



6-25-17 Sermon Discussion Guide

"Hamartiology - Do we all really sin?"



Context

Throughout this summer we are talking about words and ideas that we often hear in church but rarely define. This summer provides a chance to hit "pause" and reflect upon these ideas, their importance, and their impact upon life. This series began by asking the question, "What is theology?" After discussing the Trinity, how God reveals himself to us, and the doctrine of creation, move on to the topic of sin. What is it? Who sins? What are sin's consequences?

Checking In

Since the last time your group has met, how have each of you experienced God at work? What have you celebrated? What have you mourned?

Introduction

What we believe about sin shapes our understanding of human nature, God's love, and the presence of evil in the world. During this study, we'll look at how we know what a sin is, who sins, what sin's consequences are, and how there's good news in our discussion of sin. To begin the conversation, where do you sin in the world around you?

Discussing the Text

1. In Romans 1:18 through 3:23 the Apostle Paul describes a variety of people who sin. He starts by talking about the types of people the Roman Christians would expect to be sinners, but he continues. By the end of the passage, he says, "all people have sinned fallen short of the glory of God." Why do you think Paul would begin his letter to people he's never met before with a discussion about sin?
2. Does hearing that all people sin make you encouraged or discouraged? Why?
3. Are there different levels of sin? Does Jesus' sermon on the mount, especially Matthew 5:21-32, say that all sins are equal before God?
4. James 4:17 says that anybody knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it is sinning. What do you think James means by this?
5. In King David's prayer of confession in Psalm 51, verse 5 says that David was sinful at birth. How can this be? Are we held accountable for our actions from the very beginning?
6. What role does confession of sin play in our Christian faith? Read 1 John 1:9.

So what?

1. How do you know whether something is a sin or not? How does John 16:7-11 help with this?
2. Reflect on a time where your inaction was or led to a sin. How did you know this? What was its impact? What could you have done differently?
3. If we all have sinned, how do we have hope in this life? Is sinning a part of human nature?
4. If we all sin, is there a level of sin that God won't forgive? Can one sin too much?
5. Read James 1:13-15. How can you resist the type of temptation described here?
6. How does the pervasiveness of human sin impact the world?
7. How has confessing your sins to another person helped you grow in your faith?

Prayer

Share something you are thankful for and/or something for which you need support. Invite people to confess a specific sin to God this week in prayer. Challenge them to confess that sin to another person. Consider James 5:16 as a motivation for your prayers this week.