

# Courageous Living

Inspired By God

and

Inspiring To Others!

What Does A Courageous Christian  
Look Like  
and  
From Where Does Courage Come?

A Preacher Once Began His Sermon  
With The Following Statement:

*“Today, the subject of my sermon is “Sin”  
and I am full of my subject.”*

**Courageous Christians  
Have a Strong Sense of  
Their Own Sinful Condition!**

*“It is equally dangerous for man to know God without knowing his own wretchedness, as to know his own wretchedness without knowing the Redeemer who can cure him.”*

Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)

# Understanding The Nature And Power of Sin Will...

- Help us take our struggle seriously.
- Keep us from despair when the going gets tough.
  - It will help us in avoiding self-loathing, thinking we're not trying, and hopelessness.
- Make us more understanding of those who are not making much progress against sin when we think they should come further.
- Make us appreciate the greatness of our salvation.

# Even Public Opinion Says Evil is Real!

- Some blame it Genetics.
- Some blame it on Choice.
- Some blame it on Evolution.
- Some blame it on Environment.
- Some blame it on Adam.
- Some blame it on God.

# Sin is also Universal

*Romans 3:10-18 (NLT2)*

*As the Scriptures say, “No one is righteous— not even one. No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God. All have turned away; all have become useless. No one does good, not a single one.” “Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave. Their tongues are filled with lies.” “Snake venom drips from their lips.” “Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.” “They rush to commit murder. Destruction and misery always follow them. They don’t know where to find peace.” “They have no fear of God at all.”*

## Romans 3:21-24 (NIV)

*But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*

## Again Blaise Pascal gets it right.

There is only one group, all sinners, but we divide ourselves into two categories by our attitudes.

1. “The righteous who believe themselves sinners and”
2. “The rest of us, sinners who believe themselves righteous.”

# Sin Takes On Many Faces

- The obvious – cruelty, racism, lust, gluttony, and drunkenness, bitterness, lying, verbal obscenities and treachery and the list goes on.
- The concealed – sins of the “polite”, self-indulgence, callousness, envy, jealousy, greed, pride, and other secret sins, all of which we can harbor with only God knowing.

1 John 5:17a

*All wrongdoing is sin...*

A Basic Definition of Sin is:

“To Miss The Mark” or “Fall Short.”

What is the mark we are missing.  
And, of what we are falling short?

We are called to Christlikeness.

Anything less is “Missing the Mark.”

Anything less is “Falling Short.”

Anything less is sin.

# We Are All Less Than Christlike!

Someone Has Said...

“Christ came into the world, not so much to convict us of our transgressions, as to convict us of our possibilities!”

## 1 Peter 1:18-20 (NIV)

*For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

## John 1:14, 18 (NIV)

*The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.  
We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who  
came from the Father, full of grace and truth...*

*No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who  
is at the Father's side, has made him known.*

## Romans 3:23 (NIV)

*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

# Only God Understands the Nature of Sin in the Heart.

## Jeremiah 17:9, 10(NIV)

*The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure.  
who can understand it? “*

*I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind, to  
reward a man according to his conduct, according to  
what his deeds deserve.”*

# This Truth Repeated Again And Again in Scripture.

## Genesis 8:21 (NIV)

*The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: "Never again will I curse the ground because of man, even though every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done.*

## Mark 7:20-23 (NLT2)

*And then he added, “It is what comes from inside that defiles you. For from within, out of a person’s heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. All these vile things come from within; they are what defile you.”*

# Martin Luther Said Well In The Hymn, *A Might Fortress*.

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would  
be losing,

Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's  
own choosing:

Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He;

Lord Sabaoth, His Name, from age to age the same,

And He must win the battle.

# Paul Made It Abundantly Clear. Sin Is Not Easily Defeated

*Romans 7:14-25 (NLT2)*

*...The trouble is with me, for I am all too human, a slave to sin. I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate. But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good. So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't.*

*I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God's law with all my heart. But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin.*

# How Do We Get Right With God When We Are Captives of Sin?

**He Wants Us To Own It!**

*If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives. 1 John 1:8-10 (NIV)*

# Anna Bunston de Bary Captures This in the Following Verses.

"Tell me Your name," I challenged Christ.  
"Were You a prophet, saint supreme?  
Did You wear true flesh and blood?  
Are You that which we call God?  
Or but a hope, a sigh, A thing compacted of man's dream?"

"I will declare Myself," said Christ,  
"When you confess your name and station."  
Easy terms. I thought and thought  
But still the sum of me as naught. "A dying sinner, I."  
And straight He told His name, "Salvation."

# Confession Makes That Fellowship Possible Involves:

- Acknowledging that sin exists
- Owning we have actually sinned
- Taking responsibility for our sinning
- Accepting that our sin dishonors God
- Renouncing the desire sin
- Deeply desiring to obey God
- Trusting ourselves to God's grace.

Unless And Until  
We Come To Terms With Our Sin,  
We Will Not Find Peace  
In Ourselves Or With God.

## Psalm 32:1-7

Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit. When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.

Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"-- and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found; surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him. You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance.

# 1. Start By Remembering God “Delights To Show Mercy.”

Micah 7:18-19 (NIV)

Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

## 2. Accept God's Discipline As A Show Of His Love For You.

- Hebrews 12:7-8 (NIV)  
Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons.
- Revelation 3:19-20 (NIV)  
Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.

3. Spend More Time Thinking About Who You Want To Be And Less Time Focused On Who You Have Allowed Yourself to Become.

Jesus Accepts Our Meager  
Offerings, And Sees What We Will Do.

## Luke 22:24-30 (NIV)

Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.

For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

You are those who have stood by me in my trials. And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

## Hebrews 6:10-11 (NIV)

God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.

# Trust Christ To Transform Your Life, He's Good At It.

- 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 (NLT2)

For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.

- Remember Saul/Paul or Levi/Matthew

All Hope of Overcoming the Power of  
Sin Begins With A Saved Relationship  
With Jesus Christ.

# What Do You Need To Do To Deal The Reality And Power Of Sin?

- If you're already a baptized believer then what I've already said will get you well on your way.
- Your journey begins with believing in Jesus as Messiah.
- If you already believe, make it public. Tell people you believe in Jesus the Christ. That's called confession.
- Decide to change your way of living from giving in to the desire to sin and allow the Spirit to begin changing you.
- Follow Jesus into the waters of baptism to your sins washed away to receive the Holy Spirit.

# A Prayer For Consecration

Dear God of Salvation,  
My name is Brad,  
And I am a Sinner in need of a Savior.  
Continue to save me from the power of Sin.  
By the Power of the one who is “Salvation,”  
Restore to me the Joy of my salvation.  
And use me in your Kingdom.  
In Jesus’ saving name I pray, Amen.