

When we read through the Bible, we see that there are things that please God, and things that displease God.

There are things that the Bible says are right, and things that the Bible says are wrong.

In many different issues, God draws a line in the sand and says don't cross that or else you will be in sin.

The Bible is absolute and "black and white" in many areas, and that's why people don't like the Bible.

The reason the Bible is resisted so much is because it declares ABSOLUTE truth. It declares that certain lifestyles and actions are wrong, and people don't like to be told they are wrong.

No one likes to hear that they are a sinner and that their actions will lead them to an eternity separated from God in a place called Hell where they will burn in a lake of fire forever.

So rather than get their lives right, they try to push the Bible into obscurity.

They push back against the Bible and call any Christian who believes or proclaims its truth to be a bigot and intolerant.

Jason Collins: Gay basketball player.

Jason Collins wrote an article in Sports Illustrated letting people know about his sexual orientation. People are praising Collins, calling him a hero and commending his courage. In his article, Collins wrote:

"I take the teachings of Jesus seriously, particularly the ones that touch on tolerance and understanding."

A sportscaster, Chris Broussard, disagreed with the idea that a person can be openly homosexual, which the Bible plainly speaks against, and still claim to be a Christian. During a sportscast on ESPN, Broussard said:

"...if you're openly living in unrepentant sin, whatever it may be, not just homosexuality — adultery, fornication, pre-marital sex between heterosexuals — whatever it may be, I believe that's walking in open rebellion to God and Jesus Christ, so I would not characterize that person as a Christian."

This sent the media into an uproar. Why? Because people think it is intolerant to declare an ABSOLUTE message.

God puts these lines in place (like caution tape), and He tells us, "DO NOT CROSS"

When I sin (fail) I am not hurting God I am hurting myself. Yes, my sin grieves God's Spirit, but that is because He loves us. It's like a parent who is upset because their child fell off their bike and scraped up their knees. The parent is not upset at the child, they're upset because the one they love is in pain. It hurts them, but only because their child is hurt. And it's the same with God...

My sin primarily hurts me!

I don't detract anything from God when I sin, and I don't add anything to Him when I don't. God is God independent of my sin or lack thereof. My sin doesn't affect God, my sin affects ME!

The reason I say this is because people think God is some oppressive dictator with a complex who who feels high and mighty when people obey his commands. God is not an oppressive dictator, He is a loving father. He puts those boundaries there to benefit us, not Him.

Going beyond God's boundaries is like jumping off a building. I don't break the law of gravity, the law of gravity breaks me.

When you sin, and step over the line, you don't break God's laws, but going into that sinful territory, that will break me.

God gives us His law, because He knows the end result of sinful actions.

- Homosexual behavior causes AIDS.
- Sexual immorality causes STDs.
- Drinking causes alcoholism.
- Smoking causes lung cancer.
- Gossip destroys unity and reputations.
- Pornography destroys marriages and self-esteem.
- Worldliness creates spiritual insensitivity and hardness of heart.

He is not putting them there to oppress us, He is putting them there to protect us and keep us free.

It's like a guardrail on a highway. He sees the ditch and the destruction that will ensue if you go off the road, so He puts up His boundaries.

Jesus didn't come to make people's lives miserable.

John 10:10

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come **that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.**

Lots of people look at us and say we are burdened and that they could never obey so many commands. But in reality they are more bound than we are. Living in sin is not a life of liberty, but a life of bondage.

John 8:34

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the **servant** of sin.

Proverbs 5:22 (NLT)

22 An evil man is held **captive** by his own sins; they are **ropes** that **catch** and **hold** him.

People who live in sin think that they are free, but the child of God has more freedom in their left pinky than the sinner has in their whole body. But I have good news for a sinner tonight. Jesus said:

Matthew 11:28-30

28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Jesus is making a farming reference. Farmers would use a yoke to connect two ox together in order to pull a plow or till over a field. It was a heavy burden for the oxen to bear.

Jesus said, you don't have to be burdened with sin anymore. If you will come to me you will find that life with me is free and liberated.

A person is more free when they stay behind the line than when they cross it.

God gives us restrictions, but I am not restricted.

God gives us boundaries, but I am not bound.

That's why John said:

1 John 5:3

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments (don't cross the line): and **his commandments are not grievous.**

John had the proper perspective on God's commandments. They are there for my good!

That spirit needs to get ahold of us. His commandments are not grievous to me!

Although we know that God's boundaries are there for our good, we still find ourselves crossing them from time to time. Let's look at different categories of sin in the Bible:

A SLIP (THE BANANA PEEL)

- Leviticus 5:17-19 - And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD; **though he wist it not**, yet is he guilty ... he hath certainly **trespassed** against the LORD.
- **TRESPASS - A SLIP ACROSS THE LINE.**
- This is accidental sin. I blurted out a curse word or something hateful. I let my temper get out of hand, etc.
- Matthew 6:14-15 - For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
- Jesus was saying if you don't forgive even the smallest little slip, all your sins will be held against you.
- **TRESPASS**

A STEP (THE LINE)

- 1 John 3:4 - Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.
- **TRANSGRESSION - A STEP ACROSS THE LINE.**
- This is an intentional sin.
- Psalm 19:13 - Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.
- **TRANSGRESSION**

A SEPARATION (THE WEDGE)

- Isaiah 59:2 - But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.
- **INIQUITY - A SEPARATION. STANDING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LINE.**
- This is when you go across the line and stay there.
- It's when you hold onto a sin and refuse to let go. You might obey in every other area, but you won't give up that one thing.
- James 2:10 - For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.
- **Matthew 7:21-23**
21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. **22** Many will say

to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? **23** And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: **depart from me, ye that work iniquity.**

Trespass - Slip

Transgression - Step

Iniquity - Separation

Even if it were possible for you to never commit sin, you would still be a sinner simply because you are human.

A SHORTFALL (THE CANYON)

- Romans 3:23 - For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.
- This illustrates the concept most commonly found in the OT and NT to describe sin; it signifies "MISSING THE MARK." Even if it were possible for us not to commit sinful ACTS, we still have a sinful NATURE by birth – all are sinners!
- Sin is not just an action, it is also a condition.
- Every human being is born with it.
- It entered into the bloodline of man back in the garden of Eden.
- And no matter how good I am and how little I sin, I am still a sinner.
- All have "COME SHORT" or "FALLEN SHORT". When you "FALL SHORT" that's called a "SHORTFALL".
- **SIN - A SHORTFALL**
- Like a canyon - I'm on one side and God is on the other. The space between us is impossible to cross.
- It's like standing on the coast of the Atlantic ocean and trying to jump to Europe. You might be a bit better than me, but we are all going to fall short.
- And that's the predicament humanity is in. Nothing they can do on their own can get them across the gap.
- Our righteousness is as filthy rags. (Isaiah 64:6)
- But God made a way for us to get to Him: THE CROSS.

Romans 5:6-9

6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

Romans 6:23

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the **gift** of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Peter 1:18-19

18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

19 But with the **precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: