



A Sin is a Sin...

"All sin is the same." "A sin is a sin." "There is no difference between a little lie and a big sin like murder." These types of statements make their way around Christian circles somewhat frequently. As a pastor, I get asked about the veracity of such comments. "Pastor, is it true that all sin is the same?" The answer to this is more nuanced than a simple yes or no. Let's begin with the basics of human sin, statements with which most of us will immediately agree.

First, sin is any act, thought or motive that is contrary to the will of God. At times, sin is stepping beyond what God allows. At times, sin is failing to go as far as God demands. His law restricts certain behavior. Do not steal. Do not commit adultery. His law also requires certain behavior. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and strength. God has given us His law both restricting and requiring our behavior. "Sin is lawlessness." (1 John 3:4) Sin is the ignoring of the law of God and doing what we want instead. We cannot claim ignorance to His law. He has communicated through written word, the Bible and for those without access to the written law He has placed within them a conscience to know instinctively right from wrong. "Their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them." (Romans 2:15) In which case, though imperfect in each individual's understanding of their own conscience, God's law is written on their hearts. Sin for the individual, without the written law, is the violation of that unwritten law of conscience. Sin for the individual, with a bible in hand, is the violation of the written word of God.

Second, all people are sinners. This statement focuses on the universality of human sin. Romans 3:23 is the classic verse on this theological assertion. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." 1 John 1:8-10 says, "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the

truth is not in us...If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us." All people are sinners and sinful. Every person has sinned. Each individual has sin in their life.

The third theological truth about sin is that sin falls under God's judgment. God says that we are to "be holy for I am Holy." (1 Peter 1:16) Paul, in his letter to the church at Ephesus says, "and you were dead in your trespasses and sins...among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest." This statement looks beyond the universal nature of sin to the universal condemnation of human sin.

According to Ephesians 2:1-3, not only are we all dead in our sins but we are by nature deserving of wrath. John 3:19-20 says, "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed." God is absolutely holy and perfect. Because of His holy and perfect character, God will judge sin and the sinners who commit sin.

The fourth theological truth about sin is that no amount of good deeds can compensate for human sin. We are not sufficiently good to offset our bad. We cannot work long and hard enough to pay the price for our rebellion against God. As Isaiah says, "all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment." (Isaiah 64:6) In Titus 3:5, Paul affirms that God "saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy." In summary, sin is any act, thought or word that fails to fulfill God's standard for our life. All people are sinners and are under the just judgment of God because He is holy and we have sinned against His holy character. No amount of good deeds done on our part

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can bridge the gap between our sin and His holy character.

It is easy to see how a person would conclude that, "all sin is the same." Any act of sin makes us a sinner and justly under God's wrath. Any act of sin is sufficient, apart from God's grace, to separate us from God because of His holy character. If you have a bottle of pure water and you drop one ml of contamination into the pure bottle of water, the water is now no longer pure. This is true if it is one ml or one liter of contaminant. If God is holy, any aspect of unholiness warrants His wrath, condemnation and judgment. All sin is the same in this way. All sin separates us from God. All sin, regardless of how insignificant or serious it seems to us, has the same impact on our relationship with God. A mass murderer and a public servant who habitually struggles with pride are both separated from God because of their sin.

However, there are ways in which sin is not the same according to the Bible. Though any and all sin separates us from God, for those who have rejected God's grace through His Son Jesus Christ, the consequence of their eternal experience will depend on the seriousness of their deeds in this life. Hell is not monolithic (uniform). Not everyone in hell faces the same judgment. Revelation 20:13 describes the judgment of the lost. "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds." They were judged according to their deeds means that not everyone who faced judgment faced the same judgment. The mass murderer will face a more serious eternal judgment than someone who, though rejecting Christ, still tried to live a life meeting the needs of others. Remember when Jesus came to Capernaum and they rejected Him, He said, "And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. Nevertheless I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you." (Matthew 11:23-24) In this statement Jesus says there will be different levels of judgment for the people in Sodom than for the people in Capernaum. We also see in the Old Testament that God handles sinful activity with different levels of punishment based on the severity of the crime. Murder receives one level of punishment while theft receives a different level of punishment in the criminal code of Israel's governance. The severity of judgment also seems predicated on the knowledge and leadership role of the individual. James 3:1 says, "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment." When Eli confronted his two rebellious sons about their abuse of their priestly role in the land of Israel he says, "If one man sins against another, God will mediate for him; but if a man sins against the LORD, who can intercede for him?" In this situation, Eli identifies the severity of his sons' sins as they are using the name of the Lord in order to commit sin.

