

PRESSED, BUT NOT CRUSHED

Psalm 51:1-4 (p. 889)

July 21, 2019

*Against you, you only, have I sinned . . .
so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.
Psalm 51:4*

A short theology of sin

*And God said, "Let us make man in our image"
And God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.
Genesis 1:26-31 (p. 3)*

*When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye,
and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it.
She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.
Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized that they were naked
Genesis 3:6-7 (p. 5)*

*"Cursed is the ground because of you"
Genesis 3:17 (p. 6)*

*Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man,
and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned
Romans 5:12 (p. 1753; see Romans 3:9-31, p. 1750)*

*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins
But because of his great for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ
Ephesians 2:1 (p. 1818)*

*No longer will there be any curse.
Revelation 22:3 (p. 1938)*

1) Sin is the story of good to CURSE to better!

2) Sin means I need A SAVIOR

Psalm 51 is my story

*Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion,
blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from sin.
For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, and you only, have I sinned
Psalm 51:1-4 (p. 889; see 2 Samuel 11-12 for the context)*

1) David needed GOD

2) Sin SEPARATES ME FROM GOD

3) Restoration requires REPENTANCE

Agreeing with God

1) Sin is IDOLATRY/TREASON/BREAKING FAITH against God

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him nor gave thanks to him . . .
Romans 1:21 (p. 1747)

2) Sin breaks SHALOM with God's creation

"There is no peace," says the Lord, "for the wicked."
Isaiah 48:22 (p. 1138 ; see 57:21; 59:8; Jeremiah 8)

3) Sin DECEIVES/BLINDS

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.
1 John 1:8-9 (p. 1899)

Resources for studying the Canons of Dordt

The Canons of Dordt at <https://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs>

Tim Keller's "How to Talk About Sin" article at <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/how-to-talk-sin-in-postmodern-age/>. Sharon Hodde Miller has a great summary at <https://sheworships.com/tim-keller-on-sin/>

Tim Keller's "No One Seeks God," at <https://www.monergism.com/no-one-seeks-god-%E2%80%93-romans-39-20>

Jonathan Edwards' "The Doctrine of Original Sin" at <https://fourcornerministries.com/wpcontent/uploads/2016/09/Edwards-J-06.pdf>

Spurgeon's "A Most Necessary Prayer" sermon on Psalm 51 at <https://www.spurgeongems.org/vols16-18/chs954.pdf>

The "Bachoroette" clip on youtube is here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=V67eThktnMw. Julie Roys' analysis is here: <http://julieroys.com/8-ways-to-rationalize-sin-from-the-bachelorette/>

Community Christian Reformed Church of Kitchener, Ontario, has developed a wonderful teaching resource for the Canons at <https://www.crc.on.ca/dive-into-doctrine>

John Piper's "What We Believe" introduction to the 5-Points at <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-we-believe-about-the-five-points-of-calvinism>

Justin Taylor's "Tweaking the TULIP" at <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/tweaking-the-tulip/>

J.I. Packer has an introduction to Arminianism that is sometimes too harsh at <http://whitefield.freeservers.com/packer.html>. His opening pages of *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (InterVarsity Press, 1961) is much fairer.

The source of Pastor Fakkema's opening quote is here:
<https://www.patheos.com/blogs/lovejoyfeminism?s=there+is+more+to+christianity>

"Voice of Truth" has a helpful blog series at <http://voiceoftruthblog.com/final-objections-to-original-sin-and-their-consequences>

Jim Osterhouse has a very helpful "fresh look" at the Five Points in "FAITH Unfolded" (Faith Alive, 1997).

8 Ways to Rationalize Sin From “The Bachelorette”

Julie Roys’ analysis at <http://julieroys.com/8-ways-to-rationalize-sin-from-the-bachelorette/>

The “Bachoroette” clip on youtube is at https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=V67eThktnMw.

When I was in graduate school, I participated in a Bible study with three other women in my journalism program. We were the lone Christians in a very secular environment. And having their support and encouragement was extremely important to me.

Yet my relationship with one of them ended in an instant.

I discovered that this woman was sleeping with her boyfriend. And I remember wanting to just ignore the issue. But I felt compelled to confront her sin because of Scriptures like Galatians 6:1, which says, “. . . (I)f someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently.”

I can’t remember what I said to this friend or how I said it. But I remember vividly her response. Her face turned red and angry and she accused me of judging her. She also said she thought our Bible study was a “welcoming” environment, but clearly it was only for “perfect” Christians. She then cut off our relationship and never returned to our Bible study.

That stung. A lot. And I remember wrestling with guilt, rejection, and feelings of failure afterwards.

But over the past three decades, I’ve found that anger, condemnation, and blame-shifting is a typical response when a believer confronts another believer (or even a Christian institution) about his or her sin. Yet, I’ve never seen this dynamic played out on national TV—until this week.

The interaction happened on “The Bachelorette” TV show on Monday night and involved two contestants—Luke Parker and Hannah Brown, both of whom profess to be Christians. And though I dislike this show for its voyeurism and immorality, I found the two contestants’ interaction, which I saw in the clip below, to be incredibly revealing.

In the clip, Parker confronts Brown for sleeping with other contestants. And in less than eight minutes, Brown rattles off no less than eight deceptive defenses to rationalize her sin.

Unfortunately, these rationalizations are extremely common. I know, because sadly, I’ve used them before to justify my own sin. Yet I list them here because I think recognizing and naming these deceptions is step one toward facing our sin, rather than excusing it.

