

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Sermon Series: Do Over

To Be Used With: Session Two: The Gift You Can't Give Yourself

Sermon Title Possibilities:

How to Receive the Gift of Salvation

Jesus—The Only Way to God

Scripture: 1Timothy 2:5-6

Connection to Unit Theme: We have sinned. The small group session this week reminds us that sin separates us from God. Try as we can we can't overcome our sin through our works, efforts, or pedigree. We need help. We need someone who identifies with sinful man but meets the exacting, perfect standard of holy God. That person is Jesus. This message will show you how He is the only way to God.

Introduction: A few years ago a well-respected and well-known preacher confessed on television, "I have sinned." Tears were streaming down his face. Deep emotion was in his voice. He had been caught in his indiscretion. His sin was public. He had to admit the error of his way.

I am no different. I, too, have sinned. I have committed acts of immorality. I have stolen and cheated and lied and disobeyed and robbed God.

We all have sinned. Even if we think we haven't, we have. Even if no one sees us, we have. Even if we don't get caught, we have. The picture that the Greek word *sin* illustrates is of an archer shooting an arrow at a target but it falls short, it misses the mark. The mark or standard for our lives is Jesus. If our life is not perfect then sin exists in us.

I. The Problem with Sin

- The fact of sin is so clear to biblical writers that it is scarcely argued.
- The problem with sin is that it separates us from God. Imagine God is on one side of a chasm and all people on the other side. Figuratively, sin has created this immense gulf between us and God. God loves us, but He hates the sin in our lives. It was must be dealt with.

II. The Wrong Ways for Dealing with Sin

The Bible is clear that there is only one way to deal with our sin. But that hasn't stopped us from trying to go down lots of different roads to try to get right with God. Let's look at a few. *Pastor, provide refutation for each of these.*

- Family Freeway:** "Because I was born into a Christian family and my parents are believers then I am a Christian."
- Attendance Avenue:** "Sure, I'm a Christian; I was reared in a church. I go regularly."
- Righteousness Road:** "Sure, I'm a Christian, I do my best to follow the Golden Rule, keep the Ten Commandments. I don't lie or steal or cheat. I'm better than most people I know."
- Just Believe Boulevard:** "Sure, I'm a Christian, I believe in God, I know He's here. I've never doubted His existence for a minute."

III. The Right Way to God

- Jesus Christ alone bridges the separation between you and God. Jesus is the “mediator” whom both sides can trust, bridging the gap between two opposing parties. A mediator is one who stands between both parties and brings them together in reconciliation.
- In our case, the holy and righteous God is on one side and we, sinful and depraved, are on the other. We need a mediator, a go-between, who can bring us together.
- Jesus perfectly represents the all-good God as well as identifies with sinful man.
- Jesus “gave himself as a ransom for all” (1 Tim. 2:5 NIV). He was sinless, meeting the righteous and perfect standards of God. He was human, voluntarily paying for our debt of sin by taking the place we deserved on the cross. He paid the price for our sin. In that one act of grace and love, He made it possible for anyone to get to God, freeing them from sin and rescuing them to everlasting life. He built the bridge between God and man with His own blood. He sets us free. He provides the way to God.

IV. Receiving the Gift

- This is the greatest gift of all. The gift you can’t give yourself. God offers this gift to everyone. Paul wrote, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23 NIV).
- Would you like to receive that gift? We receive it by inviting Jesus Christ into our heart. God knows your heart. He is not concerned with your words as He is with the attitude of your heart.

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