

**SUNDAY MORNING**

**Announcements**  
Jon Barry

**Song Leader**  
Daniel Allgor

**Lord's Supper**  
Clay Morris Bill Rinehart  
Mark Davis

**Prayers**  
Joseph Barry Rodney Ellis

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**WEDNESDAY EVENING**

**Announcements**  
Randy Ellis

**Song Leader**  
Bryan Garlock

**Prayers**  
Jon Barry Mike Davis

**Invitation**  
Daniel Allgor

**ABOUT US**

**Elders**  
Jack Calvert Rodney Ellis

**Deacons**  
Jon Barry Mike Davis  
Clay Morris

**Evangelist**  
Bryan Garlock

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**SERVICE TIMES**

**Sunday**  
Bible Study .....9:30 A.M.  
Worship .....10:15 A.M.

**Monday (Zoom)**  
Bible Study .....7:00 P.M

**Wednesday**  
Bible Study .....7:00 P.M.

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*rightly, even our most painful memories can strengthen us spiritually.*

So, my dear friend, my advice to you is this: embrace your painful memories — but take them before God's throne and seek His help in thinking about these things as you should. Avoid worldly sorrow, thank God for His grace, let yourself be humbled by the memory of your sins, and let your gratitude for grace send you back into the Lord's work with a greater wisdom and strength than you had before. The devil says, "All is lost," but God says, "Much can yet be done, my child." To whom will we listen? That is the choice we must make.

**GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION**

**Hear** the word of truth ..... Romans 10:13-17

**Believe** the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24

**Repent** from all sins .... Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38

**Confess** the name of Christ ... Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

**Be Baptized** in His name ..... Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12

**Walk** in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death ..... Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10



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**Avoiding the Big Rocks of Sin**  
Mark Roberts

Thirty years ago the Exxon Valdez did the inexplicable. The huge tanker grounded on a reef, spilling 11 million gallons of crude oil into Alaska's Prince William Sound. The effect on the animals, water, and plants was catastrophic and recovery continues to this day. How could a supertanker with all that navigational technology possibly ram head-on into a well-marked reef?

his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy." Do you see the Biblical way to deal with sin? Confession and forsaking. Not some sin, not just large scandalous sins, but all sin. All sin is the same to God. The truth is, talking about the "big rocks of sin" is risky because I don't mean to imply some sins are worse than others. I'm just trying to say there are some behaviors so clearly legislated against in Scripture, so definitely marked out, looming so LARGE in the Bible with so many repeated warnings and admonitions that no Christian should ever get involved in them.

But do I see all sin as an affront to God and His holiness? Isn't it true that one of the ways to run aground on the rocks of big "monster" sins is to pretend that when we got involved in "smaller" sins, it wasn't really a big deal? Nothing much to be concerned about? Nothing I needed to confess and forsake? Isn't the mindset that says, "I can ignore the Bible on this 'small' one" the same mindset

Last week, a friend asked me if I had heard the heartbreaking news that two Christians I knew had left their spouses and run off into adultery together. How is that possible? How could strong, faithful disciples ram head-on into scandalous, obvious sin? It certainly isn't a knowledge problem. No one is saying "Oh, I didn't know what the Bible said about adultery!" They know better and we know they know better. Why then do Christians keep hitting the big rocks of sin anyway? A few possibilities...

First, we fail to take all our sins seriously. Proverbs 28:13 tells us "Whoever conceals

## FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember the health concerns of **Francine Davis, Gerald Eaton, Joey Avance, Jerry Schnelle, Bonnie Allgor, Pat Buls, Sonny & Cathy Monaghan, Beth Ellen, and Pete Rowland.**

Our dear "sister" Maxine Burnham passed from this life on Friday afternoon. Her funeral will be Wednesday at 10 am with a visitation at 9 am at the Texarkana funeral home located on Texas Blvd. Please keep the family in your prayers.

that may eventually decide, "I can ignore the Bible on this 'big' sin" too?

