



7 DEADLY SINS

Overview:

The seven deadly sins are bad habits that destroy our ability to love God, others, and ourselves.

Lessons:

1. Pride
2. Greed
3. Lust
4. Gluttony
5. Anger
6. Envy
7. Sloth



THE SIN OF PRIDE

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Pride is the refusal to recognize and admit the presence, equality or even superiority of any other being. It's a sin that - if unchecked - leaves us in isolation.

- Pride is a false pathway to _____, making it something we try to build on the basis of our own goodness. This may work for a while, but it's doomed for _____. Luke 18:9-12
- The opposite of pride is _____: being secure in our standing with God on the basis of Christ's goodness _____. This is one of the surprising gifts of the Christian life - true emotional health. Ephesians 2:8-9, Luke 18:13-14
- The antidote to pride is not self-hatred but self-_____, looking outward to find someone to serve. The reward for this is rich _____, which is impossible for the proud-hearted. John 13:3-5

DISCUSSION:

1. Describe what a prideful person looks like to you. How is pride really an issue of self-worth?
2. Read Luke 18:9-12. Describe the heart of both the pharisee and the tax collector. How do you see Christians act like the pharisee today? Which one do you relate to more?
3. Read Luke 18:13-14. Why do you think the tax collector approached God with fear and humility? How does Jesus sum up the lesson of this parable?
4. Read Ephesians 2:8-9. What does this passage say about our own goodness? Why should this verse free us from the grip of pride?
5. What does it look like for a Christian to do good things without a prideful attitude?
6. How does an attitude of service work to dispel the power of pride in our lives?
7. Read John 13:3-5, 12-17. Jesus knew who he was and so he served. Why was this such a surprising act for the disciples?
8. Moving forward, how will you humbly serve others in your life? How will you serve your church community? How can your family and church be strengthened by a serving culture?

THE SIN OF GREED

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Greed is a selfish and excessive desire for more of something (such as money) than is needed. It's a sin that paradoxically leaves us with less of what we really need.

- Greed is a false pathway to _____ life, built on the lie that this life is all there is. Jesus calls people _____ who store up earthly wealth but lack a rich relationship with God. Luke 12:15-21
- Greed is _____ at every level: individual, family, and society. Luke 12:13
- The antidote to greed is not poverty but _____, looking outward to give to others in need. The _____ for this is the ability to actually enjoy the stuff we have, recognizing it as a gift from God. Luke 12:33-34, 1 Timothy 6:17-18

DISCUSSION:

1. Rate yourself on the greed o meter (1-10). Why did you give yourself that number. What would your spouse or close friend give you?
2. Why do we fall for the lie that stuff will make us happy? How has the pursuit of things burned you in the past?
3. Read Luke 12:15-21. Describe the mentality of the rich man. Why did Jesus rebuke his actions? What would've been a better response?
4. How have you seen greedy people negatively impact society as a whole and even within a family?
5. Read Luke 12:33-34. What does it mean that where your treasure is, there your heart will be? How does generosity help to guard against greed?
6. Share a story of a time someone was generous with you. How did that impact your life? Share a time you were generous towards someone else. How did that impact your life?
7. Read 1 Timothy 6:17-18. Identify all that Paul warns against in these verses. What does he say to do instead?
8. Moving forward, how will you be more generous with your money? How can you be more generous with your time or other resources?

THE SIN OF LUST

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Lust is an intense or unbridled sexual desire. It is “a cruel parody of love. Lust takes. Love gives.”

- Lust is a _____ to sexual fulfillment, but it doesn't actually get you there. When you lust after someone, you are _____ that person for your own selfish pleasure.
- Lust has a _____ impact than you think – physically, emotionally, relationally, and _____. It not only _____ your picture of sex, but it does so much more. Matthew 5:27-30
- Lust feeds on _____ and starves in transparency. The road to healing starts with _____ – first to God and then to others. 1 John 1:7-9, James 5:16

DISCUSSION:

1. Describe the difference between lust and true love. Why is lust selfish by nature?
2. Read Song of Solomon 8:4. What does it mean not to awaken love until the right time? How does being intimate outside of marriage short change the relationship?
3. How do you see our culture minimizing lust and how has that been destructive in your life and in others?
4. Read Matthew 5:27-30. Why do you think Jesus draws the line where he does? What was his point?
5. Read 1 John 1:7-9. What does it mean to live in the light? Why does John link confessing sins and fellowship with others?
6. Share how spending time with God in study and prayer has helped you to fight temptation. How do the spiritual disciplines renew our minds?
7. Read James 5:16. What changes do you need to make to avoid the pitfalls of temptation? Who can you ask to hold you accountable to those boundaries?

THE SIN OF GLUTTONY

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Gluttony is an unhealthy obsession over food or drink. God wants the whole person, and that includes how we eat.

