

No Such Thing as a Small Sin

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It's easy to fall into the habit of ranking sin. We all do it, even if we don't realize it. We look at someone else's life and think, well, I've never done that. We point to sins like murder, rape, or homosexuality and feel a little better about our own. "At least I'm not as bad as them," we say, sometimes silently. But that kind of thinking reveals a problem, not just with how we see sin, but with how we see God.

Because in God's eyes, there's no such thing as a small sin.

Any sin, no matter how quiet or socially acceptable it might seem, separates us from Him. Whether it's pride, envy, lust, gossip, drunkenness, unforgiveness, or lying, sin in any form is rebellion against God. And the Bible doesn't leave us guessing about how serious this is.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God."

That's not an easy passage to read. But it's not meant to condemn us. It's meant to wake us up. God wants us to see sin the way He sees it. Not through the lens of comparison, but through the lens of truth. Because when we justify sin, or excuse it, or choose to live in it, we're walking further and further from the heart of God.

That's the real danger, not just committing a sin, but living in it. When we get comfortable with it. When we stop feeling convicted. When we stop repenting. That's when our hearts begin to harden, and our spiritual eyes start to go blind.

You can see the difference in the lives of two very well-known men in the Bible: David and Saul, who later became Paul.

David was far from perfect. He committed adultery. He tried to cover it up. He arranged a man's death. If we were comparing sins, David's record was messy. And yet, God called David "a man after My own heart" (Acts 13:22).

Why? Because David repented. When the prophet Nathan confronted him, David didn't make excuses. He didn't say, "Well, at least I'm not as bad as someone else." He broke. He owned his sin. And he cried out to God with a sincere heart.

Psalms 51:1,4a "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness... Against You, you only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight..."

David didn't just feel bad. He turned. He repented. And God forgave him.

Now take Saul, the persecutor of Christians, who later became Paul. He was, by all appearances, a religious man. Zealous. Passionate. Morally upright in many ways. But he was completely blind to the sin in his own heart until Jesus stopped him on the road to Damascus.

Saul wasn't out robbing people or committing adultery. He thought he was serving God. But he was full of pride, violence, and spiritual blindness. And yet, when Jesus revealed the truth to him, Saul changed. He repented. He surrendered. And God used him to write much of the New Testament.

That's the pattern we see over and over again in Scripture. It's not about how "big" the sin is. It's about what we do when God convicts us. Do we defend ourselves? Or do we fall at His feet and ask for mercy?

Jesus told a parable in Luke 18 about two men who went to pray. One was a Pharisee who listed all his religious accomplishments and basically said, “Thank God I’m not like other people.” The other man was a tax collector, someone seen as deeply sinful in that culture. But he stood far off, wouldn’t even lift his eyes, and simply prayed, “God, be merciful to me a sinner.” (Luke 18:13)

Jesus said that he, the humble, repentant sinner, was the one who went home justified before God.

That’s the kind of heart God is looking for.

We’re all going to sin. Scripture says it plainly: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). But there’s a huge difference between making a mistake and living in sin, between stumbling and staying. God doesn’t call us to perfection, but He does call us to repentance, to holiness, and to humility.

1 John 1:8-9 “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

So maybe the question isn’t, how bad is my sin compared to someone else’s? Maybe the real question is, am I letting anything live in my heart that God is asking me to let go of?

When we start seeing sin the way God sees it, we stop trying to manage it, justify it, or hide it. We start surrendering. We start seeking. We stop comparing ourselves to others and begin comparing ourselves to Christ, and that changes everything.

Let’s be people who don’t make peace with sin. Let’s be people who make war against it, not in our own strength, but through the power of the Holy Spirit. Let’s be people who keep short accounts with God, who repent quickly, who chase after holiness, not because we’re trying to earn His love, but because we already have it.

Sin is serious. But so is grace. And the moment we confess and repent, He is ready to forgive, restore, and make us new.