Why is Sin Such a Big Deal, Part II

So after my heart was broken over my daughter I decided to see if a person really could walk in the light 100% (as far as they were aware) and not sin before God. So I tried to shut the circus down.

Here is what I found out. It was just about impossible to stop my sin nature. It's like trying to sit on a wolverine. The more I resisted and fought it, the stronger it got. It wants me to fight it! It loves kicking my butt, embarrassing me and making me feel worthless and filthy. It shoves hopelessness down my throat and screams that God doesn't care. After a while I gave up. I told God that if He wants me to walk pure before Him, he is going to have to figure out how to make that happen. Man, that was the best move I ever blundered into. I tapped out and let Godzilla get into the ring with the wolverine. Me directly fighting with my sin nature didn't work. So I shifted gears and began to drown it with God's presence. The only way I knew how to do that was by getting up early and pouring the Word into my mind. I just sat there and read and read and read. You know, there is a lot of weird stuff in the Bible. I didn't let it's strangeness stop me. It's His Book about His world and His story about what happened to His people. He doesn't have to answer to me for things I don't understand. Slowly I began to see myself in the story. Every day it was as if God was sticking His hand through the membrane between the eternal world and ours to hold my hand with His book. Doing this as the first thing in the morning set the rest of whatever happened that day in perspective.

Eventually, His presence reached flood levels in my life. Talk about a strange time. It was a season of incredible righteousness floating around with the rotting crap of my life as the flood consumed everything. Like dead horses floating with flowers when the Mississippi floods. It worked. The wolverine got weaker and weaker trying to swim in the flood waters. That's when the Fast became possible. I finally shut the circus down.

Before you nominate me for the next Pope, you have to realize there are still wet clowns loose in the land but God's Spirit is hunting them down. Nevertheless, the Sin Fast had begun. Here is what I found out next.

It is possible to get through huge stretches of days without consciously sinning. When you do this, things begin to grow in your life that can't grow while the concrete of sin covers the land. You develop an appetite for good things. Many 'have to's turn into 'get to's. I get to get up early to read the Word, I get to say no to all the world's garbage that tries to bum rush my front door and get in. My prayers become more effective. I don't know how to say this any plainer than to say I am often getting what I'm asking for. Prayer for me has transformed from a religious thing I used to do
without expecting anything, to a tool to change the circumstances of life. How many Christians still cultivating sin can honestly say that? I'm not saying that to shame you, I want you to be where I'm at in your life too.

I also found out that when you practice sin, you get good at it (duh?). You learn how to do it and then play that get-out-of-jail card that comes with immature faith that you think makes it all better. When you stop practicing, it gets harder to do. Eventually it's not worth the trouble. Then you ask yourself, "Why am I burning my credibility to the ground for this little moment of 'whoopie!' that sin gives me?" When you practice righteousness, that gets easier. Whatever you practice, you get good at.

Another thing that happens when you walk consistently in the light is that you stop being embarrassed to be a Christian. How many of us loath the idea of going to all our neighbors and inviting them all to go to your church with you? Awkward!! That's because you haven't proven to yourself that God can be real in your life. Walk in the light for a while and have the produce of His presence in your hands and you will have something to invite them into.

All this to say that it turns out that sin is a big deal. Not for how it impresses God, but because of what it keeps you from. If you fill up your plate with chocolate covered Black Widows, there is no room for the good stuff. When you stop eating that poison, you will feel better, you will get hungry and you will fill yourself with the Bread of Life, loaded with vitamin G and become the superhero of your story.

As for me, it's not over. My daughter is still fighting the battle only she can fight. I am giving her artillery support in prayer and asking God to move the chess pieces He can move, but there is a portion of this that only she can do. Any parent of a prodigal knows exactly what I'm talking about. The wet clowns that survived the flood run around making trouble here and there but the tide has overwhelmingly turned. God has become a fortress in my heart that I didn't have before.

I didn't tell you this to brag. I want you to get to where I'm at and go further. Don't believe the lie that says you can never change and that you only have to rely on Grace to cover your sinful practice. You can change. Let the Flood in. We all need you to break through and be the Monster of God He intended you to be.

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