

Chapter 1: Sin

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[0:00] Well, we are beginning a new study in the adult class this morning. The book that we're going to be studying is A.W. Pink's book, Profiting from the Word. Now, I think we studied this book 20 years ago.

How many of you were not with us 20 years ago? Can I see your hands? Okay, so there's good reason for us to go through the book again. And how many of you who were with us remember everything that we studied?

Okay, just Lou. So, for the rest of you all, we'll trust that this will be a profitable study. A.W. Pink was not nearly as well known in his own day as he is today.

In 1921, he started writing a monthly magazine called Studies in the Scriptures. He maintained that magazine for some 30 years. Its readership was worldwide, but it never grew to much more than a thousand readers.

It was only really later. He died in 1952, and it was only later with the rebirth of interest in the Reformed faith that his writings have gained greater popularity and usefulness.

[1:16] Pink was concerned with what he saw as a decay in the church of Jesus Christ. And in his writings, he seeks to diagnose that problem.

What's wrong with the church today? And then seeks to set forth the remedies. His writings are marked by a devotion to Scripture and searching application of that word to our lives.

He had no interest at all in just an intellectual Christianity. Experiential Christianity was the drum of A.W. Pink.

If it's not affecting your life, then it's worthless. And there was a lot of intellectual religion all around Pink. He was concerned, and so the book we're reading is profiting from the word.

His concern was that many people were reading the Bible, studying the Bible, with no spiritual profit as seen by the fruits produced in their lives.

[2:19] And he points out in the introduction that you don't have to be a Christian to have an interest in the Bible. I think it was a couple of weeks ago, Pastor Aaron was showing us that the translators that worked along with Henry Martin had such an interest in the New Testament.

Well, one was a Muslim, the other was a Hindu, and as far as we know, they continued Muslim and Hindu. But they had an interest in the Bible. It's a fascinating book, isn't it? And some people study the Bible because it's fascinating.

Some people study the Bible because by it they want to have an argument by which they can hammer somebody else that doesn't agree with their church on some particular point. Some people study the Bible to make them proud.

Knowledge puffs up. Well, you can do that with science. You can do it with history. You can do it with the Bible. And so this is something of the milieu of things that was moving A.W. Pink.

In his day, the hot topic was the end times. How's it all going to happen? Come on, put it out on a chart and show me exactly how things are going to fall out for Jesus Christ's return.

[3:35] And everybody was interested in the end times and numerology and what do the numbers mean and typology. And people were studying the Bible, but not to their spiritual profit.

You know, we can even be excited about studying God's Word to see the doctrines of grace. It's something new to us. It's something novel. And it's the novelty that gets us going.

And we're excited. Oh, I haven't seen that before in the Bible. And we can get all excited about seeing new things in the Bible. And yet without any spiritual profit to our souls.

Well, that's the burden of A.W. Pink. How can I know if I'm truly profiting from the Word of God? And when we say that, we're talking about all the ways we take in the Word of God.

Whether we're reading it at home, studying it at home, meditating, memorizing, hearing a Sunday school lesson, preaching, a tape, a CD, whatever the source is, how can I know that I'm really profiting from it?

[4:41] We have no difficulty learning whether or not our investments are profiting, do we? We just, we look at the statement and we see whether it's profitable or not.

If you're a businessman, you have no problems in figuring out, am I making a profit? You just look at the bottom line and you see, is my income greater than my expenses?

And I'm profiting. Well, how do we know whether we're really profiting from all the Bible reading and intake that we have? Turn with me to 2 Timothy chapter 3.

2 Timothy chapter 3. And this becomes the launching pad for our study. All Scripture.

2 Timothy 3.16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful. Some of you have the King James. You know that the word there is profitable.

[5:49] And that is the word in the title of the book. Profiting from the Word. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful or profitable. For what?

Well, he tells us for what? For teaching. For rebuking. For correcting. For training in righteousness. So that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

You notice that the purpose for the Bible is not to satisfy or gratify our speculative interest. It's not to stir us up just to fill our minds with facts.

