. The word *dikaïow* means to justify, or declare righteous. A righteous judgment, act or deed is a *dikaïwma*. To do just things or right things is *dikaïws*. To declare righteous is a *dikaïwsis*; a Judge is a *dikaïotees*. A *dikee* is right, or just or a suit at law or a judicial hearing; where, of course, justice is to be decided.

We find this in the NT in Romans 1:29 (read). Now let me give you an example. Go to Acts 8. My wife and I listened to D. Martyn Lloyd Jones a while ago and he spoke about an event in this chapter. If you want some good preaching, listen to that man. Early in Acts, the newly formed Church fell under persecution. The man who became the Apostle Paul later, was at this time still involved in this persecuting business.

Well, the Christians were scattered and the deacon, Philip, went down to Samaria, kind of an un-Jewish place to go. Look at Acts 8 (read 4-7). Well, there was a certain man there, a magician, so look at verses 9-13. Now we would see such a man's conversion a miracle.

Well, the Church is brand new. Reaching out to despicable Samaritans, and this is new too. But look at verses 14-17 (read). Now what does that do to a man like Simon, who has worked in sorcery? Look at verses 18-19 (read). Now let me ask you, would you see any problem in that?

Well, Peter discerned a major problem here. Look at verses 20-23 (read). What is the problem here? Well, Simon's previous life indicated that he loved attention. He tried to get attention even if he did so by trickery or dishonesty. That is what magic is. And now he is supposedly a Christian and he wants the limelight once more. And it may well be that he had to pay to learn his magic tricks, and now he thinks by paying he can get this divine

power from God. This is a very huge sin. There is extreme ungodliness here and unrighteousness as well.

Now here is an important lesson. Is there any parent here that does not want to have influence over their children? May I ask why do you want that influence? Is it for your own reputation or what you will get out of it? Or is it for the Lord's sake? I believe I have seen people willing to buy things for their children to keep them in a certain church. When a preacher preaches, a teacher teaches, a singer sings; whatever it may be, if we do it for ourselves, there is a heart issue, and Simon had a major heart issue here. He was seeking his own glory!

And what is the solution to such a heart condition? Repentance! Look at verse 22. And note that he says, "Repent of this your wickedness." I mentioned two NT words for a certain sin in a previous message; kakos and poneeros. I quoted from Bishop Trench on these words like this: "The kakos may be content to perish in his own corruption, but the poneeros is not content unless he is corrupting others as well, and drawing them into the same destruction with himself."

The word in this passage translated wickedness is kakos. If Trench is right, it would seem to me that Simon wanted this thing for himself. You see when a magician shows how he does stuff, people no longer hold him in such high esteem. And just like his magic, it would have been no good to involve others in what he is doing. He would lose his business. Now he could use it to impress others. That is what he wanted here as well.

Now look at verse 23 (read). Notice the interpretation Peter got from Simon's actions. He was poisoned by bitterness. Now what might he have been bitter about? Did he go through the motions of believing and getting baptized for what he could get out of it? Or did he really get saved, only to realize all prestige with other people was gone? His business of tricking people, being

someone, is over. Once everybody looked up to him and now he is a nobody. And he is bitter.

And notice what Peter says, "I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity." Now I mentioned to you that words are not always translated uniformly. The word translated iniquity here is 'adikia'. Remember all the dikiaos words we mentioned earlier? This is one of those. It is the NT word for unrighteousness. In his effort to get power with God, he was doing something unjust, something unrighteous.

Now let me ask you, what was the injustice in asking for this power by offering money? Well, he was in the business of sorcery for his own glory. He was totally unjust in misleading people with his magic. And now he wants this glory by offering money to get this spiritual gift so he might once more be honored by people.

We had a young man in our church some time ago who thought he could buy prayer time from another person. He offered to drop charges if the person would pray so or so long. There is no telling what all the motives behind that were. But it is a huge sin. But when it came up in a church meeting, one of the older men said, "I am just wondering, what is wrong with that?" Something had so affected the discernment in that man, if he ever had it, that he could not even see it. I wonder if anyone would deal with such a sin like Peter did here, what our modern Christian would say? Look again at verses 20-23 (read). Unrighteousness! Injustice to others! What a sin is this!

