

## Sin, wickedness and punishment (walking along the right paths)

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### Introduction to the beatitudes (the way of the righteous)

We first started talking about the beatitudes in [part 2 of a message on mountain moving faith](#).

So, when Jesus first selected his 12 disciples after praying the whole night, power was coming out of him and healing all as Luke 6 shows. He was in a broad place. This is the scene of the famous “sermon on the mount”. It is when he first presented what are commonly known as the “beatitudes”.

*Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.  
Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.  
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.  
Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.  
Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.  
Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called children of God.  
Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.* Matthew 5: 3 – 12 (NIV)

In presenting the way of the righteous, those who suffer for the sake of the kingdom, while not saying it, he was indirectly contrasting for us the way of the wicked.

**The way of the righteous** is those who:

- realise they bring nothing to God (poor in spirit);
- they mourn to the Lord (mourn);
- they are humble (meek);
- they thirst for God’s righteousness and are pure in heart;
- show mercy and pursue peace;
- suffer persecution and insults for the sake of the kingdom.

Because of all these things, God is not ashamed to call them his, and he rewards them – like their brothers, the prophets.

Jesus showed us in the beatitudes that the wicked by contrast take a different way:



**The wicked are arrogant and proud**, puffed up to think they will inherit this world, but like the god of this world, they cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven, but instead inherit death because God opposes them (James 4:6), he hates those who have a proud look (Prov 16: 17), such belong to their father Satan – the father of pride.

**in their lifetime the wicked don't mourn** and as Jesus showed from the parable of the Rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16: 19:31) instead they receive good things, while the righteous receive bad things, but in paradise, the righteous will be comforted while the wicked will be in agony in hell, the place of torment.

**The wicked don't care to search for, to pursue the way of righteousness**, which is narrow and which few find. Instead, they pursue the way of this world – which is broad and leads to destruction. <sup>i</sup> The way of this world is lined with all the pleasures of this world and its mindset, but its way is passing.

**The wicked are cruel to their servants, their animals, their fellow man and their children.** There is no rest for the wicked and so there is no peace in their hearts and neither do they extend it to their fellow man. Showing no mercy to those who are vulnerable, they care not about Holiness, which is God's trademark. Because they are wicked, they persecute those who are pursuing holiness. They seek to bring them down to their own level – but the righteous don't consider this world their own, they lay down their lives – trusting that God will give it back to them.

If the reward of the righteous is great in heaven after they have overcome the persecution and suffering in this world, what do you think is the punishment of those who persecute the saints?

*As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear. Matthew 13: 40 – 43 (NIV).*

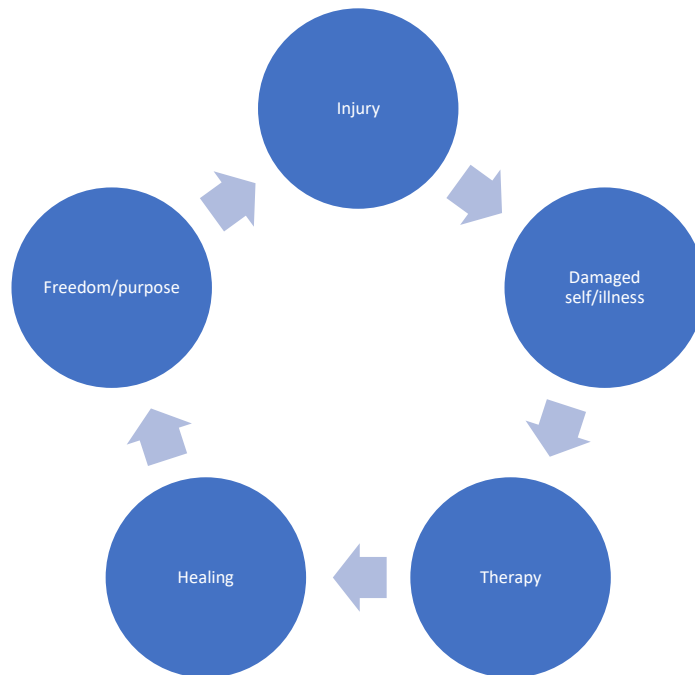
**Knowing such things – that the righteous way leads to life and the wicked way leads to death, why is it that we are unable to stop sinning?**

## **Why can't we stop sinning? Do we even have a problem?**

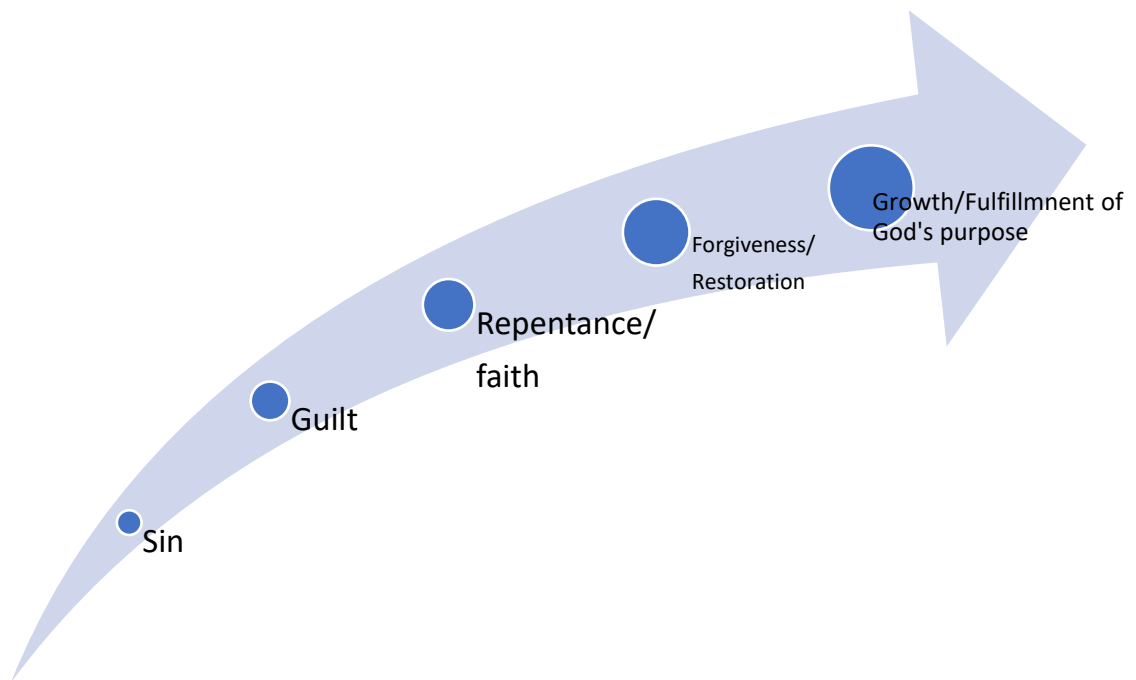
There was a time when people were quick to recognise their sin. If you told them they were sinners, they recognised their sin and sought repentance – perhaps by doing penance. Today it is different, if you told someone they were a sinner – they would be grossly offended. “I am not a sinner; I am a good person” they would reply. “who are you to judge me, they might add”. If they have a problem, they feel it is easily fixable – perhaps by therapy.

So, part of the reason we have a sin problem is that the world today sees the human predicament differently from the bible. To the world, the problem is diagnosed by therapy. <sup>ii</sup>

**Modern idea of the human predicament and the way out**



**Bible idea of the human predicament and the way out**



The two are therefore diametrically different as the root is quite different.

The bible presents the human dilemma to have sin at its root as follows:

*For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.*

Romans 7: 18: 25 (NIV).

We are unable to stop sinning because our bodies by their very nature are sinful and so we cannot help but sin. The way of the wicked is therefore the default setting of all humans for all we like sheep, have gone astray. It is for this reason that the Lord Jesus calls to those who are tired of this constant treadmill of sin and guilt. He calls them to him saying:

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."* Matthew 11: 28

It is such – those who are tired of their present condition who come to the realisation that they are poor in spirit and in need of a saviour. It is to such that the beatitudes speak – theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

The bible describes the one who walk along the right paths as follows:

*Blessed is the one  
who does not walk in step with the wicked  
or stand in the way that sinners take  
or sit in the company of mockers,  
but whose delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and who meditates on his law day and night.  
That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,  
which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither—  
whatever they do prospers.*

Psalm 1: 1-3 (NIV)

Jesus lays before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Which way will you choose? Choose life that you and your seed may live. <sup>iii</sup>

## Let us pray.

How can I pray for you?

- You are a believer but the faith journey has worn you out. You need the Lord's help to be re-energised.
- You used to be a believer, but are a prodigal son/daughter. Nevertheless, the Lord is calling you back, saying "I reward those who diligently seek me"

- You have never received the gift of Christ, being eternal life and neither have you received his Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit who gives you faith as a gift.

Write to me so I can pray further for you: [dwasake@shaweleroad.com](mailto:dwasake@shaweleroad.com) Be blessed. END.

## Next steps

- Visit our website which shows the steps it takes to get to know Jesus and be saved from this wicked generation.

## Information notice board

- 1) **About me.** Before I became a devoted Christian, I spent 20 years of my life being a hedonist – one who seeks pleasure for the sake of it, yet Love also brought pain! Since God humbled me to turn me into his servant and I got baptized in May 2017, he has enabled me to overcome sin ruling my life and to live by the Holy Spirit. You can read my full testimony [here](#):
- 2) **About these series.** The Lord Jesus gave me a single word “Go” as I was praying for a word for this season and series. This word will define a series of 12 topics he has also given me to tell his church in order to fulfil the “Great Commission”. This lesson is one of those messages.
- 3) **Pray for us!** Without the Lord, our effort is in vain. Pray that we remain faithful, humble servants.
- 4) **Subscribe to** our [YouTube Channel](#) and keep up with our videos which support the website.
- 5) **Looking for a ministry to partner with (pray, volunteer, give, subscribe to)?**  
<https://www.thepottershouse.org/>

*Founded in 1996, The Potter’s House is non-denominational, multicultural church led by Senior Pastor, T.D. Jakes.*

## Notes

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<sup>i</sup> See Matthew 7:13

<sup>ii</sup> Extracted (and re- worked) from “Life in the Spirit” Robertson Mcquilkin , Broadman and Holman, 2000

<sup>iii</sup> See Deuteronomy 30: 19