It's rather a very practical end for which our Bibles have been given to us. To teach us. To rebuke us. To correct us. To train us in righteousness.

To equip us for doing every good work. So. We spend a lot of time with our Bibles. How can I know whether I'm profiting as I should from my study of the Bible?

[6:53] Well, here are ten chapters then that answer that. And he takes ten different topics. And he'll show that these ten different topics will be affected by your intake of the Bible if you're really profiting.

Sin. God. Christ. Prayer. Good works. Obedience. The world. The promises. Joy. Love. Those are the ten areas that we should be able to see that indeed we're profiting.

Our income is higher than our expenses. So this morning, chapter one, profiting from the word, the scriptures and sin. And each chapter has seven points to it.

Seven is the perfect number we're told. And so pink has seven points for every chapter. Those who are teaching don't need to stick to those seven. In fact, I'm melting them down into six points this morning.

So, number one, you are spiritually profiting from the word when it convicts you of sin. Now, we shouldn't be surprised at that.

[7:58] If it's the stated function of the Bible to rebuke and to correct us, should we be surprised that one of the ways that we profit from it is by being convicted of our sin.

That's what it's supposed to do. That's part of the training in righteousness. That's the way it thoroughly equips us to do every good work is to convict us of our sin. Pink calls this the Bible's first office.

To reveal our depravity. To expose our wickedness. Romans 3.20 Through the law, we become conscious of sin.

Paul says, I would not have known what sin was. Had not the law said, thou shalt not covet. The word of God convicted him of his sin.

Hebrews 4.12 and 13. For the word of God is living and active. It's sharper than any double-edged sword. And it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow.

[9:03] It judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

That's why the Bible is such a penetrating book. The author knows us. He has searched us. And he has found us out. And so that's why when you read the Bible, you'll be convicted of your sin.

If you're profiting from it. Be sure your sin will find you out in here. You can't read for long before you are found out in the Scriptures.

You can't read for long if the Holy Spirit is applying it with profit to your soul. Before you feel the finger of the Spirit saying, thou art the man.

This is you, John, we're talking about now. Not just David. This is you. Not just Peter. But you. So we're profiting from the word when we begin to see ourselves in the Bible.

[10:11] And we come to grips with the fact that the author is talking about me here. Even though our outward life might be all in order. And we feel rather good about ourselves.

When the Spirit of God comes and puts his finger on something. We cry out, woe is me. Because our heart, our attitudes, our motives even are laid bare in the Scripture.

And this isn't something that just happens once in our life when we're converted. We were convicted of our sins. We were walking blindly, unaware of our sins. And then the Spirit came and convicted us of our sins.

And chased us to Jesus. And we sought for forgiveness. And that's the end of conviction. No, not at all. But that is the Spirit of God keeps blessing us as we come to the book.

What do we find? We find ourselves being convicted of sin. Over and over. We see how far, far short we come from the standard set before us.

[11:11] Be holy as I am holy. So it's here in the Word that we learn the many different ways that we come short of the glory of God.

So then the first test to apply to know if I'm profiting from the Word is, as I read about the sad failures of different men and women in the Scriptures, does it make me realize how sadly like them I am?

And as I read about my perfect Lord Jesus Christ, does it make me feel how unlike Him I am? If so, then I'm profiting from the Word.

You know, that's the very reason some people don't read the Bible. Because it does convict of sin. For the same reason that King Ahab would never call on that prophet of God, Micaiah.

Because he never prophesies anything good about me. And that's the reason some people don't read their Bibles. Because it keeps pointing out the bad things about them.

[12:21] And this is the verdict, Jesus says. Light has come into the world. But men love darkness rather than light. Why? Because their deeds were evil. And so they will not come into the light to have their sins be exposed.

They'll rather hide so the light won't shine. Well, the light shines here very brightly. And so some people won't come to it in order to keep the light from shining.

Now, I want to ask you, why is it that a Christian does not shun the light? Why is it that a Christian doesn't say, ooh, that book cuts me, that book exposes me, and just let it set?

Why does a Christian come and open that book? And let the light shine upon him? What's the answer to that? It's not the answer. There's many answers. Why? Why is a Christian any different there?

