

Sin: not as much fun as you think.



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Why do we sin? Because it's a chore - of course not! Actually, we do the wrong thing because it's fun, satisfying or seems too difficult to resist. Why would we bother if it weren't any of those things? Lowering the car window and letting rip at the gormless person blocking our way... how good did that feel? Revealing that choice morsel of information... everyone in the office deserves to know what happened! Mostly, our sin reveals a lot about the kind of person we really are.

Some years back a newspaper article named seven high profile males (mostly politicians) found to be adulterers. Collectively they had fathered 24 children. The article pondered the damage caused to those 24 lives and the sad ending to public careers.

Why did those men behave so destructively? It's tempting to excuse their actions by finding fault with sexless or unsatisfying marriages. But let's not forget the 'fun' part. They gave in to what the Bible calls 'the fleeting pleasures of sin' (Hebrews 11:25). And even if their marriages were rocky and difficult, was adultery the solution? Had they worked hard, with counsellors, to make their marriages work? Unlikely. But now there was a social stigma to be borne. And not just by them. Wives and children are always caught up as well. Life after sin can be an eternity of regret.

There's another more important answer to the question, 'Why do we sin?' And it's this. We haven't taught ourselves to hate what is evil. Are we feeling downcast about sin because we've been caught out?

There needs to be a better reason. We need to hate evil because it's evil. And we need to care about pleasing God. If that's our mindset then, when temptation presents, we'll feel alarmed, even nauseous at the prospect of betraying God.

There's a letter in the Bible written by the missionary, Paul of Tarsus to Christians in the city of Rome. It contains a great challenge.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

A little later on in his letter Paul writes:

Let love be genuine. Hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good.

None of us have the strength to do this perfectly. We need God's help. Let's pray to him about this.

Prayer: Dear God, give me the strength to say, 'No' to temptation so that I can honour you and protect both myself and those around me.

Bible Verse: *Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.* (Romans 12:9 ESV)