- God gave us food for our _____, but he also gave us boundaries. Enjoying food isn't bad; even Jesus let people have their fill. Matthew 14:20, Luke 7:34, Genesis 2:16-17
- Gluttony is a false pathway to _____, using food and drink to satisfy a deeper craving in all of us. A glutton uses food much like an _____ uses drugs. 1 Corinthians 6:12, Ephesians 5:18, Galatians 5:22
- The antidote to gluttony is both _____ and feasting, putting food in the proper place in our lives. It's learning to find our ultimate _____ in Jesus. Matthew 4:1-2, John 6:51, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Revelation 19:9

DISCUSSION:

1. *What is the last meal you would want to eat on Earth?*
2. *Read Luke 7:34. Why do you think Jesus chose to fellowship this way with people? Why were the Pharisees bothered by this?*
3. *Read Genesis 2:16-17. Notice the words in these verses. What does it say about how much fruit they could eat? What was the point of the boundary for the tree of good and evil?*
4. *How have you used things like food and possessions as distractions or to fill a void in your life? How have those things failed you?*
5. *Read John 6:51 and John 4:13. What does Jesus mean by "living bread"? What is Jesus' message to the woman in John 4? What had she been doing to fill the void in her life?*
6. *Read Matthew 4:1-11. In what ways did Satan tempt Jesus? How did Jesus respond each time? What can you learn from Jesus' example?*
7. *Share your experience with fasting. What would be the most challenging thing for you to give up? How can fasting help you to fight gluttony?*

THE SIN OF ANGER

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For many people, anger is the substitute emotion to mask deeper feelings that you struggle to express.

- Substitute anger is a false pathway to _____ – making you feel powerful instead of vulnerable. Genesis 4:6-7
- Substitute anger actually causes a _____ of control – both emotionally and relationally, and even spiritually. James 1:20, 1 John 3:10
- The antidote to anger is to be _____ and practice silence – just as Jesus did. Psalm 4:4, Ephesians 4:26-27

DISCUSSION:

1. *Make a short list of things that get you angry. Why do those things frustrate you so much?*
2. *Review the list of deeper emotions you may be masking with anger. Which one(s) are true of you?*
3. *Read Genesis 4:3-7. What was Cain's real issue? How did he use anger as a means to control?*
4. *Read James 1:19-21. Identify the key points in this passage. How have you seen your anger drive a wedge between you and God and with others?*
5. *Define what it means to be vulnerable. Who are the people you struggle to be most vulnerable with and why?*
6. *Read Psalm 4:4 and Ephesians 4:26-27. Why is there wisdom in patience and silence? How does Satan get a foothold through your anger?*
7. *Think about a person who has angered you. How will you approach that person with a new strategy based on this topic?*

THE SIN OF ENVY

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From start to finish, envy is no fun at all. It is the most miserable of habits.

- The first step in dealing with envy is to turn _____ to the very God who seems to have _____ us so badly. Instead of substituting anger for envy, be honest about what you're feeling. Genesis 4:3-7
- The second step is to learn to _____ God's gifting in others – without _____ them with your gifts. 1 Corinthians 12:29-31
- The third step is to _____ the system of values that says we should envy the wealthy, famous, and beautiful. God looks on the _____, not the outward appearance. Isaiah 53:2-3, 1 Corinthians 1:26-29

DISCUSSION:

1. Review the definition of envy.
Describe how envy has impacted your life.
2. Share an example of how you've been resentful toward God because of someone else's good fortune?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 12:29-31. What is Paul getting at here? What is your spiritual gift? Which one do you wish you had and why?
4. How does admiration quell the desire to be envious?
5. Read Isaiah 53:2-3. Why do you think Jesus didn't come as a handsome, powerful person? What did he come representing instead?
6. Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-29. What are some of the foolish things our culture elevates as important and powerful? What are the qualities that matter more in God's kingdom?
7. What are some practical steps you can take to identify envy in your life and how will you cast it out?

THE SIN OF SLOTH

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The seven deadly sins is not a list to keep us from getting the most out of life. The opposite is actually true – and the sin of sloth proves it.

- Sloth is _____ up on life and relationships; it looks like laziness, but in reality it's _____. Jesus hates it because he came for the exact opposite purpose: to give us a rich and satisfying life. John 10:10
- The picture of genuine faith is not of monks hidden away in their monasteries, but rather of men and women _____ in their world. Hebrews 11:32-34
- The antidote to sloth is to _____ engage in the world – and the payoff is _____. Jesus is our ultimate example of this kind of passionate purpose. Hebrews 12:1-3

DISCUSSION:

1. Define apathy in your own words. Share a time you fell into apathy in your life and what was the result?
2. Read John 10:10. How have you seen the enemy try to steal your joy? What do you think Jesus means by a rich and satisfying life?
3. Read Hebrews 11:32-34. In your opinion, how should Christians engage in our world today? What are some things you can do in your community to make a difference?
4. Read Hebrews 12:1. What are some of the things that are slowing you down or inhibiting you from going all in with Jesus?
5. Read Hebrews 12:2-3. What all did Jesus endure for us? Why was a death on the cross so shameful?
6. Take a challenge. How will you step up and engage in your church, with friends and family, and even at work, to point people to Jesus?

