



Detecting and Destroying The Roots of Our Sins

1 John 2:15-17

Wayne J. Edwards, Pastor

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God will abide forever.”

1 John 2:15-17

- The seedbed of our sins is our lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Since those three layers of lust form the basis for the economic system of

the world, this is an issue with which we all will have to deal as long as we are alive.

- John didn't say that participating in the systems of the world is a sin, for we all must trade our labor for the finances to provide for our needs.
- However, when our love for the world and the things in the world, exceed our love for the One who created the world, that is when it becomes sin, for that is when we fall short of the glory of God.

According to Romans 3:23, “***For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.***”

- To “**come short of the glory of God**” means to allow the things of the world to distract us from the glory of God as our supreme treasure – to forfeit the eternal for the temporal. Therefore, we have come short of knowing, cherishing, prizing, loving, treasuring God above all things.
- “**Sinning**” is any feeling, thought, speech, or action that comes from a heart that does not treasure God above all things. Therefore, the root of all sinning is a heart that prefers anything above God – to take God off of the throne of our lives and put our wants, our desires, and our felt needs ahead of His desires for us.
- Christians are often more outraged over the sinful actions of others than they are when God Himself is disregarded, disbelieved, disobeyed, dishonored, and thus, belittled.
- Christians are often more concerned about what people are and aren't doing to creation than they are about what they are and aren't doing to the Creator.
- Sin is our preference for anything over God.
- Sin is our disapproval of God's actions or lack of actions.
- Sin is our exchange of His eternal glory for temporal substitutes.
- Sin is our suppression of the truth of God.
- Sin is our heart's hostility to God.
- Sinners are who we are, and who will we be until we are delivered from this sin-sick world through our death or the rapture of the Church.

The Bible describes seven root sins from which all surface sins arise.

- **Pride** – an excessive belief in one's own abilities or value, often putting oneself above others or God.
- **Greed** – a strong, selfish desire for wealth, material goods, or power, to achieve recognition.

- **Lust** – an intense or unbridled craving for personal pleasure; especially sexual pleasure.
- **Envy** – a feeling of discontent or resentment aroused by another's possessions, success, or traits.
- **Gluttony** – overindulgence or overconsumption, usually of food or drink.
- **Wrath** – uncontrolled feelings of anger, rage, and hatred.
- **Sloth** – habitual laziness, physical inactivity, or a general apathy toward one's duties and spiritual growth.

According to Hebrews 12:1, at least one of those seven root sins is a besetting sin for us; i.e., we struggle with it daily. ***“Wherefore, seeing we are encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”***

- Other translations refer to the sins that “beset” us as “sin that so easily entangles” (NIV) and “sin that just won’t let go” (CEV).

When a Christian sins, Satan uses that failure to plant seeds of doubt about God’s unconditional love for us and our eternal security in Him.

- **If we focus on the failure**, we are headed toward self-condemnation.
 - **If we focus on the Savior**, we are headed toward forgiveness and reconciliation.
 - **If we focus on the guilt**, we will live under that cloud of condemnation until we obey God’s convictions.
 - **If we focus on the grace**, we will live under that freedom of knowing our sins are forgiven, past, present, and future.
- 1 John 1:9, ***“If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”***
 - Galatians 2:20, ***“I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”***
 - Romans 13:14, ***“We must make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts,”*** e., avoid those settings or events or circumstances where that sin is triggered or activated.

The “lust of the flesh” is the desires of our heart that are totally contrary to God’s will for our lives. (Galatians 5:19-24)

- Those who are “loving the world” and giving in to the “lust of the flesh” can expect to see these kinds of attitudes and actions characterizing their lives.
- Those who are not controlled by the world’s system, but rather are controlled by the Holy Spirit, can expect to see the fruit of the Spirit in their lives.
- In Romans 13:11-14 to ***“put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh.”***

The “lust of the eyes” means we desire what we see. The “lust of the eyes” describes someone who is captivated by an outward show of materialism; an inordinate desire to have anything contrary to God’s will is sinful.

- In Scripture, the eyes are the primary organ of perception and often the principal avenue of temptation.
- In Matthew 6:22, Jesus asserts that the eye is the lamp of the body. ***“If your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness.”***
- Job 31:1: ***“I have made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully on a woman.”***

The “pride of life” describes an arrogant spirit of self-sufficiency, along with a desire for recognition, applause, status, and advantage.

- The Greek word for “pride” describes the pretentious braggart; one who may not have a cent to his name, but brags about his financial wealth.
- Everything we desire to have, to enjoy, or to pride ourselves upon, this is the “pride of life.”
- Everything from sensualism and self-indulgence to self-conceit; the ungodly gratification of fleshly appetites, of mental self-satisfaction, of egotistic arrogance; this is the pride of life.

The three root temptations: the lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and the pride of life, originate from our fallen human nature. Every person is born with the same root sins and will face the same temptations personally, and give account of their sins individually.

- However, the pattern of expression of those three sins is established by the behavior of their parents and family.
- Just as a child learns to speak and mimic the mannerisms of their parents and their siblings, parents and families also pass down bad habits and inordinate

desires to their children, which skews their view of life, and the purpose for their lives.

- In Proverbs 22:15, the Bible says: ***“Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”***
- Historically and textually, “the rod” symbolizes discipline, training, and boundaries used by loving parents to correct misbehavior and teach wisdom. Parents must not only train, warn, and set limits to the child’s selfish behavior, they must model that before them.
- At some point in our lives, we must detect and destroy the roots of those sins that so easily beset us; those bad habits and concepts of life that we inherited from our parents or our peers that are contrary to God’s will. Either we take personal responsibility for our lives, or we will live as victims, and never fully understand the true meaning and purpose to our lives.