We, like the woman caught in the act of adultery and the crowd that sought her death in John 8, are all sinners. But Jesus says to them and 2000 years later still speaks to us, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." In this way, all sin is the same. All sin brings the judgment and condemnation rightly due sinners. All sin is in need of forgiveness by a holy God. Thus it is true on one level that all sin is the same. For all those in the same prison, some are there for stealing, some for assault and some for murder. The reality is that they are all criminals under the condemnation of the culture. They are cut off from society because of their common status as criminal. However, even within that prison, there are levels of punishment. Those convicted of serious crimes are further cut off even from the rest of the prison population. They are even more restricted from the amount of time outside their prison cell. They would trade in a moment with the prisoner that is in for a far less offense. So it is with sin. All sin causes sinners to fall under God's condemnation. However, God's condemnation is not monolithic. He distinguishes between sinners the way a criminal justice system distinguishes between criminals. There are varying degrees of wrath and judgment. All those who die outside of the grace of God found only in Christ Jesus will be held accountable for their life according to how they have lived that life. In that way, sin is not the same.

PAW Fall



Preschool Academy of Westchester (PAW) is a quality preschool program for children aged 9 months-5 years old. Your children will enjoy their classroom activities planned around our curriculum, "Wee Learn" (published by LifeWay). At our program, your child will learn about sharing, healthy living, academics, music, American sign-language, the Bible, manners, cooperation and giving. It is a time for both you and your children to enjoy.

Schedule: We are a Monday & Wednesday preschool. Our hours are 9am - 2pm. We begin school for the 2013-2014 school year on Monday, September 9th, and go through Wednesday, May 14th.

Tuition and Fees: Tuition is \$130.00 per month. There is an annual supply fee of \$75.00 and a registration fee of \$35.00 (non-refundable). Supply and registration fees are due upon enrollment. (*Sibling discounts are available.*)

Pease call Cyndi King, at 972-641-7380, for more information.

We have lots of growing room for our 2 yrs old & under!

20Somethings



Who are we? We are... sinners in need of God's Grace, part of God's plan for the future, going to make an impact on the world for Christ; we aren't children any more, we are making the decisions that will affect the rest of our lives. We matter to God.

20Somethings Night of Praise Thanksgiving Potluck Operation Christmas Child

When:

November 22nd, 2013

What:

Night of Praise 6:00pm - 7:30pm

Thanksgiving Potluck 7:30pm - 8:30pm

Operation Christmas Child 8:30pm - 10:00pm

Where:

Common Grounds

Bring:

Signup for food through an intern: Leslie Evans, Leah Payne, Jared Scott (We will provide the turkey!)



20Something Night of Praise
November 22nd, 6:00 PM
Common Grounds



A night of Thanksgiving with Out of the Valley leading worship.

Praying Scripture

for the Twentysomething's Heart

For as I think in my heart (as I reason, reflect, speculate, and pray) so I am (and will become). Prov. 23:7a

By Janet Lynn Mitchell

Weekly Activities

Sunday:

Bible Study at
9:45 AM and 6:00 PM

Wednesday:

Discipleship 8:30 PM

Common Grounds

Monthly:

Night Of Praise

Music Ministry

We hope that you and your family will join us for fellowship and worship in our times of musical preparation this semester.

Fall Rehearsal Schedule:

Adult Choir – Wednesday nights at 6:30 in the choir room

Proclamation (Student Choir) – Wednesday nights at 5:45 in the choir room

Children's Choir – Wednesday nights at 6:00 on the second floor of the education building



Save the date!

Our annual Christmas Musical will be Saturday, December 7. More info to come!

Join our worship choir, children's choir, drama team, and technical crew as we share the Christmas story.

"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned." Isaiah 9:2 (NIV)

Getting To Know You...

Alison Fischer really needs no introduction, but this will hopefully provide you with an opportunity to get to know her a little bit better. She has been the pianist at our church for three years. We are especially thankful for the leadership that she provided in the months before Jeff joined the staff at Matthew Road.

What is your occupation?

I am a piano teacher and accompanist, sign language teacher, civics teacher, homeschool teacher, public school supporter, mommy, taxi driver, and wife.

Please tell us about your family.

I have one. Husband=1, children=3, dog=1.

How did you come to MRBC?

Heidi says by car. A friend of Curtis's (another engineer) invited us.

Why do you serve in the music ministry?

They are the only ones who will tolerate me. [She's joking!]

