

Lesson 4: Sin, Death, Beatitudes & Reconciliation

Online: <https://bit.ly/3trbuEa>

I. Prayer

- a. Thoughtfulness & presence in worship
 - i. Why hands clasped ?
 - ii. Sign of the Cross
- b. Our Father
 - i. Think what it means

II. Life Scenarios:

- Scenario 1: Next car ahead at left-hand turn signal misses the green because the driver's phone commanded his attention ("slave to sin"). He jumps through the yellow, leaving a line of cars behind. The lady in the car behind honks and throws "the bird" his way.
- Scenario 2: Busy parking lot on a Saturday morning. Everyone needs to be there but wants to be somewhere else. No carts are left (plenty thrown around the parking lot). Autos honk at one another. Someone honks at you.

III. Week 3 Review & Extend

- Why did Jesus die for us?
 - Pay for our sins (to pay our debt to God, which we cannot pay ourselves)
 - The "God-man" (had to be a man to have the debt & die; had to be God to redeem us)
 - The Lamb of God (the only perfect sacrifice)

- What is sin?

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Separation from God• Adam & Eve and Cain & Abel• Shame, blame & denial (the leaf)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concupiscence ("inclination to sin" – see CCC 1264)• Pride• Idolatry (putting anything above God)
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- "Slavery to sin" ([CCC 1739](#))
 - By refusing God's plan of love, [man who freely sinned] deceived himself and became a slave to sin. ([CCC 1739](#))
- To Consider: what in today's world puts man over God?

Jesus advises:

"If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than to have your whole body thrown into Gehenna.

"And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than to have your whole body go into Gehenna." ([Mt 5:29-30](#))

- = Avoiding the "occasion of sin" (its place, opportunity, temptation)

- ***"Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."*** ([Mk 14:38](#))

- **Justification**
 - “reconciles man with God” (= makes us right with God); from [CCC 1987-1991](#):
 - The grace of the Holy Spirit has the power to justify us, that is, to cleanse us from our sins and to communicate to us “the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ” and through Baptism.
 - Justification detaches man from sin which contradicts the love of God, and purifies his heart of sin ... It reconciles man with God. It frees from the enslavement to sin, and it heals.
 - With justification, faith, hope, and charity are poured into our hearts, and obedience to the divine will is granted us.

- **Grace**
 - Our justification comes from the grace of God. Grace is favor, the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life. ([CCC 1996](#))

- **“Circle of Grace”**
 - *Imago Dei* (made in the image of God)
 - The divine image is present in every man. It shines forth in the communion of persons, in the likeness of the unity of the divine persons among themselves ([CCC 1702](#))
 - Being in the image of God the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone... called by grace to a covenant with [the] Creator ([CCC 357-358](#))
 - **detachment from God = a *distorted* image of him**
 - Self-respect, mutual respect = love for God
 - *It’s all about meeeee!* (Not)
 - Technology, day-to-day situations, choices, interactions, etc.
 - Modesty
 - Mary’s example:
 - *And coming to her, [the Archangel Gabriel] said, “Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.” But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.”* ([Lk 1:28-30](#))
 - *Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.”* ([Lk 1:38](#))
 - Modesty is about you and about others
 - maintaining your own dignity, your own “circle of grace”
 - not violating the dignity and “circle of grace” of others

Jesus clarifies:

“Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. Woe to the world because of things that cause sin! Such things must come, but woe to the one through whom they come!” ([Mt 18:6-7](#))

IV. Sin

*"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida!
For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Tyre and Sidon,
they would long ago have repented sitting in sackcloth and ashes.
But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you.
And as for you, Capernaum, 'Will you be exalted to heaven? You will go down to the netherworld.'
Whoever listens to you [the Apostles] listens to me. Whoever rejects you rejects me.
And whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me." ([Lk 10:13-16](#))*

- From [Romans 5:12-21](#):

Grace and Life through Christ

*.... For just as through the disobedience of one person [Adam] the many were made sinners, so through the obedience of one [Christ] the many will be made righteous ([Rom 5:19](#))
... so that as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through justification for eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. ([Rom 5:21](#))*

"Dying in sin"/ "slave to sin":

Freedom from Sin; Life in God

If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him ... Consequently, you too must think of yourselves as [being] dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus. Therefore, sin must not reign over your mortal bodies so that you obey their desires. ([Rom 6:8-12](#))

V. Death

On Death from the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

THE PARTICULAR JUDGMENT ([CCC 1021-1022](#)):

- Death puts an end to human life as the time open to either accepting or rejecting the divine grace manifested in Christ.
- Each man receives his eternal retribution in his immortal soul at the very moment of his death, in a particular judgment that refers his life to Christ: either entrance into the blessedness of heaven-through a purification or immediately, -- or immediate and everlasting damnation.
- At the evening of life, we shall be judged on our love.

HEAVEN

- Those who die in God's grace and friendship and are perfectly purified live for ever with Christ. They are like God for ever, for they "see him as he is," face to face. ([CCC 1023](#))
- This perfect life with the Most Holy Trinity - this communion of life and love with the Trinity, with the Virgin Mary, the angels and all the blessed - is called "heaven." Heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme, definitive happiness. ([CCC 1024](#))

HELL

- We cannot be united with God unless we freely choose to love him. But we cannot love God if we sin gravely against him, against our neighbor or against ourselves: "He who does not love remains in death.

