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**Life in 6 Words – Week 2 – “OUR”**

*“Our sins separate us from God.”*

I would venture to say that everyone here with a cell phone has experienced the annoyance of dropped calls in a “dead zone”.

What’s the worst dead zone you’ve ever been in.

The 2nd worst dead zone for me….ran out of gas on a volcano in a minivan with my wife and kids…couldn’t call for help…ran down mountain like a crazy person

 (Consider getting your own cell phone out as a visual). I think the worst part is that it seems there are certain dead zones that it doesn’t matter what cell service provider you have, what time of the day it is, or who you are talking to – if you enter a dead zone while on the call, the call is over. Dropped. Cut off. Needless to say, it is very frustrating (even if we forget that some of us are old enough to remember what life was like before cell phones).

The point is this: when you have a connection with someone on a call, often times you are mid-sentence in an important, meaningful conversation, and it isn’t good to have that connection disrupted and cut off.

My worst dead zone was before I came to Christ…spiritual dead zone.

Colossians 2:13-14…service has been restored… “*When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you[*[*d*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=colossians%202&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29508d)*] alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,****14****having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.”*

Last time we began a new sermon series called “Life in 6 Words” - God. Our. Sins. Paying. Everyone. Life. These words spell out “GOSPEL”, and each week we will unpack a powerful statement built on each of these 6 words. Last week, we started with “G” - “God created us to be with him”. We were created in the image of God, for the glory of God, and designed to have a complete, uninterrupted connection with him. But then sin entered the picture and just like a cell phone dead zone, the connection was disrupted...cut off. There was now separation. This week we are talking through the bad news, that “Our sins separate us from God”.

And I have to give you a heads up. This session is going to be packed and stacked with lots of verses and theology. So buckle up and let’s get going!

**“Our sins separate us from God.”**

1. **Our sins separate us from God.**

*“So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side[*[*e*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=genesis+3&version=NIV#fen-NIV-80e)*] of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.”* Genesis 3:23,24

What the Garden of Eden represented…God’s paradise on earth (Genesis 2:8…God’s garden) How did our sin banish us from the presence of God?

* 1. It breaks His commands

*“And the LORD God commanded the man, ‘You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.’*" Genesis 2:16, 17

* There was only one command. Total freedom to enjoy everything but the one tree that was off limits.
* Love that is true must be tested. Adam and Eve’s love for God had not been tested. Jesus’ love was tested in the wilderness three times by Satan and his love did not fail the test. Adam and Eve’s love was tested once in the garden and that’s all it took for them to fail the test.
* That’s the purpose of the 10 Commandments, which we will talk about more in the next episode. But listen to the words of Paul in Romans 3:10-20,

“*As it is written: “There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit. The poison of vipers is on their lips Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know. There is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God’s sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin*.”

In Mark 12:28-31 Jesus sums up the ten commandments with what some have nicknamed “The Great Commandment”…Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and might and love your neighbor as you love yourself.” And Romans shows us that, just like Adam and Eve, we fail the “love God/love others” test.

 Sin Breaks God’s commands.

* 1. **It attacks God’s character.**

“Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”  The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’ ”  “You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” Genesis 3:5

The serpent tempted Eve by questioning God’s Word and creating doubt in her mind that led to the action of disobeying God’s Word. Satan lied by distorting God’s Word - declaring that they would not die and even declaring that they would “become like God”. This was actually a half-truth...they would become like God in that they would know the difference between good and evil, but all of mankind would suffer the consequences of being separated from God (kicked out of the Garden – kicked out of the presence of God).

Satan attacks the character of a holy God, “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God….”

In other words Satan was directly implying that God was holding something back from them that they needed. And Adam and Eve bought the lie! How often do we? And when we do we attack God’s character

Sin is not passive. It is active rebellion. It is telling God that our way is better than his. **Joseph** understood this in **Genesis 39:9, when tempted by Potiphar’s wife** he responded, “How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?”

**David** put it this way in Psalm 51:3,4 after he was confronted about his sin with Bathsheba, “*For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge*.”

Our sin is a direct assault on God’s character.

* 1. **It misses God’s mark.**

God’s mark is perfection and we all miss it.

“*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*” Romans 3:23

Sin is actually an archery word that means “to miss the mark.” In the ancient Greek culture when archers would shoot and miss the bull’s eye the spotters would call out “*Hamartia*!” which means the archer missed the bull’s eye!

