

# Seriousness of Sin

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Preacher: Lee Roberts

[ 0 : 00 ] Amen. Tonight's passage, Mark chapter 9, verses 42 through 50, finishes the larger section that!

we started last week. Remember the situation in these verses. Jesus repeated that he will be turned! He will be turned over to the Gentiles, be crucified, and be resurrected. This plan is one that all members of the Trinity created before time began, so Jesus is a willing participant in that plan. However, the news would have been jarring to his disciples. The disciples and all Jews expected a conquering Messiah rather than a crucified one. When Jesus told the disciples in Mark chapter 9, verse 31 that he will be killed, it was the second time in Mark that Jesus had told them that. However, the disciples still failed to understand. Instead, the disciples argued among themselves about who would be the greatest. Then the disciples also tried to stop a fellow believer who was casting out demons in Jesus' name. Jesus told the disciples these words in Mark chapter 9, verse 35,

If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all. Before we read tonight's verses, we need to notice something unique about them. If you use the ESV translation, you will see that the ESV skips verses 44 and 46. Other translations include those verses, but either italicize the words or put the words in brackets. The oldest and best manuscripts lack what we know as verses 44 and 46, and that is why those verses typically are bracketed or completely omitted. Many people think that scribes later inserted verses 44 and 46 to emphasize what Jesus definitely said in verse 48. If your version includes verses 44 and 46 should match what you see in verse 48 is included in the oldest and best manuscripts, so we can be confident that Jesus really said that. Now that we know why verses 44 and 46 will be missing from what I read, let's read Mark 9, 42 through 50 from the ESV. Jesus is speaking, and he's still holding the child that we met in verse 36. Jesus said, starting in verse 42,

Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea. And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter a life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter a life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched. For everyone will be salted with fire.

[ 3 : 24 ] Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another.

Here's the main idea for this passage. We must work to avoid the serious consequences of sin, both for our benefit and for the benefit of other believers. Once again, we must work to avoid the serious consequences of sin, both for our benefit and for the benefit of other believers.

The way believers treat others in the family of God is a serious thing, and God wants us to have peace with one another. The disciples neither got along with each other, nor did they get along with other believers. The wording of the main idea may have caused you to raise an eyebrow. Someone who agrees with Reformed theology just said that Jesus commands us to work at something. We know that we can do nothing to earn our salvation. That salvation is a gift from God. Numerous passages in the Bible prove that. But Jesus spoke this passage to his disciples, men who, with the exception of Judas Iscariot, already were saved. Because the warnings in this passage were spoken to believers, we see how seriously God used sin and the reality of hell.

Nothing we could do could ever earn our salvation. However, for those of us who have been saved, our sanctification requires effort on our part. We know that sanctification is simply a \$10 word for

the process of becoming more and more like Jesus.

For every true believer, the Holy Spirit within us helps our efforts to become more and more like Jesus. Mark 9, verses 42 through 50 also make many people uncomfortable today because the verses speak directly to the doctrine of hell.

[ 5 : 33 ] But this doctrine never embarrassed Jesus. He taught about hell more than all other biblical authors combined. We're going to split tonight's passage into three sections.

In each section, Jesus will teach something that he expects his followers to do. The first section covers only verse 42. And in that verse, Jesus teaches that believers must personify holiness. Personify holiness is the first thing we'll look at. Here is verse 42 again. Jesus said, Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea.

The word translated sin also can be translated as stumble. In most versions, you stumble as the wording there. The King James Version uses the phrase, Whosoever shall offend as the English wording.

At first glance, these words seem to be a warning against the mistreatment of children. But when Jesus spoke of little ones, he was referring to ordinary believers, adult Christians who are unsophisticated in their learning, but seek to be faithful and obedient to Jesus with childlike faith.

[ 7 : 00 ] Jesus warned that if people who are puffed up with knowledge or with their status in the church arrogantly cause simple Christians to stumble, they expose themselves to severe discipline from the Lord.

He showed how serious this matter was in his eyes by making a terrifying comparison. He said it would be better for such a puffed up person to be dragged to the bottom of the sea by a millstone hung around his neck than to make a believer stumble.

Ancient Israel was an agrarian society and some of the most important crops were grains and that grain was ground by a millstone to produce flour. A typical millstone was so big and so heavy that animals were used to turn it.

No human being was strong enough to do so with the notable exception of Samson who was forced to turn the millstone in the prison of the Philistines. Jesus said those who caused believers to stumble would be guilty of such a severe sin that it would be a lesser judgment to have such a heavy stone attached to the person's neck and to be thrown into the sea.

