

Sin is Personal to God

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[0 : 00] Turn in your Bibles to the book of Proverbs, chapter 14, verse 2. Proverbs 14, 2. I know these days can be long, and I don't want to keep you too long this afternoon.

So let's dig right in to Proverbs 14, 2. The Word of God says, He whose walk is upright fears the Lord, but he whose ways are devious despises him.

Now doesn't that just drill right down into the heart of things? The Word of God is living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword.

Hebrew says it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It judges the thoughts and the attitudes of the heart.

It goes past the surface. It goes right down to the thoughts and the attitudes of the heart. And that's what Proverbs 14, 2 is. My life, my walk, shows what I think about God.

[1 : 07] My life and my walk show what I think about God and how I judge and weigh Him. What do I think of Him?

When I obey God, 14, 2 says, When I have a loving, submissive, obedient spirit towards Him, I do it because I fear the Lord.

But the other side is also true. When I sin, when I walk in crooked ways, I despise Him. Everything we do has to do with Him.

Everything we do is saying something about how we think or what we feel about Him. Every time you obey, you're saying something to God.

Every time you obey, you're saying something about God. Every time you disobey, every time you forget Him and please yourself over Him, you're saying something about God.

[2 : 10] You're saying something to God. Sin and obedience are personal. Sin and obedience are personal. And we forget that. I forget that.

And that's why I so much appreciate this proverb, clearing away the cobwebs and putting things straight to me. There's something bound up in the heart of man that separates the law of God from the person of God.

We want to take the law of God and what He tells us and remove it from Him. Gerhardus Voss, a wonderful theologian of the last century, was talking about the Pharisees and legalism.

And he said it was a kind of submission to God's law, something that no longer feels the personal divine touch and the rule it submits to.

So the Pharisees had a kind of obedience and submission to God's law, but it was disconnected.

They didn't have any divine personal touch to it. So they obeyed the rules, but they didn't love God.

[3 : 21] They lifted up the law, but they belittled God, even while they did it. Sinclair Ferguson says, keep the Ten Commandments, but divorce the Ten Commandments from who God actually is, and you've done something to the Ten Commandments.

Haven't you? You destroyed them of the atmosphere and the character and the personalness of the one who gave them. gave them. So, legalism obeys God's law, but doesn't fear God.

It removes obedience from God. Antinomianism, which, what do I mean by that? Is, I mean, anti-law, people that say, oh, we're not under law, we're under grace, by which they mean it's not really that important whether I obey or disobey.

The important thing is, in the end, grace will save me no matter what I do. You can see how they are forgetting Proverbs 14, too. They're not seeing things clearly.

He whose ways are devious despise him. You haven't found some wonderful thing where you can be all good with God and ignore his word and do whatever you want.

[4 : 50] Proverbs 14, too, calls a spade a spade. You're despising God. You haven't come to some great theological conclusion.

You're belittling God. That's his law. It's a reflection of his character. The law is all about who God is and what he's like and it carries his authority.

He's this God of love and this God of glory, this God of truth, this God of giving, as we saw this morning. And not to obey that law is to say, I really don't care what you're like.

I think that might be good enough for you, but it's not good enough for me. I don't cherish your truth. I don't cherish your glory. I don't cherish or submit. I don't think much of your authority, of your justice, your love or your wisdom.

I don't think much of you. And maybe you, maybe we don't say it in so many words, but examine yourself.

[6 : 00] every time you sin, every time I sin, I'm despising God. Even every time I heartlessly, lovelessly, gracelessly obey God's law, but I don't do it out of love for him, I'm despising God.

Legalism and antinomianism aren't so much opposites, as just, as different ways of despising God, of belittling him. They forget that it's personal to God.

And that's really what Proverbs 14, too, has at its heart. Your whole life is personal to God. He takes it that way.

Now, I'm going to be focusing on the second half of the verse, he whose ways are devious, despise him, but you notice the first half is the opposite. The first half about the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and all, that part, which we see, is the opposite of this, of despising God. I'm not going to take time to draw it out, but just know that when you're looking at what it means to despise God, the fear of the Lord is the opposite.

[7 : 18] So everything that we're going to say about what does it look like, what does it mean to despise God, the fear of the Lord is the opposite. It's what Proverbs is all about. This is the beginning of wisdom, is when you see and understand that my whole life is lived before the face of God, towards God, in relation to God, connected to God, I'm always saying something about him and to him.

The fear of the Lord is remembering and appreciating and treasuring God himself. Despising is the exact opposite of that.

So what do we do when we despise God? Well, we make God small. Jeremiah 49, 15, the Lord says to Israel, now I will make you small among the nations.

You made me small, you made me of no account, you embarrassed me, you belittled me in front of the nations, now I'll make you small. Now I will make you small among the nations despised among men.

There's our word despised. It means to make small. And so when I sin, I'm looking down on God. Let that sink in.

[8 : 38] When I sin, I make the Lord small, I elevate myself over him. Now you can do that consciously or you can do it unconsciously.

Oh, I just didn't remember to do that. I just didn't remember. I didn't think it was that important. Well, that's saying something about where God stands in your heart.

So the Lord who loves me, who made me, who saved me, who blesses me, the Lord who's patient and kind with me, the omnipotent, the omniscient, the majestic king on his throne.

Isaiah 40 talks about the nations being a drop in the bucket, dust on the scales. That great God who speaks and worlds are created, who Isaiah 6 shows thrilling the hearts of angels forever and ever, who saves sinners by putting his own son on the altar.

I despise him. I make him small. And I'm not just talking about you. I'm not just talking about you if you're unsaved. This is what we do when we sin.

[9 : 56] This is what I do. Despising God is making men more important than God. For Samuel 3.20, a prophet came to Eli. You remember Eli and his two sons.

Eli's the priest. His sons were acting as priests as well. He says, why do you scorn my sacrifice and offering that I prescribe for my dwelling? Why do you honor your sons more than me?

Far be it from me. Those who honor me, I will honor, but those who despise me will be disdained.

Eli despised God when he thought more of his sons, more of his relationship and approval of his sons than when he thought about his relationship and approval of God.

He despised God when he made more of his sons than the Lord who had made him a priest. So, sin makes God's wisdom small.

I know better than he does. Do you ever do something because you think that's the best way even though God says it's not? Sin belittles God's wrath and justice as if he can't repay.

[11:12] As if he's not someone to be afraid of. Vengeance is mine. I will repay. That's not something to worry about. Remember the two thieves on the cross and the one at Golgotha the thief on the cross sent to the other thief.

Do you not fear God since we are under the same sentence? He's saying what are you doing? We are about to die and to face our maker.

We are about ready to die and face God's justice. Doesn't that make you think for a second? I don't know how that thief responded. But when we despise God we say God's wrath is nothing to worry about.

It's despising his omniscience. His how he sees all. Psalm 94 7 they say the Lord does not see. The God of Jacob takes no notice.

Never sinned because you can get away from it away with it from men but you forget that God sees. The Lord said in Amos I know I know how many are your sins and how great they are.

[12:33] You could have everyone else fooled but I know how many there are. I know how great they are. It's despising his patience. Romans 2 4 or do you show contempt?

Do you despise the riches of his kindness tolerance and patience not realizing that God's kindness leads you towards repentance? God's patient with you and you despise him.

He's kind to you. In Romans 2 4 says that kindness and tolerance and patience is meant to lead to your repentance so that you quit sinning.

But when you despise God you take that kindness and that patience as a reason as a reason to keep on sinning. It's belittling God. It's scorning his patience.

So you're in court and you're interrupting and you're arguing with the judge and he's being patient with you. And so what do you do in response? You turn up the volume.

[13:32] You interrupt more. You become you draw more attention. You know, you start yelling and you're despising him. We call that contempt of court.

Despising. And Christian, when we despise, when we sin, we despise the one who bought us and loved us. And you despise the cross.

You despise the blood by which you were bought and cleansed. And you despise the father who loves you and who adopted you. Do you see it's not just that law out there that you're disobeying, that we're disobeying.

We're despising the Lord. And again, do you see how Proverbs 14 2 just cuts us open and lays us bare? It says that's what this is.

When you walk this way, you're living a walk of disdain. And when you walk uprightly, it's showing that you are living a life of respect and fear and appreciation and treasuring.

[14:42] So, we're forgetting who we are and who he is and we're despising his blessings and his love and in all of it we're making God small. So, first we belittle him in our hearts.

First we forget him and then we sin. Numbers 15 30 describes people who know God's law and yet they sin with a high hand.

They know what they're supposed to do but they just don't. We're not going to do it. They have this rebellious attitude and he calls that despising God's word as if God's word and God's promises and God's law is just optional.

That's called despising God. So, his word isn't that big of a deal. so when I tell my kids or my children to do something I expect to be obeyed and I do take it personally when they just ignore me or don't think it's important to obey.

It's saying something to me. It's saying something about what they're thinking about me and I do take that personally. And that's the way it is with God.

[16:03] When we don't give God our best we're despising him. Malachi 1 says God says to the priest you've despised me. You've despised my name. And they ask well how have we despised your name?

You give the blind and the lame and the sick animals for sacrifice. Here this is what you're worth. You're worth something. I'll grant you that. but not my best.

You're worth the leftovers. Are you giving God your leftovers? The leftovers of your time and of your strength, of your money, of your heart, your joy, keeping the best for yourself.

