



# GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#191)

Evil works/deeds – we need to know about them.

# WHO does evil deeds?

## WHO'S works are WICKED?

⇒ People often think it's evil-looking people who do evil things...

⇒ In reality... 

HI! I'M A MASS MURDERER!



⇒ IT'S ALL OF US.

Regardless of nationality, color, creed, gender, occupation, age, abilities, social status, or any other classification a person can invent.



⇒ IT'S ALL OF US.

From childhood.

Actually... From birth.



Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, ...  
Proverbs 22:15a (NET)

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?  
Jeremiah 17:9 (BSB)

**WE SHOULD IGNORE THESE VERSES! THEY MIGHT HURT OUR SELF-ESTEEM!**

Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.  
Psalm 51:5 (NIV)

... every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood.  
Genesis 8:21b (NIV)

**PAY NO ATTENTION TO THESE VERSES! THEY'RE "NEGATIVE"!**

Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward, spreading lies.  
Psalm 58:3 (NIV)

The hearts of people, moreover, are full of evil and there is madness in their hearts while they live, and afterward they join the dead.  
Ecclesiastes 9:3b (NIV)

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; all alike have become worthless. There is no one who does what is good, not even one.  
Romans 3:10b-12 (CSB); see also Psalm 53:1-3.

For there is not one truly righteous person on the earth who continually does good and never sins.  
Ecclesiastes 7:20 (NET)

Because all people have sinned, they have fallen short of God's glory.  
Romans 3:23 (GW)

**ALL THESE VERSES GO AGAINST MODERN WISDOM! THEY CAN'T BE TRUE!**

"What are mortals, that they could be pure, or those born of woman, that they could be righteous? ... mortals, who are **vile and corrupt**, who **drink up evil like water!**"  
Job 15:14, 16b (NIV)

IF WE **CLOSE OUR EYES TO THESE VERSES**, THEY WON'T BE THERE!

The fool says in his heart, "There's no God." They are **corrupt**; they do **vile deeds**.  
Psalm 14:1a (CSB)

THE ATHEISTS HAVE TOLD US THAT THESE VERSES SHOULD BE SUPPRESSED!

ESPECIALLY THIS ONE!

... death spread to all people, because **all sinned**.  
Romans 5:12b (CSB)

**IF THEN**

- ⇒ You have never read the Bible ...
- OR:
- ⇒ You have chosen to ignore everything that goes against what you want to hear...
- ⇒ You might be surprised at how much Scripture has to say about sin and evil.
- ⇒ But it is there in the Bible because we need it.
- ⇒ These (and other) verses teach us ...

We all, like sheep, have **gone astray**, each of us has **turned to our own way**; and **the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all**.  
Isaiah 53:6 (NIV)

And you were **dead in your trespasses and sins** in which you previously walked according to the ways of this world, according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit now working in the disobedient. We too all previously lived among them in our fleshly desires, **carrying out the inclinations of our flesh and thoughts**, and we were **by nature children under wrath** as the others were also.

But God, who is **rich in mercy**, because of **his great love** that he had for us, made us **alive with Christ** even though we were **dead in trespasses**.  
You are **saved by grace!**  
Ephesians 2:1-5 (CSB)

**The PROBLEM.**

**The SOLUTION.**

**Our HOPE.**

**JESUS.**

**This sin issue is a serious matter.**

It's not just a "passive" activity. We **actively choose** to do evil.

"God created mankind upright, but they have **gone in search of many schemes**."  
Ecclesiastes 7:29b (NIV)

... they **invent ways of doing evil**; ...  
Romans 1:30b (NIV)

And this is in spite of God's warnings and instructions.

**He has made it clear** to you, mortal man, what is good and what the LORD is requiring from you ...  
Micah 6:8a (ISV)

Stop doing evil. **Learn** to do what is good.  
Isaiah 1:16b-17a (CSB)

- Including the warning that this "good" is more important than religious activities (which people often prefer).

To do what is right and just is **more acceptable** to the LORD than sacrifice.  
Proverbs 21:3 (ISV)

**We, as sinners, create our own "standards" of good and evil...**

THESE BIBLE VERSES **CAN'T BE TRUE. I KNOW LOTS OF PEOPLE WHO DO GOOD THINGS!!**

- According to those standards, many people are good.
- Those standards may be *half* true; but they don't focus on the *whole* issue.