Well, these are some of the major broad categories of sin, but there are specific manifestations of sin, and to those we turn now.

### 3. Individual sins

I want to mention something again that I have mentioned numerous times but that, in our community, usually comes as a surprise. There are different sizes of sin. There are also different sizes of righteousness. If this were not true, no judgment would be necessary.

Justice must tell us that this is so. \*(Leave for reading themselves?) But go with me to Luke 12 (read 42-48). It is quite clear then that sin comes in various sizes.

But there are lists of particular individual sins. And Galatians 5, a passage we will be looking at, says something very important. Go to Galatians 5 (read 19-21). Now notice these words in verse 21, "...those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." So what we have here is very, very serious sins. Notice as well, the NKJV rightly, I think, gives the right idea when it says, 'those who practice such things.' It is the continued living in such a state that will send such people to hell. These sins, praise God, are forgivable by repentance and confession.

What I plan to do is to go through the things mentioned in several lists in the NT. I do not want to take on more than that for now. And we will begin with the passage in Galatians that we read. Look briefly at verses 16-19 (read). What we have contrasted here are the works of the flesh, and the fruits of the Spirit. And these sins are a demonstration of 'some' of the works of the flesh. There are more. We know this because verse 21 says, "and the like", anything else that is like these things. Just because some sin is not in this list does not mean it is just as bad. Well, we will begin to go through these.

a. Adultery

The first sin listed here in Galatians is adultery. It is simply marital unfaithfulness, and it is a very huge sin. Marriage is honorable in all, believer and unbeliever alike, so says Hebrews 13:4. It is God ordained. Marriage is wonderful. Adultery is dishonorable in all; believer and unbeliever alike. It is hard to exaggerate the evil of adultery. It is wonderful to be able to declare the divine truth of God, that this sin is forgivable. It must, however, be repented of and stopped or it is not forgivable, and persons who do not repent but continue in this sin will not inherit the kingdom of God.

I need to remind us here of Matthew 5 (27-28). I have warned much about the internet. More adultery happens there than probably anywhere else today.

b. Fornication

The next sin listed is fornication. The word is *pornia*, and of course, we get our word 'pornography' from this word. The sin here is as simple to define as is adultery, if we do not complicate them with a great desire to make divorce and remarriage acceptable. It is the physical unfaithfulness of unmarried people. Now you will understand that the view I have expressed is a highly contested view today and hardly recognized in new translations, if at all.

The effort over the years, because of the thorny problem of divorce and remarriage, has been to make *pornia* a broad sin so as to include adultery. If that can be done, otherwise very specific passages can be colored and make room for divorce and remarriage.

Consider, Vine's dictionary, which is a wonderful, conservative work, with the exception of this word. It says that the word *pornia*, and I quote, "...in 1 Cor. 7:2; Matt. 5:32; and 19:9 it stands for, or includes adultery; it is distinguished from it in 15:19 and Mark 7:21." But there is no biblical criteria by which to make such a statement, and he gives none.

Go to Matthew 5 (read 31-32). Now you will notice how I read the NKJV. Here is my biggest beef with this translation. It surpasses the KJV in many areas, and has done such a wonderful job of translating, only to fail to be objective in this very sensitive issue. It has gone the liberal route of all other new English translations on this word.

Now why do translators translate this word as the NKJV has done? To get around the modern difficulty of divorce and remarriage. And what is the ground for such a translation? I have not been given anything that is objective. This interpretation, in my studies, I have not found to be an objective

study of the meaning of this word. Modern pressure to allow for divorce and remarriage has caused this interpretation as I see it.

Now let me make a point here that I make each time when I teach through the Catechism. I spoke to you in an earlier message about categorizing things. When I teach through the catechism on our present word I say something like this: What is wrong with this list: This spring we planted peas and beans, potatoes, corn, carrots, cabbage, vegetables and beats. What is wrong with the list? Well, vegetables does not belong in the list. It is a broad term that covers all other produce in that category.

