

Sermon Date: September 25, 2016

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Weekly Action Report

Sierra's Weekly Action Plan:



What Sin Does September 25th 2016

Judges 17:1-13

There's nothing more practical than to understand the answer to the fundamental human question ... *What's wrong with us?* The Bible's answer is ancient, and it's profound: sin in the human heart.

At the end of the Book of Judges, a 400 year history covering Israel's return to the Promise Land, we see two conclusions, each similar, in there is no rescue or correction by God in each story. The first conclusion, covers Chapters 17, and 18 and the story appears benign for the most part. The second conclusion Chapters 19-21 chronicles one of the single most horrific tales in all of Scripture.

Both stories/conclusions intend to make the reader aware of sin's subtle side as well as it's deeply evil and wicked side. In Sunday's message we concentrated on the subtle nature of sin as it works into our consciousness.

I. What Sin Does to Us?

This little narrative about Micah, his Mom, and idol worship demonstrated how sin in it's advance stages makes you become this person that is mostly *self-absorbed and self-centered*. In short it makes you *boring, and banal* (common).

To quote C.S. Lewis: "*To admire Satan is to give one's vote for a world of lies, propaganda, and incessant autobiography.*" You're always thinking about yourself, or feeling sorry for yourself, and on and on.

You know what's so weird about this? Sin doesn't make you this evil mastermind it makes you mediocre. The first thing we see here in this little narrative is what sin really does is not make you bad before it makes you boringly self absorbed. **That's the essence of sin.**

But the second surprising thing is Sin also ruins you, because Your understanding of yourself is always based on your understanding of God.

Micah's Mom had a small picture of God.

"I now dedicate these silver coins to the Lord. In honor of my son, I will have an image carved and an idol cast." Judges 17:3

Micah's mother's great sin is thinking she can control God by worshipping a reduced God. She has whittled God down. She has fashioned him into a likeness of her choosing. And here's the insidious nature of sin, you reduce God all the while thinking that He's sponsoring your efforts.

II. What Sin Does to God.

All of our problems come, in essence, from whittling God down. **Psalm 50:21** talks about it, when God looks at the people. What does he say? He says, *"You thought that I was just like you, ..."* **Psalm 50:21** and this **also is the essence of sin.**

We are *sure* God has to be like us.

Let me give you some examples of how we do it.

Do you know why we're so angry when things aren't going right?

Do you know why so many of you have walked away, saying, *"I cannot believe in a God who would let this happen and that happen"*? All you're saying is, *"Because I can't think of a good reason for this to have happened, there can't be one."*

When you say, *"I can't believe in a God who would let this happen,"* you simply have pulled him down.

Tim Keller: *"You know, if you believe there's a God big enough to have caused this, then you have to believe there's a God who's big enough to have some reason for it bigger than what you know." You can't have it both ways. You can't be mad at God, because you acknowledge he's more powerful than you, but then you won't let him be wiser than you.*

The solution to keeping self absorbed sin from shrinking God is captured by what **Missionary Elisabeth Elliott** shared when coming to grips with the tragic loss of her husband, Jim by savage Auca Indians on a beach in South America.

Elliot: *"I reflected on all that happened to me, and one thing is pointed out. If he is God, he is worthy of my worship and my service, and I will find rest nowhere but in his will, and that will is infinitely, immeasurably, unspeakably beyond my largest notion of what he is up to.*

Tim Keller: *There will never be freedom in your heart unless you're willing to admit his will is "infinitely, immeasurably, unspeakably beyond my largest notion of what he is up to."*

Back in the beginning of humankind God spoke to our struggle as He chastises Cain for the murder of his brother Abel.

You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master." Genesis 4:7

In Judges 17 Micah's family suffered from *crouching sin* that did control them. The reason was simple and verse 6 tells us why.

In those days Israel had no king; all the people did whatever seemed right in their own eyes. Judges 17:6

This refrain is offered four times in the conclusions to the Book of Judges to denote really a double meaning. Firstly they had no physical king to enforce a certain way of life, but more importantly than an earthly king they had abandoned their spiritual king.

Micah's generation had long since forgotten their covenantal roots with Moses and the Law of God as the centuries had passed. Therefore life had become a free for all.

Look back upon the narrative. *What son steals from his mother, what mother enables her son into idolatry? What kind of ordained Levitical priest serves at an idolatrous shrine and then happily moves onto another for a higher bid?*

A picture of Moral bankruptcy caused by self indulgent sin that is first and foremost the bi product of doing what seemed right in their own eyes to the exclusion of God's holy Word.

III. What's the solution?

In **Colossians 1:15** Paul says **"Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God, for by him all things were created, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities."**

Paul is saying that the incredibly enormous God that we have shrunk down to size, is made known to us in human flesh and declared the Creator of all we see and don't see. A physical universe so large as to defy definition, not too mention a spiritual realm of equally enormous proportions.

First admit Jesus Christ is the image of God and remind yourself everyday that He died for sin in my place, *therefore I owe him my best fight against this rebellious nature that wants to self glorify all the time. So take your sin seriously.*

For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:21

Lastly we hold fast to God's great promises, and we work out together this great trust we have in Christ, with a clear conscious of what Christ has made us, and we strive together, we never give up, we never lay down for sin.

And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God's house, 22 let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. 24 Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. 25 And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

26 Dear friends, if we deliberately continue sinning after we have received knowledge of the truth, there is no longer any sacrifice that will cover these sins. 27 There is only the terrible expectation of God's judgment and the raging fire that will consume his enemies.
Hebrews 10:21-2

I love being one of your pastors.

dan