

Romans 6:1-5 (NLT)

Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? Of course not! Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was.

Intro: The hits on WebMD's symptom tracker site has gone up 4000% this year¹ as people self-diagnose.

Which is funny: people w/no med-bg SD on internet. *It's funny because we can relate!*

How many of you have searched WebMD to figure out why you have a headache. You're not alone!

Here are three of my favs...²

- A mom took her kids to the doctor to get "weird bumps all over the back of [their] tongues" examined. The diagnosis? The kid had tastebuds – as humans do.
- While working in the NICU, a worker encountered a patient who called 911 "because her stomach hurt a lot and she thought she was dying." The emergency room confirmed that she was, in fact, pregnant and in labor, despite the woman's insistence that she just had a bad case of gas.
- One employee had a patient book an emergency mole inspection because it "had shown up overnight" and the patient believed it to be cancer. Just a few seconds into the exam, employee wiped the "mole" right off the patient. "It was chocolate melted onto her skin."

It's funny because it's absurd. You're laughing because you do it! It's ok.

This is human nature.

We focus on symptoms

Symptom: a sign that something is wrong.

E.g. *bumps, stomach ache, mole...* politics, disease, violence, brokenness, heartache, etc. *There to tell you something is wrong.* Sometimes looking at symptoms is unhelpful when you don't know what to look for.

We need a diagnosis

No one told me you weren't supposed to surf after a rainstorm.

Doctor: you need eye drops. Optometrist: Your cornea is scratched, infected, and you need antibiotics now!

Some of us have been WebMDing our life: I just need money, I just need friends, I just need a career, etc.

And we're wondering why nothing satisfies the chasm of hunger in us. Like above, we can't self-diagnose.

The Bible offers a deeply comprehensive diagnosis of the human condition

Well then, should we keep on sinning...? (Romans 6:1)

- Chata (archery and slinging)³ **API!**

Judges 20:16 (ESV)

Among all these were 700 chosen men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair and not miss (chata) → Chata: **To miss the mark**

¹ Google Trends. <https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?geo=US&q=%2Fm%2F063x10m>

² Heather Finn. *9 of the Most Ridiculous Self-Diagnoses Doctors Have Ever Heard*. GoodHousekeeping. <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/health/a39460/ridiculous-self-diagnosis/>

³ Stories of slinging from Malcom Gladwell. *David and Goliath*. 9 April, 2020. Chris Lazo for Reality Santa Barbara

What's the mark?⁴

Image of God → love God + love others

10 Commandments

What's so bad about sin?

1. Sin destroys our relationship with God

- a. A failure to be truly and fully human (to reflect God and be near God)
- b. A separation between us and God

Isaiah 59:1-2a, NLT

Listen! The Lord's arm is not too weak to save you, nor is his ear too deaf to hear you call. **It's your sins that have cut you off from God.**

2. Sin destroys our relationship with each other

For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. (Matthew 15:19, NIV)

Like a virus—sin spreads and it harms.

This is why we can't control our anger. This is why our relationships fall apart. This is why we hurt the people we love. This is why we are driven by self-interest. This is why we are angry at people for hoarding eggs at the grocery store, but do not hesitate to buy two cartons of eggs when presented with the opportunity.

The sin in us interacts with the sin in others.

Examples...

- Rise in domestic violence (Why? People lash out in violence with the people they love)
- Rise in hate crimes (need someone to blame)
- Politically divisive (both sides trying to cover their own rear-end)

3. Sin is *inside* of us

Something the Bible often depicts as a *monster*.

Genesis 4:7 (NIV)

If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin (*chata*) is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.

CoronaV: the shock of finding out that people could be asymptomatic and still transfer it. It was inside them!

PAUL: It is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. (Romans 7:17)

Sin is **INSIDE** of us! So that Paul could say that we are "captive to sin" (Romans 7:23) to such a degree that we "do not do what [we] want, but [we] do the very thing [we] hate" (Romans 7:15).

Symptoms have to be dealt with too.

But to deal *only* with the symptoms is like a bandaid on a bullet hole wound of sin.

WE NEED TO GO TO THE CAUSE OF THE SYMPTOMS.

Summary: sin is a disease produced by our own rebellion to God, invading our lives like a monster, and subjecting us to slavery, perpetually thinking, acting, and behaving in ways that make us less human every day.

Your soul is scratched, infected, and you need a powerful antibiotic right now!

⁴ This whole section came from The Bible Project. *Word Study: Khata - "Sin"* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aNOZ7ocLD74>
April, 2020. Chris Lazo for Reality Santa Barbara

Why Easter is Good News

It's an historical account of a Great Physician offering a powerful antibiotic.

The healing salve of the gospel: his death and resurrection.

We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him. **When he died, he died once to break the power of sin.** But now that he lives, he lives for the glory of God. (Romans 6:9-10)

What exactly happened when Christ died?

- *He "killed" sin in his flesh — Romans 8:3* **When my kid had a fever (5yrs), I wish I could've taken it in their place.**
 - He destroyed the power of sin. Jesus IS the antidote.

What exactly happened when Christ rose?

- *He destroyed the power of death — Romans 6:9*

That's great for Him, you say. What about me?

Way forward

Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was. (Romans 6:5)

To be united with him means to identify with him. Not just as a buddy or admirer, but as a follower.

That's why Paul uses *baptism* language.

when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death (Romans 6:3)

Now...we can't baptize at the moment. But many of you will get the opportunity soon.

What's important to know now is what baptism *means*.

It's outwardly declaring that you want to be united with Christ by faith.

Putting your faith in Christ means...

1. You identify with Christ's death.

This is HUGE for some of you because you thought being a Christian meant church attendance, or praying a magical prayer, or getting your life back together.

You were focusing on the symptoms! But that ain't good news, that's good advice. Jesus didn't die and rise to give you good advice, but good NEWS. The good news is that you can be FREE from the power of sin!

But notice Easter doesn't end with death...but life.

And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. (Romans 6:8)

2. You identify with Christ's life

A wonderful thing happens when we make this decision to *die* to ourselves with Him.

He *raises* us to life by the Spirit. **The good news is that you can be FREE from the power of death!**

And freed into the life-giving power of God.

Riff: some of you need life right now! You're dead/tired/demoralized.

Romans 8:11 (NLT)

The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

He loves you! Sent his Son to die for you, rise, and exalted, Making all things new. Making you new.

Texting: follow up, Bible, resources.