Secondly, we let "little" sins lead us farther and deeper. Want to see how someone commits adultery? Proverbs 7 describes a young man making a series of small mistakes that lead to a tragic, final disaster. He's in the wrong part of town

(v. 12). Prostitutes frequent a certain part of town, so what's he doing over there? He becomes physically familiar with the immoral woman (v. 13). Can't you just hear him say, "Show me in the Bible where it says I can't kiss someone"? Then he listens to her lies (v. 14). The devil may know that we won't smash ourselves against "big" sin today, but he is pleased if he can navigate us just a little closer to those rocks, one small step at a time. That's how the young couple who spent time alone

one evening got carried away and a little kissing became sexual immorality. That's how someone who had an occasional drink ... that got less occasional all the time ... became an alcoholic. We started the day far away from the rocks and then suddenly, we find ourselves nearly upon them, battling mightily to keep from being broken on them. But some Christians battling in the surging tide of sin aren't victorious. To change metaphors, when we don't see sin as a roaring lion and we get close enough to pet it, we very well may get eaten (1 Pet 5:8).

Thirdly, we aren't as strong as we thought. When something terrible happens, we all say, "How can such a strong Christian get involved in that?" We're mystified because all the outward behaviors of a good disciple were in place. Then we're stunned when they leave the Lord because we thought they were so strong. The reality is, of course, that person wasn't that strong. They just looked that way. It was all outward appearance. Perhaps that is why Jesus was so concerned with the Pharisees and their empty religion (Matt 23). I consider framing someone and having the state murder them to be a "big rock," don't you? And yet, the Pharisees had no reservations about doing that very thing to Jesus (John 11:49-50).

I get it. No one thinks, "If I miss my daily Bible reading today I'll probably become a heroin addict." However, the reality is, as we neglect core disciplines like prayer and Bible reading and genuine worship (not just being there!), the inner man gets weaker and weaker. As we renew ourselves day by day, as we consistently listen to God and allow His word to permeate us, we develop His eyes to see things in His way. We adopt the eternal perspective that exposes temptation and sin as so empty and vain, and as

something we want nothing to do with. Always remember: looking strong isn't the same as being strong. It takes daily effort to become and stay strong.

How does a giant supertanker hit the most famous and well-marked rock in Prince William Sound? The government investigation found a bunch of stuff that was wrong, broken, neglected, and inadequate—a bunch of little stuff that led to a big disaster. How does a preacher or elder or Bible class teacher or good disciple get involved in big-time sin? We ignore a bunch of little stuff ... and it leads to a big disaster. Let's take some spiritual inventory and do what it takes to be sure we're sailing closer and closer to Christlikeness and further and further away from all God-dishonoring sin.

### Painful Memories Can Help Us

Gary Henry

All of us have some painful memories. The person who says he has no regrets is either lying or has not lived long enough in this world to make any mistakes. So the question is: what are we to do with the memories that bring us pain when we they resurface in our minds?

Perhaps a clarification is in order. In this post I am not thinking about the memories of things other people have done to us. Those memories can be excruciating, but whatever we may have suffered at the hands of others, of much more concern should be the sins that we ourselves have committed. How should we think about *these* things?

I expect very few of us can ponder this subject without thinking of our brother Paul in the New Testament. Forgiven by God's grace and given

a clean slate, Paul still had to live the rest of his life with the memory of having persecuted the Lord's church while he was still an unbeliever. His attitude, however, is admirable and worthy of our imitation. "For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me" (1 Corinthians 15:9,10).

**No self-pity or worldly sorrow.** Paul's memories were painful, but his sorrow shows no sign of self-centeredness or despair.

**Gratitude for grace.** Forgiven, Paul was determined that God's grace would not be wasted on him. He would respond rightly to grace.

**Humility.** If Paul was ever tempted to be cocky, he would only need to remember the seriousness of what he had been forgiven of.

**Diligence in the Lord's work.** Paul's memories of his forgiven sins were helping him in the Lord's work rather than hindering him. Forgiveness should have the same result in our own work in the Lord.

We live in a feel-good society that prioritizes emotional happiness. In our culture, painful feelings are avoided at all costs. But such an approach to life is inconsistent with the Scriptures. Jesus was a Man of Sorrows. He did not teach that we should *avoid* painful thoughts but that we should *think rightly* about them. *When we choose to think*