The sea was the place of terror and chaos in Jewish poetry. To say the least, this was a strong metaphor that conveyed Jesus' point with great force.

[ 8 : 24 ] Some commentators believed that Jesus was speaking in hyperbole here, but those commentators were wrong. In Jesus' day, some executions were done by tying a stone to people and then drowning them.

One preacher noted that when people were executed in such a way, the Romans typically threw those people into clear water that was shallow enough for passers-by to see the dead bodies and the stones in the water.

So this warning is very timely for the disciples because they are in danger of causing other believers to stumble. The disciples have been shrinking the circle of those whom they think follow Christ and those whom they think belong to Christ.

In fact, the disciples have already reduced the circle to 12 and they are further subdividing that circle in cutthroat competition trying to decide who is the greatest among the 12.

Jesus' warning to fight the sin of causing a fellow believer to stumble involves the most serious exposition of eternal judgment that's found anywhere in Mark. Jesus wants to show that the horrors of hell are worse than anything anyone could face on earth.

[ 9 : 42 ] That's because the temporary torment is better than eternal torment. Being chained and thrown into the sea where you're helpless to save yourself is like something from a horror movie.

But you would just sink to the bottom until you run out of air and cannot struggle any longer. Jesus says that hell is worse than that. In the verses we looked at last week, Jesus told us why causing another believer to stumble is so serious.

Look up at verse 37 of Mark chapter 9. Jesus said, Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives not me, but him who sent me.

Jesus equates how we treat believers with how we treat both him and how we treat God the Father. For proof of that, flip over to Acts chapter 9.

And check out the account of Paul's conversion. We'll read Acts chapter 9, verses 1 through 5. And in Acts chapter 9, verses 1 through 5, Paul still was known as Saul when these events happened.

[11:00] It says, But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?

And he said, who are you, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. Look closely at verses 4 and 5 of that passage again.

Here they are. It says, And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? And he said, who are you, Lord?

And he said, I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. Saul was persecuting early Christians, but Jesus said that persecuting Christians is the same thing as persecuting Jesus.

[12:17] After Saul changed his name, he showed that he had learned well about the importance of never causing other Christians to stumble. Listen to what Paul wrote in Romans 14, verse 13.

Paul wrote this in Romans 14, 13, Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.

Our church takes that verse seriously too. One of the requirements for deacons and elders is that the deacons and elders should avoid any behavior. That could be a stumbling block to weaker believers.

Given that this warning is so serious, let's consider how we might cause another believer to stumble. John MacArthur noted four possible ways.

One is by direct temptation into sin. A second is by indirect temptation into sin. A third is by setting an example that will cause others to sin.

[13:27] And a fourth is by failing to stimulate others to righteousness. The fourth one comes from Hebrews chapter 10 verses 24 and 25.

Hebrews chapter 10 verses 24 and 25 say, Richard Caldwell Jr., a pastor in Houston, had a challenging thought.

He said, how many of us sin every Sunday because we come to the worship service thinking only about what we will get out of it rather than thinking about how we can help fellow believers grow in their faith.

That's why we need to personify holiness in everything that we do. If you think what Jesus taught from verse 42 is hard to do, the second thing Jesus teaches may be even more difficult.

In Mark chapter 9 verses 43 through 48, Jesus teaches that we must pursue holiness. So, pursue holiness is your second section.

[14:49] This pursuit relates to how we view sin within ourselves. Check out verses 43 through 48 again. Jesus says, And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off.

It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell.

And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.

This point is closely related to the previous one. Christians cannot lead others into righteousness unless they are righteous themselves.

If our own heart is impure, we will lead others into sin. Therefore, Jesus called for radical, severe dealing with sin.

[16:00] The references to hell as the disastrous alternative indicate that these statements are caused to the initial repentance and faith in Jesus that accompany salvation.

They prompt people to remove anything in their lives that would be a barrier to entering into eternal life in the kingdom of God. But the present tense of the verb translated causes in these verses indicates that the struggle against temptation and sin is continual.

There is no salvation apart from a heart that seeks righteousness. But that initial commitment then becomes the believer's lifelong pattern. Jesus called for radical, severe action against anything that

hinders the pursuit of holiness, righteousness, and purity throughout the Christian life. Jesus does use hyperbole here when he talks about cutting off a hand or a foot or plucking out an eye. We know they are hyperboles because the Bible forbids bodily mutilation. However, in no way does this diminish or negate the importance of what Jesus is saying. Things we value supremely like eyes, hands, and feet should not stand in the way of eternal life. [17:20] Eyes, hands, and feet are inclusive of what we see, what we do, and where we go. As important as they are, better to lose them than to let them prevent you from entering eternal life and God's kingdom.