What about the Holy Spirit? Okay. Very good. The Holy Spirit. When the Spirit of God works in the Christian, He's drawing us to His own words.

[13:27] Why else? Yes, Joanna? I've read a book from Matthew and I've read a book because this book shows our remedy that opens up to you.

Because we know that this book will not only show us our wounds and our problems, but it will show us the remedy in Christ. That's an excellent reason. You see, we don't have a problem with having sin exposed because we have a Savior for our sins, don't we?

That's something the sinner doesn't have. So the sinner has to cover his sin. The sinner has to deny sin and think of himself higher than he is. But the Christian knows what to do with sin. We have a Savior to run to.

We have forgiveness to find in Christ. We have sin-killing power to get from Christ. So, yes, the Christian is willing to have the Word of God shine its light.

Why else? We want to be more like Christ. And what is it that makes us unlike Him? Sin. So we want Him to show us those areas where we're not like Him.

[14:31] Exactly. Why else? So our whole nature has changed. Rather than hating the light, that was our nature, He's changed us and He's made us children of light.

Whereas once we were children of darkness, we now love the light. We want to walk in the light as He is in the light. And so we say, Lord, search me and try me and show me my darkness, that I might repent of it and be cleansed of it and walk in the light as You are in the light.

So there's a whole different attitude. And you can know that you're profiting from the Word then if it is convicting you of sin. Alright? Number two, you can know you're spiritually profiting from the

Word when you sorrow over sin.

Again, if all Scripture is profitable for rebuke, if that's one of the offices of the Scriptures, then when it rebukes us for sin, we're not profiting from the Word if we sit there unmoved.

It says, John, you are walking out of line with God's law. And if I sit there unmoved, am I profiting from the Word? No. I ought to be sorry for sin when the rebuke comes.

[15 : 47] I ought to grieve for sin, realizing what a grief it is to God, what an offense to Him. Now, here again, some people only read their Bibles to feel better.

That's their aim. That's their reason for going to the Bible. They want to feel better. And so, they judge their time as profitable, their quiet time as profitable, if they leave feeling better.

So, they stick to passages like some of the Psalms, passages that are full of comfort. Now, I want to be careful here.

The Psalms are part of God's breathed out Word, and they are for us, and we ought to live on them. But it's not all of God's Word.

And comfort is one of the purposes of the Scriptures, Romans 15, 3 and 4. The comfort and encouragement of the Scriptures. But it's not the only purpose for the Scriptures.

[16 : 52] There are other things written in God's Word that ought to cause us grief and sorrow. And the important thing is that we don't dictate to the Bible what we want from it, but that we come to the Bible to receive whatever God knows that I need.

Whatever the author says to me here, I need to embrace it. I need to take it on board. And sorrow for sin, then, should not be shunned.

If during your annual physical checkup, the doctor should put his finger on a problem, you wouldn't go home saying, what an unprofitable visit to the doctor.

Even though it was perhaps painful to hear, and perhaps distressing to think of the changes in your lifestyle that are going to have to result from what he said, you would still say it was a profitable visit.

It was helpful to my health. It profited me. So it is with times in the Word of God. If the Scripture sometimes breaks your heart and makes you ache and sorrow for sin, you can know that you are profiting from the Word.

[18 : 01] Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. And that's the divine order.

Mourning followed by comfort. The wounds followed by the balm of Gilead.

There's a godly sorrow that leads to repentance. And those who are profiting from the Bible know something of it. So that's the second thing. Conviction. Sorrow. Thirdly, you are profiting from the Word when it leads you to confess your sins and to forsake them.

Now, confession of sin means that the Word of God has done its work in you because it's brought you to the God of the Word. It's brought you to the living God.

And when you come to Him, you own your sin that He's pointing out. You name it, you agree. You agree with God about it. Lord, that look was lustful. Lord, that evening was wasted.

Lord, that word was unkind. Lord, that money spent was selfish. And we agree with God concerning our behavior. We name it.

[19 : 09] We confess it to Him. And we say, God, be merciful to me for Jesus' sake. Wash me.

Cleanse me. Forgive me.

So, confession is the cleansing of the soul. It's the vomiting out of sin. And this is to profit from the Word. There's no profiting if it comes short of this.

Honest dealings before God in Christ. You see, we can have the first two and still not profit. We can be convicted of sin and be sorry for our sin.

And yet, if it doesn't lead us to Christ in the confession of our sin, we come short of profiting from it as we ought. Turn to Psalm 32.

You have a classic example of this. David had sinned greatly against the Lord. And he was convicted of his sin and he felt sorry.

[20 : 08] He was a sad case here in Psalm 32, verse 3. But he hadn't yet confessed. Notice the predicament he's in. Notice he's convicted and he's sorry, but he hasn't yet confessed.

Psalm 32, 3. When I kept silent... He's talking about silent, not confessing, not coming to God, confessing it. When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long for day and night your hand was heavy upon me.

My strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. This guy's under conviction. The heavy hand of the Lord is upon him. There's no joy in David's life.

He is sorrowful. Verse 5. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, I will confess my transgression to the Lord and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

And you see that it's not good enough just to be convicted and to feel sorry. We've got to get to Christ. We've got to come and confess. We've got to open our mouth and acknowledge our sin to the Lord.

[21 : 21] Never stop short of Christ. Getting to Christ. Does my Bible reading lead me to Jesus in the confession of my sin? But not only confessing it, but to forsake it.

Proverbs 28, 13. He who conceals his sin does not prosper. There's no profit in that. But whoever confesses and renounces or forsakes them find mercy.

Not only to confess, but to forsake. Sometimes a man will forsake his wife and children. He just turns his back on them and walks away. Doesn't want to have anything more to do with it.

Well, that's how we're to forsake sin. We're to turn our back on it and have nothing more to do with it. Blessed is the man who confesses and forsakes.

And you can know you're profiting from the Word when that is so. Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness. Well, the fourth way that we can know that we are profiting from the Word is when it produces in you a deeper hatred of sin.

[22 : 28] A deeper hatred of sin. Turn to Psalm 97 and verse 10. You see, you really can't escape the knife of the Word even in the Psalms, can you?

But I trust you know what I mean when some people just run to comforting portions in the Psalm. But the Psalms are full of that which ought to convict us of our sin as well. Here in Psalm 97, verse 10.

Let those who love the Lord hate evil. Let those who love the Lord hate evil.

Love for the one is to move us to hatred of the other. Spurgeon. We cannot love God without hating what He hates.

We are not only to avoid evil and refuse to continue in it, but we must be up in arms against it and bear toward it a hearty indignation.

[23 : 30] I wonder if it could be said of you, you are up in arms against your sin. You are downright angry with your sins. You hate evil.

It was said of the Lord Jesus that He loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Hebrews 1.9 And when the Word of God produces a deeper hatred of sin, we're profiting from it.

Let's think about hatred for a moment. It's a powerful emotion, isn't it? It'll cause a man to do what he otherwise would never do. Give me an example.

What will hatred cause a man to do that he otherwise would never do? Actually to murder. We call those hate crimes, don't we?

When the crime is motivated by one thing, by hatred. Who was the first hate crime? Cain slew his brother out of hatred.

[24 : 30] And he's not the last hate crime. But you know, hatred will also cause a man to kill his sins.

That's the positive use of this strong emotion. The old Puritan Edward Reiner said, Till sin be hated, it cannot be mortified.

You will never cry against it as the Jews did against Christ. Crucify it, crucify it, till sin be really abhorred as he was.

Till sin be hated, it cannot be mortified. It's a hard thing to kill sin. And what he's saying is, you won't pull the trigger unless you really hate it.

Soldiers need to be trained to kill the enemy. Talking with a father of a marine trainee. They're making the point of, it's no small thing for our young men to look the enemy in the eye.

[25 : 35] To see, be close enough to see the white of their eyeballs and to pull the trigger to kill them. Some of you perhaps know better than I from previous wars that men have needed to be trained to kill the enemy.

Sometimes the training is included learning to hate the enemy. Whatever you think of that, this much is sure. You will not kill your sin unless you hate it.