What are you listening to right now?

Heidi at the piano. Mostly I listen to students. A lot of listening to students. A lot. But on the rare occasion I get to listen to skilled musicians, I have been listening to Arabic music and Gregorian chants.

Youth Ministry

November 15th 7:00pm-9:30pm – TGIF @Wests 4548 Jousting Ln, Grand Prairie TX 75052

November 22nd-23rd – Fall Retreat @Mt. Lebanon – Cost \$40 *See Stephen Clardy for details

Mt. Lebanon – Fall Retreat 13'



This past month I have been pushing our students to share the Name of Jesus with neighbors, friends, classmates, teammates, and anyone else. The October Youth Bash Outreach brought close to 30-40 new students onto our campus, where we shared the Gospel with them. I'm excited to continue to push our students to evangelize and serve God by spreading the good news about Jesus Christ. One of the ways we encourage our students to invite friends is through camps, retreats, and personal evangelism. We'll be going to Mt. Lebanon and have lowered the cost to \$35 if they invite a friend! Please join me in prayer and encouragement for our students to do the Great Commission of Matthew 28:16-20!

~ Much Love in Christ, Zach

Women's Ministry



Be a Sister of Strength! Take the time to strengthen a sister! Make a phone call! Send a card! Pray! Let us walk this life together!!!

Have a prayer request? Need more information about our Women's Ministry classes or events? Need to get in touch with our Women's Ministry Coordinator? Then contact us at our email address: womensministryofmatthewroad@gmail.com



**Wednesday Night
Ladies Bible Study
6:45pm, Conference Room**



Here and Now...There and Then by Beth Moore is a lecture series on the book of Revelation. Beth presents many points of view, allowing women to decide for themselves when the interpretation varies among scholars. She teaches that God is as specific about what He does reveal as He is about what He does not reveal. Join us for this amazing time of reading through God's Word. Led by Kim Sweet.



Sat, Nov 16 and again on Sat, Dec 14 from 9:00am – 12:00, we are going to be making feminine hygiene packs to meet the most basic needs of impoverished women and girls around the world. This will allow these ladies to continue to meet the needs of their families, their work and schooling without interruption, while also avoiding serious, even life-threatening, infection.

This ministry gives women the opportunity to share the gospel through meeting one of the most basic needs that is unique to women. At this time we hope to send the feminine hygiene packs to the orphanages we support in South Sudan and Rwanda. We will also have the opportunity to send these packs on future medical mission trips.

In addition to asking for volunteers we are also asking for monetary donations. Please see Connie Hebert, or contact her at 817-713-3959 or conniehebert@sbcglobal.net for more information or to sign up for this remarkable mission outreach opportunity.

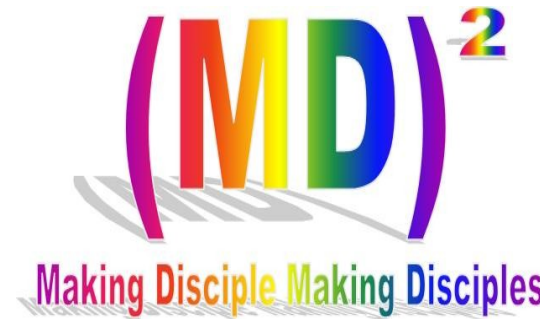
Children



Join us each Wednesday evening as we memorize God's Word, hear Bible stories, play games, and have a lot of fun!



Cubbies - 3 & 4 year olds (by September 1st)
Sparks - Kindergarten through 2nd grade
T&T - 3rd through 6th grade
Wednesdays from 6:30-8:00pm.



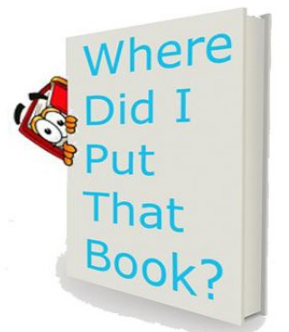
Join us each Sunday night as we play games and learn how to become "disciple-making disciples". We are studying the book of James!
Boys - Area 56
Girls - 4th Grade Room



Join us Sunday mornings, in the Education Building, at 9:45am, as we meet as a large group to hear God's Word and then break into small groups for activities and discussion.

Library Ministry

Lost a book? Found a book? Know you have a book from our library but can't lay your hands on it? Borrowed a book but forgot to check it out? Then please contact Ms. Jeannie at jeannie@matthewroad.org or call her at 972-641-2717, and let her know. Several books have gone missing from our church library, and we'd just like to know if they have found a new home.