So these words compose the strongest call to discipleship that Jesus ever gave. He challenges everyone to either deal radically with sin or to be cast into hell. In Matthew, Jesus further describes hell as the outer darkness, the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. We need to understand some background here to appreciate how these words would have impacted Jesus' original hearers. The Old Testament declared that it was a serious sin for people to disfigure their bodies.

Unlike the Greeks who despised all things physical, the Jews placed a high value on the body. In the Jewish mind, the hands, feet, and eyes were body parts that were gifts of God to be enjoyed in this life.

[18:34] They were regarded as precious possessions. Yet Jesus said it would be better to cut off one's hand than to go to hell with the hand intact. Jesus was clearly telling his hearers that bodily disfigurement is better than spending eternity in hell, and that whatever is most precious to us is worthless compared to the kingdom of God.

Simply put, the worst calamity that can befall any human being is to go to hell. Nothing should have a greater priority in our life than the eternal well-being of our soul.

Losing a hand or foot or eye is severe, but our eternal well-being is much more important. Furthermore, we also sever parts of our body to enhance our physical health for a period of only a few years, but Christ is talking about eternal benefits here.

Other New Testament passages also call for drastic action against sin in our lives. Listen to Romans 8, verse 13.

Romans 8, verse 13 says, For if you live according to the flesh, you will die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

[19:57] Here are Colossians 3, verses 5 and 6. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you, sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

On account of these, the wrath of God is coming. this passage is Titus 2, verses 12-14.

Titus 2, verses 12-14 say, Training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for a blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness, and to purify for himself a people for his own possession, who are zealous for good works.

Finally, here is 1 Peter 2, verse 11. 1 Peter 2, verse 11 says, Going back to our Mark text, we have been referencing hell often, but we have yet to mention one thing that will help us understand verse 48 better.

The original word translated as hell in verses 43, 45, and 47 is Gehenna. John MacArthur said, Gehenna appears 12 times in the New Testament, all but one of those uses by Christ.

[21:47] As the reference to unquenchable fire indicates, Gehenna always refers to the eternal fire, the lake of fire, never to the place of the dead in general, which is identified by a different word, Hades.

The name Gehenna derives from Old Testament Valley of Hinnom, located just south of Jerusalem. There, the apostate Jewish people sacrificed infants to Molech, the abominable false god of the Ammonites.

This was an appalling practice that God strictly prohibited and strongly condemned. Both the wicked kings Ahaz and Manasseh, before he repented, sacrificed their children in the valley of Hinnom.

Because of those sacrifices, the place became known as tapeth, which derives from a Hebrew word meaning drum. Evidently, drums were beaten loudly to drown out the screams of the babies being

burned alive.

As part of his reforms, the godly king Josiah destroyed that place of sacrifice. The valley of Hinnom was turned into Jerusalem's garbage dump, where a fire burned continually in the midst of the rubbish.

[ 23 : 00 ] with that horrible description in mind, listen to Mark chapter 9, verse 48 again. Jesus described hell as where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.

Simply put, this verse shows us that hell is a place of eternal punishment. We can understand the concept of an unquenchable fire.

It means a fire that does not go out, it just keeps burning. But why does Jesus talk about worms here? Well, the actual valley of Gehenna had piles of garbage that were burned, but there were also dead bodies of those who did not have families to bury them.

The worms are maggots that lived in these corpses. In the original garbage heap, when the bodies were consumed, the maggots died too. But the difference with hell is that even the maggots do not die.

There is no final decomposition to the point of total elimination. Notice that the people in hell have their own personal worms tormenting them.

[ 24 : 13 ] People who are in hell will suffer for eternity, and in that sense, that is why the worm tormenting them will never die. Jason Meyer noted that taken as a whole, verses 43 through 48, teach us three things about hell.

First, the suffering of hell is unending. Two times in these verses, Jesus adds a further description about the nature of hell. We just saw verse 48 describe hell as where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.

Second, the suffering of hell is incomparable to any earthly torment. At the heart of these verses, there are repeated comparisons between something horrible on one hand and hell on the other hand.

The first thing is always a terrible torment, but each one is portrayed as being better than hell. Third, the suffering of hell is real, not metaphorical.