**In contrast, God sees the full nature of our deeds; and he evaluates them *honestly*, based on *righteous* standards.**

- Scripture tells us that on the surface, some people may do "good" things. Often the problem is hidden in the heart – issues such as motives and whether or not it is done to honor God.
- God determines the nature of our deeds, based on what is in our hearts and minds. It is on *this* basis that he will repay each of us according to our deeds – Revelation 2:23b; quoted from Jeremiah 17:10. (See also Hebrews 4:12.)

**We do this because our sinful nature clouds over our ability to see clearly.**

- God, in his Word, reveals to us a clear view of reality.
- The problem is that we don't like or want it; because:
  - ① It points to the horrible judgment that we have earned.
  - ② It shows us our need to repent and change our ways (and to trust Jesus for that change). This is the only way we can escape that horrible judgment.
- We can't make the *consequences* of sin go away by ignoring, suppressing, vilifying, or condemning what God has said.
- If we become willing to humble ourselves and admit the truth, and begin to follow Jesus, the consequences still are there... but it will be Jesus who pays the penalty. He will take *our* punishment in *our* place.

## We NEED those verses that define what evil deeds are!

- It's the only way we can develop an accurate understanding of evil.
- Sin (and the world's influence) *naturally* leads us to view at least some evil deeds as "good" – and our views need to change.

### EXAMPLE: WHEN GOD DEFINES "WICKEDNESS" ...

Don't you know that wicked people won't inherit the kingdom of God? Stop deceiving yourselves! People who continue to commit ... **[list of various sins here]** ... will not inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Corinthians 6:9a, 10b (GW)

#### THE WICKED OFTEN SAY:

I THINK SOME OF THOSE THINGS ARE **GOOD** – AND ALL THE WORLD'S EXPERTS AGREE WITH ME!

#### GOD SAYS:

Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, ...

Isaiah 5:20a (CSB)

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## We need to submit to Scripture, to accurately recognize the differences between evil and good deeds.

- We may find it easy to recognize some sins as evil... but there are often other sins that we zealously defend as "good."

### EXAMPLE:

#### THE WICKED OFTEN SAY:

I THINK THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH EXPLOITING THE POOR.

#### THE WICKED OFTEN SAY:

I THINK WE SHOULD PUNISH THE RICH!

#### GOD SAYS:

You must **not pervert justice**; you must **not show partiality** to the poor **or favoritism** to the rich; you are to **judge your neighbor fairly**.

Leviticus 19:15 (BSB)

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## What can we conclude?

- Scripture is *filled* with passages that people tend to dislike, because they speak *accurately* about our sin issue. They show us that the wrath of God is genuine and well-deserved.
- It is because God *loves* us so much, that he gives us this accurate description of our situation. *He also offers us salvation and a new life*; so we don't have to remain under that wrath... *unless we choose to reject his offer to escape it*.
- Here is the offer: If we are willing to admit these things, turn to him in repentance and trust, and accept the changes he places in our hearts (so that we can begin to obey him), we will be saved!

This is why we need to look at these passages about evil deeds – the passages that people tend to not want to see.

In admitting their truth, we have hope!

HERE IS WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT OUR EVIL DEEDS – OUR SIN:

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## LEARNING WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT EVIL WORKS/DEEDS.

Many are quite obvious, and God identifies them for us.

- We can pretend that they aren't sin... but we can't change reality: We won't inherit the kingdom of God with these types of deeds controlling our lives.

[A REPRESENTATIVE LIST.]

Now **the works of the flesh are obvious**: sexual immorality, impurity, depravity, idolatry, sorcery, hostilities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish rivalries, dissensions, factions, envying, murder, drunkenness, carousing, and similar things.

I am warning you, as I had warned you before: Those who practice such things **will not inherit the kingdom of God!**

Galatians 5:19-21 (NET)

God also identifies the *opposite* type of works – the **good** ones, which are the "fruit" of the Spirit's presence in us (Galatians 5:22-25). He also shows us how we can change.

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## There are also different types of "not-so-obvious" sins.

