



# Biblical Soul Care in the Local Church

Biblical Counseling  
and the Operations  
of the Heart,  
Part 2 (Review)



Where does sin come from?



# Where does sin come from?

The world encourages us to see the wrongs we do as coming from outside of us.

# Where does sin come from?

Scripture takes us to the epicenter of all sinful thoughts and actions.

- Mark 7:1-23
- Scripture alone speaks to sin in the **heart** as the **root** producing bad **fruit**.

What is the cause of arguments, fights, quarrels, and conflicts in relationships?

What is the Bible's answer?



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James 4:1-2



# What is the Bible's answer?

James 4:1-2

More literally: “From where wars and from where fightings? Are they not from here, from your desires for pleasure that wage war inside you?”



# How does the New Testament describe what is wrong with people?

- lusts of the flesh
- deceitful lusts
- idolatrous lusts

Titus 3:3



# How does the New Testament describe what is wrong with people?

“The New Testament repeatedly focuses on the ‘lusts of the flesh’ as a **summary** of what is wrong with the human heart that underlies bad [sinful] behavior.” (David Powlison)

# How does the New Testament describe what is wrong with people?

- In **believers**: Galatians 5:16-17; Colossians 3:5ff

“... the most significant inner conflict in Christians is between what the Spirit wants and what we want.” (David Powlison)

# Biblical lists of idolatrous lusts:

- Galatians 5:19-21
- 2 Timothy 3:1-5

# Modern labels for idolatrous lusts:

- Man's approval, attention, health, wealth, pleasure, safety, comfort, leisure, sports, security, significance, respect, certainty, fairness, success, possessions, freedom/independence, money, ministry, education, marriage, family, traditions, self-esteem, perfectionism, workaholism, love, control, appearance, peace, etc...

# Modern labels for idolatrous lusts :

- Each are manifestations of either the world, the flesh, or the devil (1 John 2:15-17)
- Not limited to sexual desire
- Inordinate or ruling desires driving our behavior

# Overcoming deceitful lusts

**Peter** emphasized God's grace **overcoming** these deceitful lusts through a "true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence."

Peter instructs us that God "has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust (evil desires)."

2 Peter 1:3-4



# Overcoming deceitful lusts

Paul tells us to “...put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.”

Romans 13:14

In dealing with desires of the heart, biblical counselors are concerned with the **lordship** of the desire.

The **object** of any desire can be good or bad; the issue with any desire is in its **ruling status** in your heart.

Will I sin to **get** this desire? Will I sin if I **don't get** it?

# Biblical Counseling and the Operations of the Heart, Part 3



# The Battle Within

We must understand our heart's drift toward wanting and worshiping things in place of wanting and worshiping the Lord above all things:

- Galatians 5:16-17

# The Battle Within

We want to better understand this process so that we can:

- **Repent** of self-serving desires, and
- **Replace** them with godly desires to please and glorify the Lord in all things

Paul David Tripp calls this process “the stages of the **war** for your heart.”

Stage 1:

*“I must...”*

Desire becomes demand!

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Stage 2:

*“I will...”*

Demand becomes need!



“The problem with desires is the way they tend to *grow*, and the control they come to exercise over our hearts. Desires are a part of human existence, but they must be held with an open hand.” (Paul David Tripp)





*“All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes,  
but the Lord weighs the heart.”* Proverbs 16:2

Apart from God’s grace and wisdom in Scripture,  
we can be convinced that wrong is right!



Stage 3:

*“You should...”*

Perceived need produces  
expectation!



Stage 4:

*“You didn’t...”*

Expectation leads to  
disappointment!



Stage 5:

*“Because you didn’t, I will...”*

Disappointment leads to  
punishment!

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“We are hurt and angry because people who say they love us seem insensitive to our needs. We feel thwarted and our agendas are in jeopardy. So we strike back in a variety of ways to punish them for their wrongs against us.”(Paul David Tripp)



“We hold onto our beliefs, tithe, remain faithful in church attendance, and occasionally participate in ministry activity. Yet at the level of what we are really living for, we have forsaken God for something else. This is the silent cancer that weakens the church, robs individuals of their spiritual vitality, and leads to all kinds of difficulty in relationships and situations.” (Paul David Tripp, emphasis added)

All human desire must be held in submission to a greater purpose, the desires of God for his kingdom. This is the posture of open hands before the Lord.” (Paul David Tripp, emphasis added)

Just like Jesus expressing the greatest desire of His heart in Luke 22:42, "*Not My will, but Yours be done,*" we submit all that we are and all that we want to the greater aim in life of pleasing God in all things.



Adapted from: Paul David Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemers Hands*