You'll not pull the trigger on sin unless you hate it. Now here's the good news. The Bible's aim is to increase our hatred of sin. Over to Psalm 119 and verse 104.

Psalm 119, 104. I gain understanding from your precepts, therefore, I hate every wrong path. The psalmist says that as I pour over your precepts, I have this emotion of hatred that grows in me. [26:50] Now, we don't often think of that. We think of it as we pour over the scriptures of our love growing. The psalmist says there's another way that I profit from the word. It's that when I read your precepts and pour over them, my hatred for sin grows.

I hate every wrong path. Now, I want you to tease that out a bit. How does that happen? What do you see in the scriptures that increases your hatred for sin?

There? His love and sacrifice. So, in the scriptures, we continually are brought back to Calvary and we see Christ crying out under abandonment by his father and we say, what has brought this on? And the scripture says, your sin, John. And I hate my sin with a new hatred. You see how it works. How else?

What else do you see in scripture besides that central thing of the cross that causes you to hate your sin more? Lou and Dale?

[28:12] Okay. Hmm. We see how much our commander hates sin. We hear his command to us to hate it.

And we have a sense of loyalty to our commander to turn our back on sin, to put it to death. Dale? Please may may but yet the desire to reflect the advantage is to fill it and to fill it out and you learn that it's it war begins but it's one thing drawing away from what you desire and now that you do the better so in reading about the inward struggle in Romans chapter 7 you can have your own hatred for sin grow you realize that there's a part of you that's drawing you towards sin and you say I want to put that part of me to death good what else do you read in the Bible that causes you to hate sin Chuck and then Jason the entwining effects of sin the consequences of sin James 1 15 sin when it is finished brings forth death that's what it's after it doesn't tell you that when it comes tempting you but the Bible tells you what it's after it's after death

I hate sin that's what it's after it wants to kill me wants to separate me from Christ good Jason okay good Raj hmm you sense God's indignation for sin hmm good that's really that's really just teasing out a bit more Chuck's idea of entanglements the entwining of sin that it comes and it wraps its tentacles around us to where we become its slave and it should make us hate sin it's such a wicked taskmaster where where in all the world do you learn about hell if not in the scriptures okay so so in my Bible reading

I keep bumping into this place where men are gnashing their teeth where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched where torments are eternal and the cries of them go up forever and ever where men are crying for just the drop on the tip of the finger to give them some satisfaction in their agony and I say what has brought you to this man and he says my sin what will bring you to this man your sin and I begin to hate sin is this what sin deserves what a horrible thing it is isn't it in the Bible that we learn about a paradise don't we don't we read in the Bible about a day when there was no suffering a day when there was no disease no death whatever happened to that paradise there was once a creation that had no curse on it what happened to that paradise it was lost the Bible tells me what what caused it to be lost and Genesis 3 says it was sin

Romans 5 says it was by sin that death entered the world and the curse came on it and I say what a horrible thing sin is to have perverted God's good order of creation to have destroyed what was so wonderful once it's by what we read in the Bible that we find our hatred for sin growing that's what the psalmist is saying I gain understanding from your precepts therefore I hate sin I hate every false way we see how ugly sin looks in others I see Sarah lying and I say oh what an ugly thing a lie is on a woman that's not beautifying to her at all I see what an ugly thing lust is to David and I begin to hate it you see as I see it in others in the scriptures and then I realize how hateful it is in me different ways thousands of ways that the Bible will increase our hatred of sin it's in the Bible that sin appears exceedingly sinful sin always comes with its painted face on it and it looks gorgeous and pleasurable and what our

[33:19] Bibles do for us it takes hold of the mask and it rips it right off and it shows us sin in its native colors takes us to the cross and says here you may view its nature rightly here its guilt may estimate it shows us as it really is so we're profiting from the word when it produces a deeper hatred of sin that's the fourth point well we profit fifthly from the word when it fortifies you against sin fortifies you against sin what do we hear what word do you hear in fortify fort what's a fort for you can just see the fort and there's the moat around it and there's the huge bulwarks the strong walls what's a fort for protection from the enemy to strengthen against the attack of the enemy and so we

are fortified against sin that's a way to know we're profiting when it strengthens us and protects us against the attacks of sin we like that song or I do thy word is like an armory where soldiers may repair and find for life's long battle day all needful weapons there oh may I find my armor there thy word my trusty sword