God’s mark is not just the bull’s eye. It’s the dead center of the bull’s eye every single time. Every arrow splits every arrow shot. There is no room for us being once millimeter off in our lives. God demands complete perfection because he is completely perfect!

This is why Isaiah, when standing before the presence of a thrice holy God in Isaiah 6 exclaimed, “**Woe is me! I am ruined! I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips!”**

What’s true of the prophet is true of everyone! Apart from Christ we would come apart at the seams in the presence of this holy, holy, holy God!

* Here’s how Adam and Eve broke God’s command, attacked God’s character and missed God’s mark.

*“When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.”* Genesis 3:6

* God held the man responsible. Eve was deceived but Adam, who was there the whole time, knew exactly what was going on. **Eve succumbed to Satan’s deception. Adam succumbed to Satan’s temptation.**
* Satan has three basic moves… He used these moves in the garden. He used these moves in the wilderness with Jesus and he uses them on us today.
	+ - 1 John 2:14,15, “*Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world.”*
	+ What are some of those temptations that you are facing in your life today? The danger of online porn…porn epidemic…like the forbidden fruit it is within arms reach of every one of us. Maybe it’s not porn. Maybe it’s bitterness, gossip, anger, pride or legalism. Whatever it is it is a direct assault on God, it violates his character and misses the mark.

**Sin is breaking God’s commands, violating God’s character, and missing God’s mark.**

**Our sin separates us from God.**

1. **Our sin separates us from our who we were created to be.**

	1. It kills us spiritually.

*“And the LORD God commanded him, “You may eat freely from every tree of the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; for in the day that you eat of it, you will surely die.*” **Genesis 2:16,17**

Do you know how eskimos used to kill a wolf? No, tell me. They take seal blood and put it in a bucket, and then dip a knife into that bucket. After this they put the knife outside to freeze. They then take the knife and stick it into the seal blood again and place it back outside to freeze. They do this about 5 times until a thick frozen coat of seal blood is around the knife. After there is a coat of blood, they stick the knife into the ground, with the blade up, and watch. A wolf smells the blood and comes to eat a seal but finds this little frozen seal popsicle! They lick it over and over and over until it numbs their tongue, and when they get through the blood and hit the knife they will not feel it until it is too late. They bleed to death and die. Total Depravity is like that in that we will always choose what will kill us, sin! That is, unless God intervenes and changes the desires of our hearts!

This was an immediate spiritual death, a future physical death and an impending eternal death.

* + 1. They suffered an immediate spiritual death.

“*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient*.” Ephesians 2:1,2

**And every baby ever born is born dead in their sins**! That’s why you don’t have to teach your kids how to disobey you…Jeremy and the Fire alarm! Perhaps personalize with a story about your own children. You’ve always had to teach them to obey, but there never was a day where you said, “Ok, kids, today we are going to learn how to disobey Mommy and Daddy. We are going to tell you to do something, and you’re going to say, ‘NO!’” No, that day never happened, because they figured out how to disobey all on their own. Born with a sin nature, just like all of us.

Illustration: One drop of poison in a bottle of water… …. This is how it is with sin. That one sin committed by Adam and Eve contaminated their relationship with a holy God and separated them from him. It actually contaminated all of humanity’s standing with God, as we are ALL separated from him because of sin.

When Adam and Eve sinned, their sin problem became our sin problem, too. That same sin nature has been passed down to all of us. Some may look at that and say, “That’s just not fair.” But Adam and Eve were the representatives of humanity.

Technical Theological Term: Federal Headship. Who’s to say you would have done any better? This concept is at work all the time when leaders, politicians, etc. represent us, and we reap the benefits and consequences of their decisions whether we elected them or not.

So, we don’t become sinners because we sin, we sin because we’re sinners—we have a sinful nature. We are held responsible for our own behavior and actions because we do sin, personally.

Sin kills us spiritually. Apart from the intervention of Jesus we would be completely dead in our sin. Adam and Eve died spiritually on the spot as a result of sin.

* + 1. They would suffer a future physical death.

“*Altogether, Adam lived a total of 930 years, and then he died*.” Genesis 5:5

I attended a funeral this week…a reminder of sin’s consequences.

* + 1. Without God’s intervention, they would have suffered an impending eternal death.

*“…they, too, will drink the wine of God’s fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. They will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb.****11****And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name.”* Revelation 14:10-11

People that don’t take hell seriously, don’t take Scripture seriously. It is the ultimate consequence of sin.

Youth group Letter from hell…we don’t believe in hell…we don’t believe in the Bible then…at least they were consistent!

Sin kills us. It leads to our spiritual death, physical death and eternal death forever in hell.

* 1. It destroys our innocence.

“*Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked…”* Genesis 3:7

Innocence lost…This is when humanity, not only became self-aware but self obsessed.

* 1. It impacts how we view ourselves.

“…*so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.”* Genesis 3:7

Shame entered the world because of sin. That’s why Adam and Eve hid. These fig leaves can represent how our teenagers can hide behind their social media personas, sports, Grades, hobbies, friendships, religion or whatever…to cover the shame.

# In an article entitled, “**Shame: A Concealed, Contagious, and Dangerous Emotion” Dr. Mary C. Lamia wrote these powerful words in Psychology Today.**

“*As a self-conscious emotion, shame informs us of an internal state of inadequacy, unworthiness, dishonor, regret, or disconnection. Shame is a clear signal that our positive feelings have been interrupted. Another person or a circumstance can trigger shame in us, but so can a failure to meet our own ideals or standards. Given that shame can lead us to feel as though our whole self is flawed, bad, or subject to exclusion, it motivates us to hide or to do something to save face. So it is no wonder that shame avoidance can lead to withdrawal or to addictions that attempt to mask its impact.*”

* 1. Ultimately, it forces us to hide from our ultimate source of joy.

*“Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, ‘Where are you?’”* Genesis 3:8-9

We were not made to be out of sync with our Creator. But sin gets us out of sync with him.

*As a little side note,* This was mankind’s first attempt at **works salvation—the attempt to cover one’s own sin.**

God knew all along and it broke his heart. And it breaks his heart when we sin. Why? Because our sin separates us from God and from who we were made to be.

1. **Our sins separate us from each other.**
* The blame game: you can join the club and play the game by blaming this all on Adam and Eve. After all, Eve blamed the serpent, and Adam blamed Eve AND God! (Genesis 3:10-13). But it doesn’t change the fact that Adam and Eve were held responsible for their own sins, and are held responsible for our own sins as well.
* It wasn’t just Adam and Eve. It was their sons. In the next chapter Cain kills Abel out of jealousy. Crazy family drama has begun!
	+ Marriages that are a mess: Kicking a peacock…blame game…
	+ Jonathan’s Smith marriage counseling, “Only take responsibility for what you’ve done wrong.”

Two significant verses in Genesis 3 that point to the cross:

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=genesis%203:15&version=NIV#fen-NIV-71a)] and hers;
he will crush[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=genesis%203:15&version=NIV#fen-NIV-71b)] your head, and you will strike his heel.” Genesis 3:15

*“The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.”* Genesis 3:21

* But Jesus made a way. Adam and Even couldn’t cover their own sins and we can’t cover ours. God made “garments of skin” to clothe Adam and Eve, implying that an animal had to be sacrificed to cover them. Jesus, the Lamb of God, was the sacrifice for OUR sins when he died on the cross for us.
* As believers, even though we have been saved from the penalty of sin, we must still deal properly with sin here on this earth and rely on the presence of Christ to overcome the power of sin. The main problem with sin is that it broke our relationship with God. Although that relationship has been restored in Christ, it can still daily affect our relationship with the Father.
	+ *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”* 1 John 1:9
	+ My buddy Dave Gibson calls 1 John 1:9, “God’s washing machine”
* John is talking to the Church here, so it’s **not a matter of confessing sins to get saved or stay saved but to get close to God and stay close to God**. It’s not a matter of justification, as this is not the prayer of one approaching a judge, seeking acquittal. For the believer, it’s a matter of a child approaching a loving Father, saying “I’m sorry”.
* When I got married many years ago, a union was formed with my wife and I that is never meant to be broken. But it takes a daily commitment and communion to grow in that relationship, and to love each other in the way we should…kicked a peacock…confession…argument…confession…**Not a perfect relationship but a progressing relationship.**
* Child of God, is the Holy Spirit dealing with you about sin in your life right now? Perhaps even now God is revealing these things, calling you to confess and forsake the sin that interferes with your relationship with God.