

Session 8 Take-Home: Sin That Kills, Sin That Wounds

What We Found

We found the distinction in apostolic ink: "There is sin which is mortal... All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin which is not mortal" (1 Jn 5:16-17). It resolves John's own letter: every Christian stumbles ("If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves," 1:8), and, as the Church reads John whole, the one abiding in God does not commit the deadly kind (3:9). Jesus himself grades culpability along the same lines the Church's conditions name: the matter and its weight (anger, insult, "the hell of fire," Mt 5:21-22) and by knowledge (the severe beating and the light one, Lk 12:47-48). James gives sin's embryology: desire conceives, gives birth to sin, "and sin when it is full-grown brings forth death" (Jas 1:14-15).

The Church's anatomy of the deadly kind, all three conditions together: **grave matter, full knowledge, deliberate consent** (CCC 1857). Mortal sin "results in the loss of charity and the privation of sanctifying grace... If it is not redeemed by repentance and God's forgiveness, it causes exclusion from Christ's kingdom" (CCC 1861). Venial sin wounds charity but "does not deprive the sinner of sanctifying grace" (CCC 1863), and unrepented, it disposes little by little toward the deadly kind. A diagnosis is not a budget; it is the reason the patient reaches the doctor in time.

And the envelopes opened. Seven weeks of evidence answered the question we sealed in Session 1: yes, a true Christian, really justified, really a child of God, can destroy the life of grace through mortal sin. The texts said it before the Church did. But the last word of the night was Ezekiel's, from the same chapter that carried the warning: "I have no pleasure in the death of any one, says the Lord GOD; so turn, and live" (Ezek 18:32). And such **were** some of you, Paul told Corinth: "but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified" (1 Cor 6:11). Grave sin is not identity; it is history, for everyone who turns. Next session is the turning.

Voices of the Church

VOICE OF THE CHURCH · St. Augustine of Hippo

Enchiridion (c. 421)

The Church has always distinguished, St. Augustine teaches in substance, the grave crimes that sever a Christian from the altar and demand the Church's penance, from the light daily sins no just man escapes, whose daily medicine is the Our Father prayed with a forgiving heart. Two gravities, two remedies, one mercy.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH · St. Thomas Aquinas

Summa Theologiae I-II, qq. 71-89

The difference between mortal and venial sin, St. Thomas teaches in substance, is what happens to charity: mortal sin turns the soul away from God as its last end and destroys charity; venial sin stumbles over the means without abandoning the end, leaving charity alive though its fervor and act are impeded. Some things injure a living body, and some things kill it, and no doctor treats the two alike.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH · St. John Paul II

Reconciliatio et Paenitentia (1984)

Against the modern blurring of all sin into vague "sinfulness," St. John Paul II reaffirmed in substance the constant teaching: mortal sin, grave matter chosen with knowledge and consent, truly deprives the soul of sanctifying grace; and he warned equally against making mortal sin a rare, nearly impossible act. Both blurrings cost souls the truth they need.

Live It This Week

Keep your guess. Tape your opened guess inside your study Bible: evidence of a mind changed, or confirmed, by Scripture itself.

Pray Ezekiel's sentence. Each day: "You have no pleasure in the death of anyone, Lord; so I turn, and live." Present tense, and daily.

Do a gentle examen. One evening, review the three conditions honestly over your week: matter, knowledge, consent. Not to torment yourself; the way a sailor checks the hull, knowing where the shipyard is: next session.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

"For I have no pleasure in the death of any one, says the Lord GOD; so turn, and live."

Ezekiel 18:32 (RSV2CE)

Before next session: read Psalm 32, David's report of what silence did to him and what confession undid. Next session: the way back, and the tale of two apostles who fell the same night.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1855, 1857, 1861, 1862-1863

My Answer Now

You sealed a guess in Session 1 and opened it tonight. Write your answer as you hold it now, with the one text that most persuades you. Keep this page where your sealed guess used to live: some questions deserve to be answered in your own handwriting twice.

MY ANSWER NOW · opened and answered, Session 8

Can a true Christian lose their salvation? My answer now, and the text that persuades me:
