

BELPRES CHURCH

Sermon Title: Show Me My Sin

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Scripture:

Romans 3:10-12, 23

¹⁰ As it is written:

“There is no one righteous, not even one;

¹¹ there is no one who understands;
there is no one who seeks God.

¹² All have turned away,
they have together become worthless;
there is no one who does good,
not even one.”

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Matthew 9:10-13

¹⁰ While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

¹² On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ¹³ But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Transcript:

Well good morning to all of you who are here. Good morning if you are worshiping online. My name's Annie Duncan. I'm the executive pastor here and it is so good to be with you in worship. This morning, scripture comes from two different places, the Book of Romans and the gospel of Matthew. First from Romans, "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 altogether become worthless. There is no one who does good, not even one. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." From the gospel of Matthew, "While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?' On hearing this, Jesus said, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means. I desire mercy, not sacrifice. For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.'"

So when I was a kid, maybe about five years old, I remember one night I couldn't sleep and so I snuck out of bed and I found my mom and I crawled onto her lap and I just proceeded to confess all the things that I as a five-year-old thought that I had done wrong. Weird. No wonder I couldn't sleep, right? I confessed to her things like, "Oh, it was actually me that locked my brother in the bathroom. He didn't get stuck in there himself. Sorry. I lied to you about that. That cookie that you thought magically disappeared, it was me that ate it. Sorry about that. I kicked the dog." I mean on and on like the list just kept on going. My sweet mom had to bite her tongue to keep from laughing because I was so serious about needing to confess my sins and for some reason needing to confess them to her.

What is your understanding of sin? Can you remember the first time that maybe you realized, "Hey, us humans, we don't really have it all together?" Maybe you have a hard time recognizing sin and understanding what it is or maybe you can easily spot sin in those around you, but have a harder time seeing it in your own life. I know that's sometimes me. We're in a sermon series called *Is It Good Or Is It God?* We're taking a look at the basic things that we believe as Christians and we're gaining some clarity because there's a lot of stuff that gets said out there in culture, but we are trying to align with scripture and look at the Bible and ask God, "God, what do you say about this?" Today, you might have guessed it already, we're talking about sin. Sin, what is it? Why does it matter?

First, what is it? Sin is a condition that affects everything. Everything. I mean everything around us. It affects how we treat ourselves. It affects how we treat others, how we handle money, our views on power, our views on sex, how we spend our time, how we treat others that think differently than us. I mean it affects everything. It's everywhere. Because sin affects everything, here's what it does. Sin separates us from God. Last week, Scott talked about the trinity and how God is a God of relationship. We're made to be in relationship and sin, sin separates us from God because it breaks down that relationship and it breaks down our relationship with others. We see this throughout the entire narrative in the Bible.

In Genesis 1, God created everything and it was good. In Genesis 1-2, He creates human beings and we're supposed to care and watch over all of creation. Then in Genesis 3, sin enters the world because Adam and Eve, they question and they disobey God and then the rest of the Bible and up until today, God is on this rescue mission to save us from this condition of sin.

Because of this condition of sin, we commit individual sins every single day. Every day. Some of them are obvious and out in the open like murder, adultery, or yelling at somebody when they cut you off on 405. [inaudible 00:04:25]. Am I alone in that? Okay. Yelling when Annie cut off the 405. Okay. I'm just making sure you're there. Then others are more devious and they're under the radar, things like gossip or jealousy or those passive-aggressive eye rolls that you give to your husband when he tells you that you're talking too much. Those are sinful, but they're a little bit under the radar. Then there's this whole gray area of sin, things that we don't think are sin but maybe they impact others around us negatively like me being super excited that Aaron Rodgers and Tom Brady aren't in the playoffs. I'm super excited about that, but I know that there's a couple here that are huge Packer fans. Go Pack, go! They might be negatively impacted by my excitement, right? So is that ... What is that? Is that sin? What is it?

Then sins, they can be in two different categories, right? Sins of commission and sins of omission. A sin of commission, while it might sound like a good thing like something you might get a 10% payout on, it's actually something that you do that you're not supposed to do. I mean just think about the 10 commandments and the long list of, "You shall not do this. You shall not do that." Right? Then sins of omission are things that you don't do that you're supposed to do like love God, love those around you. Sins of omission are those missed

opportunities of how we can live the way that God intends us to live. So that is a ton of information about sin. Sin, on its own, it can sound a little bit depressing, but hang on. Don't worry. There is hope. There is remedy. There is a cure. It's coming at the end and even more so, it's coming next week when Scott Dudley preaches on the next topic in this series. So make sure to come back next week.

So if the what of sin is that it separates us from God, then why does sin matter? The exact same reason, because it separates us from God. If sin separates us from God and we are made to be in relationship with God, then [Bell Pres 00:06:42], we've got to face our sin. There's a number of reasons why we have to face our sin, but I'm just going to give you three today. We need to face our sin because, one, we can't fix a problem we won't admit we have. Last March on the morning of my 40th birthday, my husband was going to take me to Leavenworth, my one of my favorite places, but on the morning of my birthday, I woke up with a little bit of a headache and I was like, "Oh, no." I thought to myself, "I'm fine. I'm fine. Everything's fine." Popped an Advil, started to pack. Then my husband woke up a few hours later and he goes, "Happy birthday," and he took one look at me and he's like, "Whoa. What's wrong with you?" I was like, "Oh, no, nothing. Everything's fine. Everything's fine," which was a lie.

Guess what a lie is. A lie is a sin. So let's see where this lie takes us, right? So we pack the car and we leave our home in Sammamish and make our way to the I-90 on-ramp where we're going to head east for Leavenworth, but in the 15 minutes that it took to get from our home to the I-90 on-ramp, I started to really, really not feel well. But again, I lied and this time not only to my husband but also to myself. I said things to myself like, "Oh, Annie. You're fine. You just need to drink some more water. You're dehydrated," or "Oh, Annie. You're fine. You're just really excited it's your birthday," or "Oh, Annie. You're fine. This is just what it feels like to be 40." But as we approached I-90, I knew I really needed some clarity on what was going on inside my body so I prayed. "God, if I'm really sick and we need to turn this car around, show me and show me now." Instantly, I got the cold sweats and thought I was going to puke. So I said to my husband, "Turn the car around. I'm sick. I've been lying to you. Sorry we're not going to Leavenworth. Happy birthday to me."

So where did that little lie take us that morning? Well it almost took us to Leavenworth which would have been miserable because I did end up being quite sick for the next four days, but let's play out that lie a little bit more. What if I'd continued to lie to my husband? What if

we'd gotten on I-90 and started making our way to Leavenworth? Well by that time, I would have thrown up in his car, he would have been pissed, right? My fever would have spiked and given me the chills and I would have been miserable and we would have been trying to have fun in Leavenworth, but the whole time, my husband would have been saying to me, "Why are you lying to me? You are sick. We need to go home." Right? This is a story that really happened, but it is also a metaphor of how sin can deceive us and wreak havoc in our lives and those around us.

Bell Pres, we can't fix a problem we won't admit we have. Often like in the case of this story, I needed to stop lying and admit that I was sick. We need to stop sinning and admit that we sin. More often than not, those around us can see the sin in our lives easier than we can see it and always every single time Jesus can see it before we see it. In Romans 3, it says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." That's all of us. No one's excluded from this. It's a level playing field here. The downside of sin is that it separates us from God and breaks down our relationship with others. We can't fix a problem that we won't admit we have and a lot of times with sin, we don't see sin as a problem. We just don't see it as a problem because we are so accommodating of it. We get so comfortable with it.

Like greed, take greed for example. Greed works well for us because it means we get to live comfortably as we hoard all of these resources and go on bougie vacations. Lust, lust works really well for us because it gives us the dopamine hit that our brains are craving in that moment. Works well. We're really accommodating with maybe various kinds of addiction because sometimes life is really hard and we just need to numb out for a little while. But what do greed, lust, and all kinds of addiction and all sin, what do they all have in common? They separate us from God. They separate us from relationship with others. So they end up being a pretty big problem and sometimes we can't see those problems, but they're problems that we need to admit to having which is why we need to pray. Show me. God, show me. Show me my sin.

In the story I just told about not going to Leavenworth when I prayed, "God, if I'm really sick, show me," God showed me and he not only showed me that I was sick, but He also showed me that I had been lying, lying to myself and lying to my husband. That is the same prayer that we get to pray about our sin. We get to go to God and we get to say, "Okay, God. I read in the Bible that I've got this condition of sin, but God, I can't see it right now. So show me. Show me where I'm messing up. Show me my sin. Help me see it." As we grow

deeper in our relationship with Jesus, getting closer and closer to him, we're going to be able to recognize our sin more and more and we're not going to want to take it so lightly. We're going to be disgusted by it just as Jesus is, right?

Which brings us to our second point. We need to face our sin because, one, we can't fix a problem we won't admit we have and, two, otherwise Jesus is just a nice guy who did some cool things. When we read in the Bible about Jesus, here are some things that we do not find that Jesus says. So just to be clear, we don't find this in the Bible. We don't hear Jesus saying, "Hey, guys. Aren't I so nice? Aren't I such a nice guy? Hey, see these cool miracles I'm doing? Aren't they fun? Aren't they so cool?" No, just for clarity, we don't find that in the Bible, but what we do find is Jesus saying things like this. "I have come that they might have life and have it to the full." He also said, "Repent. For the kingdom of heaven is near." So what is Jesus getting at then with the things that He does say in the Bible?

Jesus, because Jesus is God, knows that we are made in the image of God. We're image-bearers of God. That's how we're created to be, but Jesus knows that sin gets in there and distorts some things sometimes and Jesus came to save our lives. That's why we call him our savior and our Lord, our leader and forgiver. Now, some of us might be thinking, "Okay. This is a sermon on sin, but I don't really feel sinful. I don't really feel broken." Others might agree with that and be like, "Yeah, actually I'm really good. I live a pretty good life and I treat others pretty well." That's great. Sin isn't about being good or bad. Sin is more than just bad things because it describes how easily we can deceive ourselves and spin illusions and redefine our bad decisions as good ones. Remember my self talk earlier about telling my husband a lie and telling myself a lie? That was sin deceiving me into thinking, "Hey, just lie about this. You'll still get to Leavenworth. Just lie about it."

We see things like this, sin deceiving people, we see it all over in the Bible. King Saul in 1 Samuel, you can read all about King Saul and he loved David, but then he hates David. What? How does this happen? Read all about it in 1 Samuel. He is so jealous of David that he's actually hunting him down to go and kill him. Kill him, this man that he loved. He's out there to kill him and he only gets convicted and he's convicted by his ways and he actually sees, "Oh, David isn't the enemy. I am," and then Saul says to David, "I have sinned. I have sinned." Sin separating, separating relationships, right? Then there's this prophet Nathan who goes and tells David about a guy who had a guy murdered just so he could shack up with his wife, and David hears this and he's like, "Oh my gosh, that is awful. That man

should die." Nathan goes, "That man is you." David is so deceived by his sin that he doesn't even realize that the prophet Nathan is talking about David himself.

This is why sin is so tricky. We struggle with it because we can be blind to it, right? We can even convince ourselves that we're succeeding when we're sinning. So what do we do? What do we do about all of that? We go to Jesus. We go to Jesus. Carl Bart said sin is most visible and evident in contrast to the righteousness and the holiness of God revealed in Jesus. Jesus, without Jesus, we hate ourselves instead of our sin, but with Jesus, we see ourselves made in God's image and how God intended and we see how sin gets in the way of that. So what role does Jesus play in your life? Is He a nice guy who did some cool things or is He your savior? Do you know that you need to be saved? Jesus came that we might have life and the life that He's talking about is the life abundant, life restored, life redeemed, a life where our sin is dealt with.

So Bell Pres, facing our sin means that we get to come face-to-face with Jesus. We don't face it alone because Jesus is the cure and that is our third point. So we need to face our sin because we can't fix a problem we won't admit we have and secondly, otherwise Jesus is just a nice guy who did some cool things, and third, we need to face our sin because there is a cure and it is not us. Amen.

Amen.

Growing up when my brothers and I were teenagers, they had this nickname for me. They called me righteous Annie. While they didn't exactly mean this nickname to be a compliment, I kind of took it as one. I mean 18-year-old Annie, she had things pretty much squared away. I had my life figured out. I checked the boxes I needed to. I knew what it took to live a life that looked good on the outside and have all the right answers. I would flaunt that in front of my brothers which is maybe why they gave me the nickname righteous Annie. I texted my younger brother Jeff to see if he remembered the righteous Annie era and he texted me right back right away. He texted me a long text which I'm just going to read a short little snippet to you, but I asked him if he remembered this. Here's what he said.

He said, "Ha ha ha. I do remember that." He said then a story which I'm not going to share, but then he said, "I wouldn't say, Annie, that you were ever wrong, but perhaps you were a bit Pharisee-like in your following of the rules." Ew. Yikes. He is spot on. My brother calling

me a Pharisee, and he had no idea what I was preaching on this weekend, but him calling me a PHarisee/rule-follower definitely sums up everything righteous Annie wanted to be. It's why Jesus tells the Pharisee who deemed themselves as righteous rule-followers, it's why Jesus says to them, "For I've not come to call the righteous, but sinners." Jesus knows and we now know that following the rules doesn't save us. We cannot save ourselves, but there is a cure and it is not us. This is why Jesus is such good news.

