

SUMMER OF SIN

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Colossians 3:4-14

⁴When Christ, who is your life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). ⁶On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient.* ⁷These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life.* ⁸But now you must get rid of all such things—anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive* language from your mouth. ⁹Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices ¹⁰and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in

knowledge according to the image of its creator. ¹¹In that renewal* there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!

¹² As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. ¹³Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord* has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Romans 3:21-24

²¹ But now, irrespective of law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, ²²the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ* for all who believe. For there is no distinction, ²³since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; ²⁴they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

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REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase, or image stands out to you?
2. Paul, like many ancient writers, lists virtues and vices throughout his letters. Paul's vice lists don't quite match the "7 deadly sins", but they do overlap. What do you know about the 7 deadly sins from popular culture, history, or your own spiritual journey? Can you name some or all of the 7 deadly sins? (The list is at the bottom of this reflection guide)
3. Too often, the sins Christians obsess over bear very little resemblance to the vices Paul lists or the 7 deadly sins. Why do you think that may be?
4. How do you understand "sin"? Is it an action you do (or don't do), a habit that builds up over time, a force beyond any one person that influences people and communities, a genetic trait, or something else?
5. What does it mean to you that "all have sinned"? How might that still be good news?
6. Talk of sin can be filled with fear, shame, or confusion. Too often, people have focused on judging the sins of others, and not on wrestling with their own demons. What experiences have you had with religious people judging or condemning other people's sins? How do you approach the topic of "sin"?
7. The 7 deadly sins were first called "Capital Sins". These were "capital" because they were considered the *fountainheads* (source) of all other sins. The list was a way of getting at the root causes of all that could go wrong in Christian life. They were often combined with virtues—like faith, hope, love, courage, justice, temperance, and self-control—and also spiritual practices like prayer, scripture reading, almsgiving, etc. What virtues or spiritual practices help you "stay on track" in your spiritual journey?
8. The summer sermon series will unpack the 7 deadly sins (and more). Which of these sins are you most curious to understand better?

7 Deadly Sins: Pride, Gluttony, Envy, Wrath, Sloth, Lust, Greed

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