



Chapter 9- The Power of Sin

The defense attorney rested. In a rousing defense of his client the barrister speaking to the jury as passionately as he could, suggested that his client was not guilty, but rather was a victim of the circumstances surrounding his upbringing. Like a bad hand of cards, luck dealt this boy a circumstance that provided a recipe for violence. It was inevitable that this boy who was abused by his father act out. He was sent to various family members to live just long enough for them to find out about his temper. Then he would be sent to another family member to live. Seven homes in three years. When his dad died in a drug deal gone bad, he acted out by robbing a convenience store. So this attorney looked into the eyes of the jury hoping he had done a good job of polling and researching the prospective jurors. As a defense attorney he did his job well, but his Christian beliefs led him to another conclusion...

You know similar stories and as a review and a preview of this chapter, we see in the above story, first that the defendant is considering his worldly grief and his Christian attorney has been stricken with a concern of the boy's Godly grief. Should the criminal lawyer confront his client with his concerns about the boy's spiritual welfare? Will the boy on trial confess his sin when he doesn't believe in sin? Who is to confront him with his ignorance of his condition? Can an objective bystander excuse his crime as merely venial in nature? The case is rhetorical and you don't know everything about the person's soul, but we know one thing, he is a sinner. It doesn't matter whether he sees his actions as sin. God's law still accuses all of mankind as sinners and especially clarifies sin in the Ten Commandments. The law still applies despite us being misled by Satan, slick professors, politicians, or lawyers. Is it helpful for us to allow people to delude themselves into thinking that they are good people? Is saying you were a "good person" something you want said of you at your funeral?

1. What has happened to sin? We often hear the language of evil, victimization, or crime but seldom is the word *sin* used in public discourse. Why is this?
2. Read Romans 6:12-14 to explain why Christians are "good" people.
3. Read Romans 8:13-14, I Corinthians 6:7-10, Galatians 5:19-21, and Ephesians 5:576. What is the common theme in these texts regarding those who live under the lordship of sin?
4. Why is it essential to take 1 John 3:9 and 1 John 1:8 together?
5. What are we told about the nature of the Law in Matthew 5:18-19 And James 2:10?

6. Comment on the truthfulness or deception of CFW Walther's words, "Small sins become great when they are regarded as small."

7. Read 1 John 1:7. How inclusive is God's absolution? Is this verse easy enough for you to memorize? Are you motivated to memorize it now? Or how about 1 John 1:9, is that verse easier?

If time permits read through pages 93-104 in Luther's Small Catechism. What is your reaction with the new thoughts included there? Is it helpful to delineate new sins against the sixth commandment?



From LSB p. 292 "Individual Confession and Absolution" an excerpt

I, a poor sinner, plead guilty before god of all sins.

I have lived as if God did not matter and as if I mattered most.

My Lord's name I have not honored as I should; my worship and prayers have faltered.

I have not let His love have its way with me, and so my love for others has failed.

There are those whom I have hurt, and those whom I have failed to help.

My thoughts and desires have been soiled with sin.

I am sorry for all of this and ask for grace, I want to do better.