Because Jesus uses metaphorical language to describe hell, many people wonder if it is a real place with real suffering. But the fact that Jesus uses a metaphor does not mean that hell is imaginary.

[ 25 : 31 ] In fact, Jesus' metaphor about bodies burning on the garbage heap demonstrates that hell involves both the spiritual and the physical. Jesus is saying that the final punishment of hell will include our bodies.

Elsewhere, he says, do not fear those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. Rather, fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Clearly, for Jesus, hell was a real physical place. But he does use metaphors to describe hell. Metaphors are used when other words fail to capture the full weight of something.

When the reality is so full that one or two ways of talking about it are insufficient. Multiple images are needed to get the full picture. Saying that scripture uses metaphors for hell never compromises the reality of hell.

The metaphors for hell declare that the reality is fuller and far worse than anyone can put into plain words. R.C. Sproul said the same thing in a slightly different way.

[ 26 : 41 ] Sproul said, people often ask me whether I believe hell is an actual lake of fire as it is described in the book of Revelation. I usually tell them that I doubt it and I can always sense their relief.

However, I think their relief is premature. The Bible uses a number of ghastly images for eternal punishment of which the lake of fire is only one.

However, in most cases when we use symbolic or figurative language, the reality that we are describing is more intense than the symbol. And that is the case with the symbolic language that the Bible employs for hell.

He said, frankly, I would be unsurprised if a sinner in hell would do anything possible to trade his circumstances for a lake of fire. He went on to add, others ask me, is hell simply the absence of God?

Admittedly, it's a dreadful thing to be totally separated from God. On the other hand, there is nothing the sinner in hell would prefer more than separation from God.

[ 27 : 52 ] The condemned sinner hates God and wants nothing to do with him. What makes hell so terrible for the condemned is that God is there. He is there in his wrath.

It's a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. That last sentence is a reference to Hebrews chapter 10, verse 31. Hebrews chapter 10, verse 31 says, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

If you're still with me after those two heavy sections, we have one more section to cover. So far, Jesus has taught us to personify holiness and to pursue holiness.

In the final two verses of tonight's passage, Jesus teaches us to prioritize holiness. Prioritize holiness is what we'll look at next.

We must prioritize holiness above worldly status. Listen to Mark chapter 9, verses 49 and 50 again. Jesus said, for everyone will be salted with fire.

[ 29 : 06 ] Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another.

initially, you can see how verse 50 bookends Mark chapter 9, verses 33 and 34, the first verses that we covered last week.

Those verses were where we learned that the disciples had been arguing about which one of them would be the greatest. We could somewhat accurately paraphrase verses 49 and 50 as avoid arguing with one another, be at peace with one another instead.

But the verses go deeper than that. The word for at the beginning of verse 49 shows that Mark intended his readers to apply the preceding verses to their own lives.

Picking up on the word fire in verse 48, Jesus affirms in verse 49 that everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is a preservative.

[ 30 : 11 ] Everyone will be salted with fire, and what they are salted with and how they are salted will depend upon their relationship to Christ.

For unbelievers, they will be salted with the perpetual fires of final judgment in hell. And for the believer, the believer will be salted with the preserving and refining fires of trials and suffering in this life that mark the road to true greatness.

forgiveness. Ezra chapter 6 verse 9 and Ezekiel chapter 43 verses 23 and 24 connect both salt and fire with the Old Testament sacrifices.

As we mentioned, salt is a preservative, and it was added to the sacrifices when they were burned as a symbol of God's enduring covenant. Specifically, the grain offering seems to be referenced here.

Leviticus chapter 2 verse 13 specifies the requirements that God gave the Israelites for that grain offering. Here is Leviticus chapter 2 verse 13.

[ 31 : 17 ] The grain offering was one of the five Old Testament offerings.

The others were the burnt offering, the peace offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering. The grain offering was an offering of consecration symbolizing total devotion to the Lord.

Just as salt symbolized God's enduring faithfulness, all believers should make a long-term, enduring, permanent sacrifice of their lives to God. Warren Wiersbe said, Jesus used the concept of living sacrifices to illustrate his point.

The sacrifice ends up on the altar and is consumed by fire. Would you rather endure the fires of hell as a lost sinner or the purifying fires of God as a sacrifice for his glory?

Remember, Satan promises you glory now, but the pain comes later. Jesus calls us to suffering now, and then we will enjoy the glory later.

[ 32 : 34 ] For believers, Mark chapter 9 verse 49 echoes what Paul taught in Romans chapter 12 verse 1. Romans chapter 12 verse 1 says, I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

So you might be wondering, how does the fire of verse 49 relate to the fire of verses 42 through 48? Those who have not been salted with fire, in verse 49, are impure, and thus they are in danger of the unquenchable fire that's described in verses 42 through 48.

There's a holiness or saltiness without which no one will see the Lord. Let's dig deeper into Mark chapter 9 verse 50.

Jesus said in Mark chapter 9 verse 50, Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again?

Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another. Salt speaks of purity and preservation. The disciples were God's salt, but they were in danger of losing their flavor and becoming worthless.

[ 33 : 59 ] Our salt today is purified and does not lose its taste, but the salt of that day contained impurities and could lose its flavor. So the question that Jesus is asking there is once you have lost that precious Christian character, how will you restore that character again?

Jesus' command to have salt in yourselves is a call to a radical obedience to a holy life that's preserved by righteousness. He then gave the disciples a direct practical application, commanding them to be at peace with one another.

And this command was a fitting challenge to those proud, self-serving, hyper-competitive men who were constantly bickering over which one of them was the greatest.

Instead of rebuking others, the disciples should have been examining their own hearts. It's easy for us to lose our saltiness and become useless to God.

Christians will experience fires of trial and persecution, and they need to stand together no matter who is the greatest among them. Commitment and character are the essentials, and if we are to glorify Him and have peace with one another, we need to show that commitment and character.

[ 35 : 21 ] Sinclair Ferguson also helped clarify the intent of Jesus' words. He said, Unless we maintain the purity of our own lives by plucking out the eye, etc., and are purified by the flames of testing and remain faithful to Christ, our lives will have no preserving influence on this corrupt world.

Remember the main idea. We must work to avoid sin both for our benefit and for the benefit of other believers. As we've gone through this passage, we've spent much time talking about the doctrine of hell.

That's purposeful for two reasons. One, that is what tonight's passage covers. And two, when we understand that hell is a real terrible place, we can appreciate even more that God provided a way to save undeserving sinners from that hell.

Jason Myers said, We must not lose the terrors of hell or we will lose the glory of the gospel. People tone down the wrath of God because they want to save the idea of the love of God, but they actually destroy both because they miss the gospel.

The wrath of God is an essential dark backdrop against which we can see the bright, shining beams of the love of God in the gospel of Christ. When we appreciate the heat of God's anger against sin, we fully feel the gratitude we should feel for His love in sending Jesus.

[ 36 : 54 ] Think about how jewelers show off the beauty of a diamond. They put that diamond against black felt so that the diamond's beauty is highlighted even more.

Everyone has sinned against God and deserves the eternal torment in hell that we have discussed tonight. However, God provided a way for doomed sinners to be reconciled to Him. Jesus came to earth and lived a perfectly sinless life that we could never live.

Then He willingly made Himself a sacrifice to pay the price for the sins of everyone who puts their faith in Jesus alone for salvation. When we think of Jesus' perfectly sinless life against the dark backdrop of sin that deserves eternal torment, Jesus' beauty shines brilliantly brighter than any jeweler's diamond could ever shine.

God is perfectly holy and He will obtain payment for the sins that all humans have done against Him. For those who repent and trust in Jesus' work on the cross for their salvation, Jesus has already made that final payment for us.

For those who refuse to repent of their sins, that payment will come as eternal torment in hell. Here's another quote from R.C. Sproul.

[ 38 : 13 ] He said, Have you ever asked yourself where you will be 100 years from now? He said, You will be somewhere and you will be conscious. You will either be among the damned or in the state where joy never ends and happiness is never dampened, where your eyes will behold the beautiful vision of the loveliness of Christ forever.

If it takes the loss of a hand, a foot, or an eye to make sure you are there, the trade is worth it many times over. For those of you who already believe, Romans chapter 5 verses 6 through 11 remind us, For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

For one will scarcely die for a righteous person, though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die. But God chose his love for us that in while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have now received reconciliation. Believers can be certain that that promise applies to them because of Romans chapter 10 verses 9 through 13.

[ 39 : 50 ] Romans chapter 10 verses 9 through 13 say, Because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

for with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the scripture says, Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Let's pray. Father, this passage of scripture is a difficult passage of scripture. It's not fun to read or study, but it does give us an idea of how seriously you take sin.

It also gives us an idea of how great a sacrifice that you and Jesus made on our behalf when he came to earth to pay the price for all believers' sins.

[ 41 : 04 ] Help this passage make us more and more willing to share your gospel with others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Thank you.