I'll learn to fight with every foe the battle of the Lord where in the Bible do we find such language about weapons to fight off the enemy Ephesians 6 right the whole armor of God we're to put it on and what is the sword of the spirit the word of God we're talking about how can I know that I'm profiting from the word of God how can I know when this sword is doing me good well you can know it when it's fortifying you against sin it's fortifying you against the enemy now how does that work in our day to day life what would it look like well here comes the temptation to sin and in my reading of scripture I see this commandment of God and I suddenly realize that this behavior that I'm thinking about doing is out of bounds with this command and I have had the sword of the spirit fortify me this is out of bounds can't go there or the thing that I'm being tempted to comes and and then some warning comes to my mind that I found in the scriptures those who who walk or live according to the flesh will reap destruction from the fret the flesh oh I dare not so to the flesh and the warning that I found in scripture helps me or it might be a promise

I feel my weakness before this temptation I feel its allurements so strong be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power and I'm encouraged by a promise that I found in scripture maybe it's the promise maybe it's some aspect of God maybe the scriptures remind you of some attribute of God that he is everywhere oh Joseph found that to be a help in his temptation how can I sin against my Lord he he's here he knows me he's omniscient and our knowledge of God from the scripture will help us fortify us against sin the death of Christ on the cross all these things that we're reading in the Bible should be making it harder for us to sin that's what it means to fortify you against sin we read about the day of judgment when everything covered will be uncovered and suddenly we find new fortification and strength against the temptation union with Christ we read that I'm one with him and he's he's in me and so his strength is my strength and I'm fortified maybe

I'm thinking about giving up the fight and I consider him who endured such contradiction from sinful men and so I do not grow weary in my battle against sin thousands of ways that the Bible fortifies us against sin the important test then is you're profiting from the word when it makes it harder for you to sin against God when it makes you stronger and fortifies you against sin again Psalm 119 11 I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not what sin against you in other words the word of God hidden in the heart fortifies us against sin is that one reason you memorize the Bible because it fortifies you then the Bible is profiting you with my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth so when sin comes knocking on my door I'll have the knowledge of his law to know what is in bounds and out about I'll be fortified against temptation like Jesus was when the temptation in the wilderness came knocking and Jesus says it is written and he knew the scriptures to quote it's written you shall not worship and serve the Lord your God only nothing else and he he was fortified by the scriptures somebody said sin will either keep you from this book or this book will keep you from sin this book keeps you from sin because it's a fortification against sin and so the picture of what the Bible does for us if we're profiting is it brings the it brings the drawbridge up it fills the moat full it arms the the people up above with all kinds of ammunitions to shoot against sin it fortifies us as the word of God is dwelling in us richly one last verse

Psalm 37 31 speaking of the righteous man it says the law of his God is in his heart his feet do not slip why do his feet not slip into sin because the law of his God is in his heart where not on the shelf not in their lap not in their hands not even in their minds alone but in their heart Manson if scripture is only in the tongue or in the mind only to make it a matter of talk and speculation it'll soon be gone the seed that lies on the surface the fowls in the air will pick up therefore hide it deeply let it get from the ear into the mind and from the mind into the heart let it soak in further and further it is only when it has a prevailing sovereignty in the heart that we receive it in the love of it when it is dearer than our dearest lust then it will stick to us the law of his God is in his heart and so his feet do not slide but we don't have time to take the last point I'll just give you the heading you're profiting from the word when it causes you to practice the opposite of sin not only to be convicted and sorry sorry for sin and confess and forsake it but to practice the opposite of sin well I trust you get a bit of the flavor of what A.W. Pink is concerned that our Bible intake do something to us by the power of the spirit may it be our experience today as we have much to do with the word of God that it would come with profit to our hearts were dismissed may may may may may may may may may may may may may may may

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