



OUR SIN IN CHURCH: **IS OUR SIN HURTING THE CHURCH?**

Let me tell you a story. I knew a boy who was about 10 years old at the time. Would you consider a boy of ten to be capable of going to hell? Well one night I encouraged this 10 year old and my son to attend a youth event. I was certain that this would be great for them. It's a good place; they will be protected by my pastor friends and the kids that are Christian. What could possibly go wrong? As it turns out they took my friend and pushed him in a corner of the sanctuary. A youth leader and pastor cornered him. They told him he was going to hell and needed to make a choice for Jesus.

Since that night he has never darkened the door of a church. He said "If that's the love they will give me when I enter that place, they can take a hike." He turned gay because in reality, that community embraced him for who he was. They loved him, cared for him, and

accepted him. He hates the church, God, and every Christian he meets. Do you blame him? Is he foolish in your eyes at ten years old? At ten years old we can't drive, we can't drink, we can't vote, we can't work, and we can't have sex, yet at ten years old someone in a church felt this boy was old enough to decide between heaven and hell. I wasn't mature enough to make that decision until I was 33. Theoretically this boy is going to hell now at 23. He is the walking dead. Church sin can be a killer.

In your staff meeting talk about those you have saved and those you have rejected. What was the message you were trying to give? What was the result? Talk about the disasters when trying to give the gospel. Was the message more important than the people? What I mean is: were you willing to kill the friendship because they did not go your way that day? Below are 7 questions that were meant to point out: you are not perfect inside your church.

1. SIN IS PART OF YOU: GET USED TO IT!!

1 John 1:8-10 “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 is not in us.” We are visual creatures.

Sometimes in church we forget that we can see, smell, hear, and touch very well. Try and shut that off. Over the centuries many have tried and many have failed. Our problem in church is our own sin. We are Jesus people so we have to look sinless right? Did Jesus pick the sinless or the best? He never ever does. Point of Grace sings a song “come to Jesus.” One verse says: “Jesus didn't come to raise the living.” Our sin is part of us. If we don't need Jesus every day we are probably dead and not alive in Christ. What does that mean to your sinless church?

2. CHURCH SIN CREATES SPIRITUAL BLINDERS.

1 Corinthians 1:2 “To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours.” It’s the things we claim to be, but rarely are. Spiritual blinders are the way we handle sin. In ministry I was advised to be careful on social media. Don’t let people see who you really are, they won’t understand. Jesus was a social media guru wasn’t he? He went to the temple, the market, and the parties. He got in trouble didn’t he for that? Has being called a saint and sanctified so often caused us to get sloppy? We do sin (I’ve been in church, I know). Maybe if we expose our lives on social media two things will happen. One: we’ll see our own lives. Two: people can see Jesus rather than just hear about him.

3. ARE WE IN A STATE OF FALSE SAINTHOOD?

J Vernon McGee tells the story of little Willy hiding in the pantry. When mom finds him she says “what are you doing with the cookie jar?” He replies “I’m resisting temptation.” JVM also mentions that we need to admit that we wish we could sin more often. Those are sobering words. We are told in church we are saints and we are justified and sanctified. Rarely are we these things but we hear it over and over. Discuss the words “called to” and sanctified “in” Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:2 and Romans 1:6-7 does not say we are but that we are “in Christ” and called “to be” saints. Has church leadership set people up to fall? We need “Christ” to be saints everyday don’t we? Isn’t it more about who we need than who we are?

4. DO WE USE CHURCH DOCTRINE AS A CLUB?

Is it possible we have inadvertently killed millions of people that have tried to come to church? There is a really tough section in the Bible called Luke 6:1-11. This section is a mirror of the organized church. We use doctrine for what purpose? Is it to guide us or protect us? Maybe both, but have we used it as an unwelcome club? In Luke 6 Jesus wants to point out the heart of the law more than the law itself. Our doctrine is to keep our view of Jesus straight. Our actions should reflect Jesus not our doctrine. Too often we have rejected people because they don't look like our doctrine. Who did Jesus reject or judge? Most of the time it was the church leaders wasn't it?

5. IN CHURCH ARE WE CONCERNED FOR OTHERS OBSERVANCE MORE THAN OUR OWN?

I know a reformist who is traipsing around the countryside looking for saints to help him. He is not interested in aint's. Are we like that in church. I know who you appoint and hire for leadership positions. I know who you recommend for elders boards. My friend has his spiritual blinders on looking for perfection in an imperfect sinful world. Who would Jesus appoint to do his work? He picked aint's more than saints didn't he? The leadership will reflect the attitude of the congregation. Do you know that? If they are not doing well do you think you are?

6. DOCTRINE IS INSPIRED BY THE GOSPEL BUT IT'S NOT THE GOSPEL?

Is what you believe; what you read; and your walk with Jesus why you are saved? Doctrine was inspired by the gospel. The creeds are very very good. The church faith statement and vision are very very good. Yet, are we using them more than our Christ

like actions to run church? Church has wandered from the truth and made our doctrine more important. I knew a man who argued with me over commentaries in his orthodox Bible. I said “is it Gods word?” He continued to say yes because it was in his Bible. You get the point, I know you do. Jesus healed the man with the withered hand because he cared, not because he was commanded too. He wanted the religious rulers to look past rules, traditions and doctrine, and towards the hearts of others. Do we in church?

7. IS IT BECAUSE OF CHRISTIANS THAT PEOPLE DON'T COME TO CHURCH?

It's about the heart of the gospel. You are human. Do you really believe that in church anymore? The people are outside. I served at a church that had a low income housing complex next door. I found out that no pastor had ever gone there to visit. I know a church that is debating whether to use social media. Our Jesus went to Samaria; he went to the Pharisees house; he went to the sinners and tax collectors. You are the leaders in your church. Where have you gone? Go home if you do it in the name of Jesus. God could not care less about you if you do it for Jesus. That's harsh Patrick!!! Really!!! Do it because you care, not because you are commanded too. People don't come to your church maybe because you are not acting like people?