Keeping the best for yourself. You despise me, the Lord says. Now, believers, we need to arm ourselves with this thought and with this reality and with this clarity.

We need to arm yourself with the mind of Joseph. Remember, he is far away from anyone that knew him, far away from dad and family, and no one would have found out anything, but he says to Potiphar's wife, how can I sin and do such a thing against God?

[17:26] How can I sin and do such a thing against God? Remember, it's saying something, it's doing something about God, to God. Joseph knew that. And so Joseph connected God's law, Joseph connected his walk, his life, to God himself.

There was no separation. He feared the Lord, and so when temptation came, his heart was riveted to God himself. And so he was armed, and we need to arm ourselves with that same mindset.

Proverbs 14, 2 does this. It's hard, it's a hard word to hear, it's a hard word to say like, yeah, this is what's going on, this lays open my heart, but this equips us.

We need to arm ourselves with the mind of Christ. How did Jesus think about these things? How did he think about God and obedience, God's law?

John 14, 31, Jesus himself tells us, the world must learn that I love the Father, and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. I love him.

[18:38] I love him. I love him, and I do what he commands me. So Jesus, what's this all about? What's your life all about?

What's your obedience all about? He says it's about love. It's about showing God and showing the world that my Father is worthy. How worthy is he? He's worthy of doing everything he commanded me to do.

And so he's worthy, and I'll go to the cross, and I'll be despised, and I'll be rejected, and I won't be believed, but I'm going to do it to show the world that my Father is worthy, worthy.

I'm going to do it to show the Father that I love him. So we need to arm ourselves with the mind of Christ.

Why do we live this way? Why do we walk uprightly? Why do we take God's law and take it seriously and obey it and follow hard after God? Jesus says because this is about loving and treasuring God.

[19:43] We're going to do it because he's worthy. So arm yourself with the mind of Joseph. Arm yourself with the mind of Christ. And to you, if you aren't trusting God, if you aren't repenting and believing, if you aren't right with God, just see the sinfulness of your sin.

because I know in your heart you just want to say, these things aren't that big of a deal. But see the sinfulness of your sin.

God has a personal problem with you. Your whole life is this one constant act of disdain for him.

And so you're good things. things that people would say, those are good. Well, you don't do it with any sort of love or faith or trust or reliance upon him.

You don't do it for him. You do it for yourself. So your good things and your bad things, whatever you do, you're saying, who's the Lord that I should obey him, that I should love him, that I should care about him more than me.

[20:58] And you're despising him. And you're despising Jesus, the only one who can save you. So how will you escape if you ignore, if you despise such a great salvation?

salvation. And that's where I leave you with that problem. You live constantly despising and belittling the God who made you, the God who's poured blessing into your life, the God who is going to hold you to account, whose wrath is as great as the fear that is due him.

And he's made a way for you to be right with him. He's made a way for you to be right with him through Jesus Christ, to have your sins, your belittling, God belittling sins forgiven.

And it's through wholehearted surrender and faith in Jesus who died on the cross in the place of rebels. So he's made a way for you to be forgiven, to escape.

But how will you escape then if you ignore the salvation? how will you escape if you go on despising the only one who can save you?

[22:17] So you're drowning in the water and you're despising the life guard who's coming to save you. Well then how then will you be saved?

What are you going to do? So that's where I want to leave. You. How will you escape?

So believers we need to arm ourselves with this thought. This encouragement. The Lord does take our obedience personally. We saw that this morning.

He takes our sacrifice our giving our service as done to him. He takes our love and our obedience and our righteous life as done to him and it's pleasing and holy in his sight.

It's a fragrant offering. To him the opposite is true believers that when we sin we're showing that we're at least at that time we're thinking less of him and more of us.

[23 : 19] And so we need to arm ourselves with these thoughts. With Joseph and with Jesus. And then to the unbelievers what are you're going to do?

You're disdain the one who's coming to rescue you. What's left for you then? Well, let's pray.

Our heavenly father, we thank you for the clarity and the simplicity of your word. And we do feel that it lays us open and it exposes our hearts and exposes our motives and our thoughts.

And I'm sure all of us can say we don't like what we are seeing here. And we do confess that we've thought too little of you and too much of ourselves.

We've forgot you and remembered ourselves. We've valued our comforts and our desires and our pleasures and our will more than your will.

[24 : 26] And so we would come asking forgiveness in Jesus' name. Thank you that he never belittled you. He never thought less of you than you deserve. He never once didn't give you everything that you were due.

And so we come trusting in him. His righteousness, not ours, is our hope for heaven. But do help us to walk more and more in the fear of the Lord.

For those who are far away and asleep, I pray that this word would uncover and convict them. And even as it brings conviction of sin, I pray that it would bring a desire for life and salvation and that you would save.

In Jesus' name I pray these things. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.