- The sin might be obvious, but no longer recognized as such, because we have chosen to call it "good."

- It might be a matter of "good" things being done with evil motives.

EXAMPLE: "They do everything to attract people's attention."

Matthew 23:5a (GW)

- It might be the omission of a good work that we know we should be doing.

Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it.

James 4:17 (NLT)

- The sin might be hidden – done in secret. Even so, *God sees it*.

For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.

Ecclesiastes 12:14 (NIV)

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- The sin might be disguised as something good.

✓ Ananias and Sapphira did this. They sold some land and told the church they were donating 100% of the money ... but actually kept back part of it. The Bible calls it "lying to God" (Acts 5:1-11).

✓ Just like Satan himself (who pretends to be an angel of light), Satan's servants pretend to be servants of righteousness (2 Corinthians 11:14-15).

### "Not-so-obvious" sins will eventually be exposed.

Some people's sins are obvious, preceding them to judgment, but the sins of others surface later.

Likewise, good works are obvious, and those that are not obvious cannot remain hidden.

1 Timothy 5:24-25 (CSB)

(Good works will also become obvious, *but this recognition is not the motive of those who do them.*)

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**Different sins cause different amounts of harm.**

- Sins of the mind may have fewer harmful effects *on other people*, than do sins actually committed against them. YET THEY ARE BOTH SIN.
  - ✓ **EXAMPLE:** Lust or hidden anger might not *physically* destroy another person (though it might eventually lead in that direction); whereas adultery and murder have a greater immediate impact on them.

This is why the Law of Moses required *death* for murder (but not for anger) and for adultery (but not for lust).

- This doesn't mean it's OK to commit sins of the mind! *Both* types of sin are serious enough to earn us God's condemnation and eternal death. In either case, "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23a); and *we will be paid what we have worked for.*

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**Some sins are deliberate; some are done in ignorance.**

- Willful sins earn a greater punishment than those done in ignorance. YET THEY ARE BOTH SIN.
  - ✓ These "sins done in ignorance" are still sins, because we have a moral obligation to learn God's moral will – and our sinful nature encourages us to suppress what we *could have known*.

"The servant who knew what his master wanted but didn't get ready to do it will receive a hard beating. But the servant who didn't know (what his master wanted) and did things for which he deserved punishment will receive a light beating.  
A lot will be expected from everyone who has been given a lot. More will be demanded from everyone who has been entrusted with a lot."  
Luke 12:47-48 (GW)

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- Continued willful sin can lead to a hardening of our hearts. We may lose the ability to repent.
  - ✓ From God's perspective, it's part of the punishment we receive. But we can also call it "self-inflicted," because we have to choose to go the way that results in this punishment.

They perish because **they refused to love the truth** and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.  
2 Thessalonians 2:10b-12 (NIV)

**THE DESIRE OF GOD'S PEOPLE IS TO AVOID ALL FORMS OF SIN.**

Who can know all his errors?  
Please do not punish me for sins I am unaware of.  
Moreover, keep me from committing flagrant sins;  
do not allow such sins to control me.  
Psalms 19:12-13a (NET)

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**ALL these things about sinful works/deeds are an expression of God's love!**

**GOD IS OFFERING US AN OPPORTUNITY ...**

- To see our sinful condition accurately, so we can begin to see his offer of salvation accurately!
- To understand the seriousness of that sin, which is the *necessary context* for understanding the wonder of his grace.
- To learn about our weakness, and our need for his amazing power – the power that enables us to begin doing good works, the *same* power that raised Jesus from the dead (Ephesians 1:19b-20)!

**WITHOUT THIS UNDERSTANDING, WE CAN'T BE SAVED.**

Refusing to mention these things may result in people becoming *religious*; but it cannot result in them being saved. Omitting the unpleasant part of the Good News makes us guilty of lying about God and his Word.

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**THIS WEEK'S MISSION!**

**HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND TO ALL THIS?**

Thank God that he doesn't lie about our condition!

He enables us to know the necessary changes that must take place... and then he enables us to make those changes!

**THIS WEEK'S MISSION!**

- ➔ It's like being given an accurate road map, so we can get to a wonderful destination.
- ➔ Those who lie, and omit the part about our *sinfulness*, are like people who tear off the first half of the road map.

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