Veterans Day Luncheon

Sunday, November 10th, 12:15pm, Fellowship Hall
To sign up, please pick up a form at the Welcome Desk.



Thanksgiving Fellowship



Saturday, November 23rd, 5:00pm, Sanctuary
We'll provide the taco salad, you bring your favorite dessert to share! We'll enjoy a Dessert Auction during the evening.
Questions? Please see Jayme Aldape.

Dessert Auction

COMING SOON:
Dessert Auction at our Thanksgiving Fellowship!
Look to announcements for further information.



Wednesday Night Dinner



Join us on Wednesday evenings, at 5:15pm, for a time of food & fellowship. Not only are these dinners a wonderful time saver for our Wednesday night leaders, their families and our guests, but all proceeds are donated to the World Hunger Fund. Reservations are needed and greatly appreciated. Please place your reservation at the Welcome Desk or contact the church office at jeannie@matthewroad.org or christy@matthewroad.org.

We will post the weekly menu in our announcement sheet found at the Welcome Desk

November 2013 Events & Activities

For more information, please see our website, www.matthewroad.org, or call the church office at 972-641-2717.

- November 1st:** MRA Family Field Trip, see Candace
November 3rd: Daylight Savings Time ends, "Fall Back" one hour
November 6th: **Quarterly Business Meeting, 6:00pm, Sanctuary** (Yes, on a Wednesday!)
November 7th: Young @ Heart Breakfast at Outlaws, 8:30am
November 8th: Youth TGIF, see Zach
November 8th - 9th: Preteen Retreat, see Brittany
November 10th: Veterans Luncheon, 12:15pm, pick up form at the Welcome Desk or see Lynn Titus
Open Budget Discussion, 4:30pm, Sanctuary
Deacon Meeting, 5:00pm, Conference Room
November 15th: Parents Night Out, 6:30pm, see Cyndi
November 16th: Woman to Woman, 9:00am, Fellowship Hall
November 17th: 20Somethings Led Sunday
November 20th: PAW Thanksgiving Fellowship, see Cyndi
November 21st: Kindergarten Thanksgiving Fellowship, see Cyndi
November 22nd: 20Somethings Night Of Worship, see Rachel
November 23rd: Thanksgiving Fellowship, 5:00pm, Sanctuary
November 24th: Lord's Supper during all three Worship Services
November 28th - 29th: Church Office closed in observance of Thanksgiving Holiday

Discipleship

Sunday Nights:

- ♦ Trek Journey - CommonGrounds, 4:30pm
- ♦ The Study of Acts - Sanctuary, 6:00pm
- ♦ Ladies Bible Study - Fellowship Hall, 6:00pm
- ♦ Adult Bible Study - Library, 6:00pm (ongoing)
- ♦ 20Somethings - 2nd Flr, Ed. Building, 6:00pm (ongoing)
- ♦ Guy Talk for youth - classroom behind coke machine in CommonGrounds Bldg., 6:00pm (ongoing)
- ♦ Girl Talk for youth - classroom to the right of the stage in CommonGrounds Bldg., 6:00pm (ongoing)
- ♦ MD² - Education Building, 6:00pm (ongoing)

Wednesday Nights:

- ♦ AWANA, 6:30pm, Ed. Building
- ♦ Collide (for youth), 6:30pm, CommonGrounds
- ♦ Adult Bible Studies, 6:30pm, Worship Center
- ♦ 20Somethings Bible Study, 8:30pm, CommonGrounds

Regular Weekly Calendar

Sundays	
Morning Worship	8:30 & 11:00am
Morning Bible Study (all ages)	9:45am
Trek/Journey (Jr. & Sr. High)	4:30pm
Evening Bible Study (all ages)	6:00pm
7:17 Service	7:17pm
Mondays	
PAW Program	9:00am
Tuesdays	
Young @ Heart Activities	9:45am
Wednesdays	
PAW Program	9:00am
Wednesday Night Dinner	5:15pm
Proclamation Choir (youth)	5:45pm
Children's Choir (K - 6th grade)	6:00pm
Collide (youth)	6:30pm
AWANA Club	6:30pm
Adult Bible Study	6:30pm
Adult Choir	6:30pm
20Somethings	8:30pm
Saturdays	
Men's Coffee Group	7:30am

Average Morning Attendance for October: 371

Average 7:17 Service Attendance for October: 177

Financials Thru 9-30-13

Budget Income	\$691,227
Budget Expense	(715,542)
Net Budget	(24,315)