- “Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.” (1 Jn 3:14) Our Lord warns us that we shall be separated from him if we fail to meet the serious needs of the poor and the little ones who are his brethren.
- To die in mortal sin without repenting and accepting God's merciful love means remaining separated from him for ever by our own free choice. This state of definitive self-exclusion from communion with God and the blessed is called "hell." (CCC 1033)

Jesus clarifies:

Or those eighteen people who were killed when the tower at Siloam fell on them— do you think they were more guilty than everyone else who lived in Jerusalem? By no means! But I tell you, if you do not repent, you will all perish as they did!” (Lk 13:4-5)

VI. Beatitudes

- *Beatitude* = “the quest for happiness” = being in God and not in our “disordered sin”
- *Blessed* = “made holy” but also “in a state of happiness” (joyful)

<i>Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.</i>	“poor in spirit” = humble, hungering to be filled by God’s grace (“poor” = “in need of”) Ex. <u>Peter’s reaction to the Miracle of the Fish</u> : “When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at the knees of Jesus and said, “Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man” (Lk 5:8)
<i>Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted</i>	“mourn” = to grieve from loss or absence; refers to mourning sin & the fallen world
<i>Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.</i>	“meek” = gentle, patient, forgiving, neither giving nor taking offense; obedient to God
<i>Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied</i>	“righteousness” = sinless, justified; oneness with God
<i>Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.</i>	“merciful” = forgiving and giving
<i>Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God</i>	“pure in heart” = putting God above all else
<i>Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.</i>	“peacemakers” seek reconciliation with man and God
<i>Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven</i>	“persecuted for righteousness sake” = persecuted for standing up for God, as was Jesus; every Apostle except John died a martyr (see <u>Cristo Rey monument</u> at Guadalupe)
<i>Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.</i>	
<i>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.</i>	= our reward is in Heaven (happiness is in Heaven, not this world)

- The Beatitudes are at the heart of Jesus' preaching. The Beatitudes fulfill the promises [of the chosen people since Abraham]... by ordering them no longer merely to the possession of a territory, but to the Kingdom of heaven (CCC 1717):
- by shedding light on the actions and attitudes characteristic of the Christian life, they describe the vocation of all the faithful (CCC 1716)
- “they purify our hearts in order to teach us to love God above all things” (CCC 1728)

- The Beatitudes are “a catechesis: [teaching] of ([CCC 1697](#)):
 - *the way of Christ*
 - *the only path that leads to eternal beatitude for which the human heart longs*
 - *of sin and forgiveness, of the Christian virtues of faith, hope, and charity*
- the Beatitudes don’t just tell us how to live (they do): they tell us how to GET TO HEAVEN
- Exercise:
 - Give examples of the opposite of the states of Beatitude that Jesus gives us
 - “Woe to... “

God clarifies:

“Listen to him”

Then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my chosen Son; listen to him.” ([Lk 9:35](#))
His mother said to the servers, “Do whatever he tells you.” ([Jn 2:5](#))

- Listen using the “senses of scripture”:

Literal	Allegorical	Moral	Anagogical
<i>What he says...</i>	<i>Applies to just about any situation in our lives</i>	<i>Examples of how to be (or, don’t be the opposite!)</i>	<i>These are paths to happiness on earth and salvation in the eternal life</i>

More from the Sermon on the Mount

Jesus describes God’s people as “Salt” and “Light”:

“You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot” ([Mt 5:13](#))

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden” ([Mt. 5:14](#))

Jesus clarifies the Commandments:

“You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, ‘You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment.” ([Mt 5:21-22](#))

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” ([Mt 5:27-28](#))

“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil. When someone strikes you on [your] right cheek, turn the other one to him as well.” ([Mt 5:38-39](#))

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust.” ([Mt 43-48](#))

Doing as he says

- Real-life scenarios
 - How do you react?
 - How does God want you to react?

- Externalities
 - Self-awareness + awareness of others
 - It’s all about meeeee! (Not)
 - Turn signals: for you or them? (or both?)
 - Other examples?

Reconciliation: *how to get back into God’s grace?*

Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation

- “It is called the **sacrament of conversion** because it makes sacramentally present Jesus' call to conversion, the first step in returning to the Father from whom one has strayed by sin.” ([CCC 1423](#))
- “It is called the **sacrament of Penance**, since it consecrates the Christian sinner's personal and ecclesial steps of conversion, penance, and satisfaction.” ([CCC 1424](#))
- It is called the **sacrament of confession**, since the disclosure or confession of sins to a priest is an essential element of this sacrament. In a profound sense it is also a "confession" - acknowledgment and praise - of the holiness of God and of his mercy toward sinful man. ([CCC 1425](#))

VII. The Seven Sacraments (“Seven Mysteries”)

Sacraments of Initiation (the Holy Spirit!)	Sacraments of Healing	Sacraments at the Service of Communion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baptism (forgiveness of sins) • Confirmation (“confirms” & extends baptism) • Eucharist (The Last Supper) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penance & Reconciliation (Confession) • Anointing of the Sick (uniting the sick or dying to Christ) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holy Orders (ordination of priests) • Matrimony (marriage)

VIII. Sacrifice

- It is right to offer sacrifice to God as a sign of adoration and gratitude, supplication and communion: "Every action done so as to cling to God in communion of holiness, and thus achieve blessedness, is a true sacrifice." ([CCC 2099](#), quotation from St. Augustine)
- At Mass we are present at Calvary, the only perfect Sacrifice (the Lamb of God)
 - We ourselves partake in that sacrifice
- A valid sacrifice must be “acceptable to God”
- Therefore, a sacrifice must be something that puts God above ourselves:
 - i.e., the sacrifice is something you could not do without but that you give up for God
 - if you sacrifice something you’d give up anyway, it is not a sacrifice fasting, avoiding anger, temptation, sin = putting God above yourself