



Virtues
as found in II Peter 1

Words to Find:
charity

faith
godliness
kindness

knowledge
patience
temperance

How Sin Works

Gospel Herald

A vivid illustration of sin and how it works is shown in a story occurring in the middle ages. During that time, there lived a blacksmith who boasted that he could break any chain, except those forged by himself.

He committed some act, which displeased the noble whom he served, and was punished by being condemned to the dungeon. On the way to the dungeon, he boasted that he would soon be out again as he was sure he could

break any chain put upon him. When he was chained, he immediately started to look for the flaw in the links that would set him free. He found his own mark on the links, and knew he was hopelessly bound by his own handiwork.

So many sins start so small and so innocently, and we are certain we can break these self-forged chains at will. However, they grow stronger until we cannot break them. We find ourselves bound, and our own lives ruined by our own sins.

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No Little Sin

Bill Brinkworth

For some reason, most have weighted some sins “heavier” than others. A robbery of a million dollars is seen as wicked and terrible, but the theft of a pen from work is barely even thought of as sin. Still, both are examples of the sin of thievery. In God’s eyes, both committers are equally thieves. Sin is still sin, no matter how serious we think the iniquity.

There is no “small” sin. We may think one worse than others, but in God’s pure eyes, all sin is wicked. The following five examples show sins that we may consider small and insignificant, are very significant to God. Here are some examples of what we would consider “small” sins, but they were still serious disobedience to God’s commands:

⚡ God instructed Moses to speak to the rock so water would come out to quench the thirst of the people of Israel. Even though his anger towards the people may have been his excuse, he hit the

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The Tenacity of Sin

Sunday School Times

A little banyan seed said to a palm tree, “I am weary of being tossed about by the wind. Let me stay a while among your leaves.”

“Oh, yes,” said the palm tree. “Stay as long as you like.”

By and by the palm tree forgot the little seed was there, but the seed was not idle. It sent out little fibers and tiny roots, and they crept around the trunk and under the bark, and into the heart of the tree itself.

Then the palm cried out, “What is this?”



The banyan replied, “It is only the little seed you allowed to rest among your leaves.”

“Leave,” said the palm tree. “You are too large and strong.”

“We have grown together. I would kill you if I tore myself away.”

Little by little the palm leaves withered, the trunk shriveled, and only the banyan could be found.

Beware of little sins, as they are much like the “little” banyan seed.

No Little Sin

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rock instead of speaking to it. Because of that sin of disobedience, the leader was not allowed to go into the Promised Land that he had worked so hard to get to. It was not a “little” sin. It cost him something that was important to him.

“... And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: ... And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.” Numbers 20:10-12

✎ After the important piece of the tabernacle furniture, the ark of the covenant, was returned from the Philistine enemy, men of Israel violated God’s commandment and paid the consequences. No one was permitted to even touch the golden chest other than certain priests of the tribe of Levi. When it was returned, non-Levi’s opened the chest, perhaps to see if anything was removed from inside of it. When they did, 50,070 people perished. No matter what their reasoning, they sinned against God and He was angered. A little “sin” was not taken lightly by God.

“And he smote the men of Bethshemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the LORD,

even he smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men ...” I Samuel 6:19

✎ Another time when the ark was returned to Israel from their enemies, a serious punishment came upon a man named Uzzah. As the ark was being transported back to God’s people, Uzzah put out his hands to steady the golden chest as it wobbled on the cart. Right there, Uzzah died for his disobedience in touching the ark.

Many would justify his action. “If he did not put out his hands, the ark would have been broken.” As far as God was concerned, man’s excuses did not hide the fact that Uzzah still disobeyed. It was a “big” sin as far as God was concerned. “... Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.” II Samuel 6:2-7

✎ Saul lost his position as King over Israel after committing a “small” sin. The king was commanded by God to destroy all of the Amalekites: men, women, children, and their belongings. Saul spared the enemy king, Agag, and many of the Amalekites’ livestock. Saul’s excuse, that they were going to use the cattle in the sacrificial worship

to God, did not appease God’s anger.

“Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not... Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD? For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.” I Samuel 15:3-23

✎ The early church in Acts was excited and growing. Many of the people in the church were selling some of their possessions and giving the money to the ministry, so it could grow. No one was commanded to give. It was something many wanted to do. Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, also sold a possession they had. However, both lied to the church that they had given all they had made from the sale to the church. They had only given some of the money. Because of their lie, they died instantly in the church. Their sin of lying, angered God. “But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, ... and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles’ feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: ... And Peter answered unto her,

“Our sense of sin is in proportion to our nearness to God.”

— Thomas Bernard

Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. ... Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost ...”

Acts 5:1-10

As these examples illustrate, all sin is a serious matter to God. No matter what the justification of the deed or the intent, a violation of God’s commandment is sin.

Those in the examples, did not escape the wrath of God when they sinned against a Holy God. Nor will we escape it, even if we think it a “small” sin. None of our sin is taken lightly by God.

Would We Prize the Knife?

Spurgeon

If I had a dear brother who had been murdered, what would you think of me if I valued the knife which had been crimsoned with his blood? If I made a friend of the murderer, and daily consorted with the assassin who drove the dagger into my brother’s heart, surely I too, must be an accomplice in the crime. Sin murdered Christ; will you be a friend to it? Sin pierced the heart of the incarnate God; can you love it?

Many times is this not a fair estimate of our own attitude towards others’ sins?

“No sin is small, as no grain of sand is small in the mechanism of a watch.” — Jeremy Taylors