

### Who Has The Greater Sin?

I would like you to use your imagination for a moment today. Or if you don't want to use your imagination, you can use the pencil in the pew and draw a line on your bulletin.

Anyway, I would like you to draw a line in your mind or on the bulletin. On the left-hand end of the line, write the name Jesus, and at the other end of the line, write Satan or The Devil. Now I'm going to mention some names and I want you to think about where you would put these names on this scale of sin.

Saddam Hussein, Charles Manson, David Berkowitz (Son of Sam), Adolph Hitler, Osama Bin Laden, Joseph Stalin, Richard Nixon, Martha Stewart, ---these are names of some pretty well-known dictators, murderers, convicted felons, and so on. These are people who some might feel richly deserve the fate that awaits them in a boiling lake of lava and burning sulfa. Wouldn't you agree? What about people who cheat on their taxes, embezzle money, defraud insurance companies, what about people who lie about things to stay out of trouble, like making up an excuse for being late to work, or not having your assignment completed. What about kids who fake being sick so they can skip school. Where would you put them on

the scale of sin? Now what about you, where would you put your name on the scale of sin? Do you feel that you deserve the same fate that awaits these other people? Aren't they much worse than you? After all you haven't killed anyone, you haven't stolen millions of dollars or made people lose their jobs or forced them into bankruptcy. Your sins are nothing compared to these people, right? Well the Bible tells us something else. James 2: 10, <sup>10</sup> For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. (Jam 2:10 NIV) and Romans 3: 23

<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, (Rom 3:23 NIV). You see just as the gift of God is eternal life to all who believe in Jesus, the punishment from God for sin is eternal death, and sin is sin. There is no difference between the one who kills but is otherwise a great guy and the one who lies to get out of trouble and is also nice to his grandmother. We should never try to justify ourselves before God by comparing ourselves to others that we judge are worse which is exactly what the Pharisee was doing.

The fate that awaits all who do not repent of their sins will be the same no matter what the sin. And it doesn't matter what good deeds you list for yourself in prayer

I hope that you can see the need for continual repentance in your life. This coupled with daily prayer and Bible study will bring about the fruit that God is looking for in your life. The words from the prophet Isaiah ring just as true today as they did more than 3000 years ago. Isaiah 55: 7 – 9  
<sup>7</sup> Let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts. Let them turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will freely pardon. <sup>8</sup> "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. (Isa 55:7-8 NIV). If you are looking at other people and thinking they are worse than me, and they aren't suffering any penalty from God, think again. The fate that awaits them will be your fate too, unless you repent.

Let us pray. Dear Lord, our lives are so confusing sometimes. And the world around us doesn't seem to make sense. There are blatantly evil people in this world who seem to have everything. And we who are seeking to serve you and

draw closer to you are suffering. We are suffering from disease, from poverty, from abuse, persecution, from war, and depression. And yet you tell us that your ways are not our ways and your thoughts are not our thoughts. So then you do have a plan. Father help us to bear the fruit you are looking for in our lives so that when you come to harvest it, you will be pleased to see it there. Strengthen those of us who have doubt, guard our faith and give us more. If there are those among us who have not allowed your Son and your Holy Spirit into their lives, I pray that today would be that day. Let your Holy Spirit fall on them today and let Jesus enter their hearts so that they can know the joy of forgiveness and begin bearing the fruit of repentance you want to see. Work with us and help us in the name of your Son Jesus Christ, Amen.