When we sin, it's a failure to be human as God intended because we fail to love God fully and love others fully, but enter Jesus, the one who did not sin, the one who fully loved God and fully loved others. In Romans, it says that we're slaves to sin and then later on in Romans, it says the things that we don't want to do are exactly the things that we do. Ugh, why are we so stuck in sin, right? Yet, Jesus took responsibility for our sin and for our failures because He came to live for us and die for us and our sins and was raised to life and invites us into that same saving life. The apostle Peter puts it this way. "Jesus committed no sin, yet He carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we might die to our sins and live to do what is right."

So is the goal to try not to sin or is the goal to believe that Jesus saves us and receive his mercy and forgiveness? Yes, to both of those things, but we don't need to walk around fixated on don't sin, don't sin, don't sin. That's more righteous Annie. That's more righteous Annie living, trying to follow the rules, but we can actually focus on the freedom that we have in Jesus knowing that our sins are dealt with once and for all. So instead of thinking, "Don't sin. Don't sin. Don't sin," we can actually fix our eyes on Jesus and we can say, "Jesus, I just want to follow you. Jesus, how do I live like a disciple of yours today in this meeting or today on the basketball court or today when I'm going to school? How do I follow you?" Do you guys see the difference? One is fixated on sin. One is fixed on Jesus, knowing that we can follow Jesus. Jesus is going to be talking to us. It all goes back to that relationship. Rule-following like checking the boxes or relationship, every minute of every day?

It's different and I know what it's like to live the life of righteous Annie and let me tell you it's not fulfilling. It feels good to check boxes, but this feels way better. Being in step with Jesus, relationship with Jesus, knowing I can talk to him about anything, right? Being in relationship with Jesus, it's hearing his voice say, "Annie, I know that you think you can live with this sin in your life, but I have come that you may have a different kind of life. So come with me. I

will show you what it means to turn from that." That's good news. That's the life I'd rather live. So what is one way this week that we can face our sin? I'm going to give you one action step and that's it. I've already said it. Pray the prayer, "Show me my sin." Pray this when you wake up in the morning. Pray when you go to bed at night. Pray it individually. Pray it as a family. Pray it with your spouse. Pray it with a mentor.

Know that God through the Holy Spirit will show you your sin, but don't worry. It's not going to be [inaudible 00:21:46] like a laundry list, "Here's all the things, Annie, that you did that you messed up on today," but God will highlight something and He'll say, "Come with me. I'll show you how to turn from that." When we see our sin, we get to repent of it and another word for repent is just to turn, to turn away and live differently, think differently, have a different change of your perspective. If you pray the prayer, "God, show me my sin," and you don't hear anything, don't think that you're exempt from it. Keep praying or pray with somebody else that you trust and know that the Holy Spirit will guide you in all truth. That's funny.

So BelPres, know that Jesus calls us to live a life we cannot live apart from him and that is good news. It's Jesus that's going to show us our sin. It's Jesus that's going to forgive us. He has already, forgives our sins forever. It's Jesus that will show us the life and life abundant and that is good news. So God, we thank you for that good news. We thank you that you revealing our sin to us is good news. So Jesus, I pray that each and every one of us this week remembers that prayer, prays that prayer, and experiences the freedom that you have for us because of that prayer. You have come that we might have life and have it to the full. Jesus, I want, I want to be disciple Annie more than I want to be righteous Annie. So God, fill us with your spirit. Fill us with that hope. We love you, Jesus. Amen.

Discussion Questions:

Read this week's scripture(s) & answer the below questions with your friends, family, or All In small group.

Suggested Icebreaker Question:

- If you could go "back to school" to study a specific subject or learn a new trade, what would it be and why?

Opening Question:

- Looking back, were you able to apply any of the things we talked about last time to your life this week? What did you do? How did it go?

Scripture Reflection Questions – Read this week's scripture together and discuss the following:

- What do we learn about God (e.g., traits, personality, what matters, priorities) in this passage?
- What do we learn about people, and ourselves in particular, this week?

Sermon Reflection Questions - *Reflecting on this week's sermon, discuss the following:*

- Is it hard for you to recognize sin in your own life? Why or why not? Is it easier to recognize sin in the life of others? Why do you think that is?
- Have you tried praying the prayer, "God, show me my sin?" If you're comfortable sharing, what did God reveal to you? Discuss.

Closing Question and Application:

- Given what we've discussed together today, how might God want you to apply these learnings to your life or in the life of your community this next week? Who might you share this with?

Closing Group Prayer:

- Spend a few minutes together in your group sharing prayer requests and then praying together for each other. Thank God for the time together, the conversation shared, the other people in the group, and for encouragement in the week ahead.