Now, before we go on, let me remind you of what I mean when I use the phrase physical immorality. I am avoiding a word. Now I ask you, is the word pornia a broad term or a narrow term? Does it include all kinds of physical immorality, or is it a certain kind of physical immorality? Well, take the NKJV translation of it, which says, "But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except physical immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery." The words, 'physical immorality', do they cover all kinds of physical immorality, or a certain kind? Well, the answer is clear. It is being used as a broad term.

So, go now to 1 Corinthians 6 (read verse 9). Now look at the word, 'fornicators'. It is the very same word rendered 'physical immorality' in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9. Why did the NKJV translate it one way in one place and another in another place? To make room for divorce and remarriage for a broader range of things than the Scriptures otherwise do.

Now if Pornia is a broad term, what is the problem with translating it in 1 Corinthians 6 as it was translated in Matthew 5:32? Well, it is the same as saying, "This spring we planted peas and beans, potatoes, corn, carrots, cabbage, vegetables and beats." Vegetables does not belong in that list because it is a broad term. If pornia is broad term



it could not be used in several places where it is used in the NT.

So look at verse 9 again. If *pornea* is a broad term it cannot be translated as 'physical immorality' here. Why not? Because there are other sins listed that are physical immorality as well. Look at the verse, it includes adulterers, homosexuals, and sodomites. If *pornea* is a broad term, it has all these covered. So what did the translators do? Well, they decided the otherwise broad term is narrow here. On what ground? None given! You will see this again in Galatians 5.

These two sins we have just covered, adultery and fornication make up a very large part of the sins committed in all the world. They are sins that fit under several classes of sins, and are the kinds of sins that lead to the sin we are now battling in North America, and beyond. For anyone wishing more information on this word, let me recommend message 4 on divorce and remarriage on [sermonaudio.com/mecl](http://sermonaudio.com/mecl).

#### c. Uncleaness

So we come to our next word, *uncleanness*. Just what is this? The word is *akatharsia*. It comes from the word *katharos*, which means clean or pure. I want to illustrate this word. So look at this cup of nice clean water.

**(1 Illust. Have Levi drink some.)** Now watch this

**(2 Illust. Scoop out of a diaper and put in water.)**

Now you have some idea of what uncleaness means.

Now there are basically 2 kinds of uncleaness. There is ceremonial uncleaness so often mentioned in the OT. For example, if you touched something dead you were considered unclean ceremonially and you needed to be ceremonially cleansed before you could be involved in spiritual things.

But our concern, and that of the NT is more, moral uncleaness. So, go to Matthew 23 (read 25-28). The word 'clean' or 'to cleanse' is the positive of the word uncleaness that we are looking at. And the

word uncleanness we are looking at is that inward uncleanness of our present passage. So let me illustrate this.

**(3 Illust. Put water with diaper stuff on outside and inside of cup.)** Here is how many people are

**(4 Illust.** cup dirty on outside). Here is what many people do by baptism and church membership or going to church and such like. They wash the outside of the cup, but leave the inside.

**(5 Illust. Wash outside of cup and offer to Levi. Dismiss Levi)**. You cannot tell from the outside what is on the inside.

Now let me show you this in another way. Here is this wonderful clean, beautiful cell phone. It can be just like this cup. Beautiful on the outside, but you get in here in the wrong places and this is what you have. This cell phone is harmless. It is not unclean on the inside. But when you hit certain sites here, it will funnel in dirt from the air and it will go into your soul, just like the stuff you drink from this cup goes into your body. May I ask you, are you drinking from this cup??? Then you may be beautiful on the outside and like this cup on the inside.

Now go to 2 Corinthians 7 (read 6:11-18). The Lord says in verse 17, "Come out from among them and separate yourselves. There is our doctrine under consideration. And then it says, "Do not touch the unclean thing." There is our word, here given as akathartos. Do not touch it. Why? It is like drinking from this cup! **(Illust. Show by acting like you are drinking from dirty cup.)** And what is the result of separating ourselves from those things and not touching unclean things? He says, "And I will receive you."