1. Say another believer has no right to confront you.

When Parker first confronts Brown, she responds, *“I’m kind of mad because . . . Why do you have the right to do that because you’re not my husband?”*

Nowhere in Scripture does it say only husbands or wives, or those with an especially close relationship, have license to confront someone who’s sinning. The only qualification Scripture gives is that one must be living by the Spirit (Galatians 6:1)—in other words, not gratifying the desires of the sinful flesh.

2. Mislabel godly confrontation as sinful judgment.

Next, Brown turns to the classic, *“You’re judging me.”*

This defense is so common, I wrote an entire article about it. But in short, the argument that Christians aren’t supposed to judge is based on one verse taken out of context. In Matthew 7:1, Jesus says, “Do not judge or you too will be judged.” But He goes on to say, “For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the same measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?”

In other words, don’t apply a double-standard and judge someone for a sin you’re equally, or even more guilty, of committing. Instead, Jesus says, “first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to

remove the speck from your brother's eye." So the solution isn't to refrain from judging; it's to fix yourself so you can help fix others.

3. Turn the tables and start accusing the other person.

Brown then shifts from the defensive to the offensive, and argues, *"You know what? Sex might be a sin outside of marriage, but pride is a sin too. And I feel like this is a pride thing."* A bit later she says, *"You're holding (me) to a standard you don't even live by. Maybe because you abstain from sex—but there's a lot of things that you struggle with."*

This defense kind of throws Parker. After all, who isn't guilty of pride on at least some level? Parker backs down and says, "You're right. I didn't have the right to do that." But he does have the right. Scripture doesn't say one has to be sinless to confront someone else. One just has to be living by the Spirit and with integrity when it comes to the sin he or she is confronting.

4. Appeal to feminist ideology to rationalize your sinful decisions.

"I'm a grown woman and can make my own decisions. And I'm not strapped to a man right now."

Here Brown sounds a lot like Gloria Steinem—"a woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle." (I suppose if she were a man, she'd justify her sin as "boys will be boys.") On one level, Brown is right. She doesn't belong to Parker. However, she's missing that she belongs to God. In 1 Corinthians 6, the apostle Paul writes, "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies."

5. Paint yourself as a victim.

*"You've already broken my heart through this, like truly. And I've broken my own heart because I've allowed everything. . . . And to have you say this about me. And make me feel like, I, you would look at me any differently, and judge me, or make me feel like you would not think of me as a woman of faith like I am, and that we weren't on the same page. . . . That's a big, like *** you!"*

After a brief moment of feminist empowerment, Brown jumps to the other end of the spectrum and portrays herself as a victim. Here, she's slept with another contestant, which clearly hurt Parker. But she's the victim because Parker is calling her out on her sin.

The assumption is that Parker is hurting or victimizing Brown by speaking the truth. But he's not. He's actually doing the most loving thing. James 5:19 says, ". . . (I)f anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins."

6. Get mad at the other person and break off the relationship.

"I do not want you to be my husband. . . . My husband would never say what you've said to me."

Brown boots Parker off the show and actually gives him the finger for having the audacity to confront her immorality. Sadly, this is all-too-common too. Staying in relationship with someone who's living in sin is incredibly hard, and sometimes impossible. As John 3:20 says, "Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed."

As believers, we represent the light. And those who love their sin will hate us. When this happens, it's hard not to take it personally. But Jesus warned us in John 15 that people hated Him, and they would likewise hate us.

7. Brag about sin & become defiant.

*"You know what, I didn't just go to the fantasy suite. I **** in the windmill. And guess what? I did it a second time (winks)."*

Hannah Brown morphs in this scene from being soft and sweet to being edgy and defiant. This hardening is inevitable when we quench the Spirit and persist in sin. As Romans 1 warns, God gives those who persist in sin “over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. . . . Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.”

This is Brown’s dangerous spiritual condition by the end of the show. Self-deception and sin have consequences. She would do well to read Philippians 3 to see what happens to those who persist in their rebellion. It’s not a pretty picture: “their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and their glory is in their shame.”

8. Malign Jesus by attributing abhorrent thoughts and attitudes to him.

“Time and time again, Jesus loved and ate with ‘sinners’ who laughed. And time and time again he rebuked ‘saints’ that judged. Where do you fall Luke?”

After the program, Brown and Parker exchanged tweets in which Brown insinuates that Jesus would be pleased with sinners like her and would condemn self-righteous people like Luke. This is perhaps the most sinister thing Brown does. At this point, she’s not really maligning Parker; she’s maligning God.

Yes, Jesus associated with sinners, but He never condoned their sin. To the woman caught in adultery, He said, “Go and sin no more.” And to His followers, Jesus said, “Be perfect, therefore as your heavenly father is perfect.”

Here, I think Parker is spot-on that Brown’s tweets make a mockery of the cross:

In another comment, Parker says to Brown, “I’m weeping at (my sin) and you’re laughing at yours. All sin stings. My heart hurts for both of us.”

My heart hurts for these two young adults too. Yet I am quite sure that both of them, if they trust in the Lord, will heal from this sad chapter. But currently, Brown is headed for disaster. As Isaiah 5 describes, she is “wise in (her) own eyes and clever in (her) own sight.” She calls “evil good and good evil” and puts “darkness for light and light for darkness.” I pray she turns from her sin before the damage is too severe. And I pray we’ll learn from her example, and not fall into the same trap.