Now look at the promises, "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty." Is that not most incredible? Now note the following verse in 7:1, "Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse

ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

Oh, how much is there here! But notice he says, “Let us cleanse ourselves...” What word is that? It is *katharizw*. It is the opposite of unclean. It is cleansing. And how do we cleanse ourselves? We do so in the blood of Christ! There is a fountain flowing, to go and wash ourselves in. Repentance is a very key word here.

Now notice what we are to cleanse ourselves from. It is from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit. Now this word filthiness is *molusmos*. What is that? It is the action of getting the flesh or the spirit dirty. (**Illustr.** Act like drinking from cup.) We have spoken of adultery and fornication. What do they do? They get both the flesh and the spirit dirty. And the person is, we say, ‘enjeshwient’, piggish, soiled, dirty. So, in brief, I would say that the sin of uncleanness is to contaminate the body or the spirit, with sin. It is uncleanness.

Well, there is an endless list of sins of the flesh, of which we have named two already. But then there is a long list of sins of the spirit; pride envy, lust and on and on. Pride soils our spirit. Envy, greed, jealousy soils our spirit, and there we have filthiness of spirit.

Let me add something here. Demons are called evil spirits six times in the NT. That is *poneeros* spirits. They are evil, but they want to pull you into their vileness. That is why they are *poneeros*. But 20 times they are called ‘unclean’ spirits. If you visit any pornographic material, no doubt unclean spirits are with you. They want to soil you until you cannot recognize right from wrong. It is like driving down a dirty slushy road, and a vehicle passes and whap, you can hardly see through your window. And unless you have wipers and good fluid, you can end up in the ditch. Sometimes on some of our roads you need a lot of windshield washer fluid. And many people walk with no washer fluid!

Uncleanness of flesh and spirit. Oh let us clean ourselves by flying to the fountain and then setting in place those things that help keep us clean.

Now I want to read you a harmonization of three Gospel accounts of an event that involved an 'akatharsia', an unclean spirit. Here we learn a little of the capability of an unclean spirit. I have slightly altered some of the old English to make it more readable. Here is the account, and notice the unclean spirit mentioned:

*And when he had come to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes which is over against Galilee and had come out of the ship, he went to land, [and] immediately there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs. [One of these was] a certain man, with an unclean spirit, exceeding fierce, (notice that this is an unclean spirit is a very fierce spirit) so that no man could pass by that way, and he had demons for a long time, and wore no clothes, neither lived in a house, but had his dwelling among the tombs.*

*And no man could bind him, no, not with chains: because he had often been bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been torn apart by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw Jesus far off, he ran and worshipped him, and, behold, the two demoniacs cried out, and fell down before him, and they said with a loud voice, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of the most high God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?"*

*(The exceeding fierce unclean spirit said) I adjure You by God, that You do not torment not. For he said to the unclean spirit, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit". For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he broke the bands, and was driven by the devil into the wilderness. And Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he answered,*

*saying, "My name is Legion: for we are many", because many devils had entered into him. And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country, into the deep.*

*And now, there was there a good way off from them close to the mountains a great herd of swine feeding on the mountain. And so all the devils besought him, saying, "If You cast us out, allow us to go away into the herd of swine, that we may enter into them." And Jesus gave allowed them, and said to them, "Go". And then the unclean spirits went out of the man, and when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and they were drowned in the sea and perished in the waters.*

Here we get some idea of how powerful some of the spirits of uncleanness are. And from the names spirits have like; dumb spirits, deaf spirits, spirit of infirmity, spirit of divination; evil spirits or unclean spirits; the unclean is mentioned the most.

CONCL: Well, we have concluded the broad categories of sin I chose for us to look at. In this message we looked at unrighteousness. I think the key idea in unrighteousness is unjust actions towards others. Then we began to look at narrow terms used to describe sin. We looked at adultery. It is the marital unfaithfulness whether in thought or action. Then we looked at fornication. That is the physical unfaithfulness of unmarried persons, whether in thought or action. Then we looked at uncleanness. In brief, I would say that the sin of uncleanness is to contaminate the body or the spirit, with sin. It is uncleanness. By the way, we did not look at the whole aspect of ceremonial uncleanness in the OT.

And I ask you this morning: Are you clean? This morning is a good time to evaluate if there are some things that need to go and to make a commitment to do so.