

SICK OF EVIL • Week 1: The Infected Society

Daily Briefing • Day 5 of 5 • You First

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?

1 Corinthians 5:6

Sunday's message traced how evil spreads through a whole society. This closing Briefing turns that diagnosis back on you. Before you go fix what is broken out in the rest of the world, Scripture has you examine yourself first. You can watch or listen to the sermon at 1mso.church or on the One Missoula app.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, it's easy to see what is wrong with the rest of the world without checking myself first. I pray that You would grant me humility and I ask that You would search my heart. Show me what is in me that is offensive to You and destructive to myself and others. Give me the humility to hear Your correction, and give me the power of the Holy Spirit to help me make life-giving changes. I pray these things in the name of Jesus. Amen.

TODAY'S TEACHING

Every hiking guide in Montana knows the rule before they ever set foot on a trail with clients. Check your own gear first. A guide who never inspected his own boots, his own rope, his own compass has no business telling anyone else how to get up or down a mountain safely. Sunday's message was honest that evil spreads through families, workplaces, and whole societies. It would be easy to walk away from this series wanting to go fix everyone else, everywhere else. Today's Briefing exists to slow that down and do the critical introspection work first.

Jesus put this bluntly. He asked why you can see the speck in someone else's eye while missing the log in your own (Matthew 7:3-5). The metaphor is almost comedic on purpose. A person walking around with a piece of lumber sticking out of their own eye, confidently offering to perform delicate surgery on someone else's eyelash. Jesus was not telling His listeners to stop caring about what is wrong in other people, or to avoid necessary correction. He was telling them the sequence matters. Deal with your own log first, and then you can see clearly enough to actually help.

This week has already answered part of how that actually happens. You cannot remove your own log through sheer effort any more than you can perform your own eye surgery blindfolded. It takes His supernatural action that only comes from surrendering to Jesus as King, being indwelt by the Holy Spirit rather than left empty, and refusing to give evil a place to operate in your thoughts, your words, or your actions. But there is one more piece underneath all of that, and it is the piece this series turns to starting Sunday. The actual nature of your heart.

The prophet Ezekiel recorded God's own promise for what this requires. "I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:26). Your heart, in the biblical sense, is not just your feelings. It is your desires, your drives, your attitudes, your values, and your thoughts, the central command center of who you are and what you do. A hard heart of stone cannot want the right things no matter how hard it tries. It has to be replaced. That is where this series is headed next, and it starts the same place this Briefing does. Not with them. With you.

READ & MEDITATE

Matthew 7:3-5

"Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."

Ezekiel 36:26

"And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."

Read Matthew 7:3-5 and notice that Jesus never says the speck in your brother's eye does not matter. He says the order in which you address issues matters. Then read Ezekiel 36:26 and notice the main actor. God gives. God puts. God removes. Every action in that verse belongs to Him, not to you.

REFLECT

Reminder: honest introspection and Scripture-informed self-assessment is far more beneficial than self-delusion and wishful thinking.

Jesus was not comical by accident. A person confidently offering to remove a speck from someone else's eye while a piece of lumber sticks out of their own is meant to make you laugh, and then wince.

Where have you been quick to point out someone else's obvious problem, sin, or failure recently?

Now be honest. Is there something in your own life you have been avoiding, minimizing, or explaining away that is actually bigger than what you noticed in them?

Notice every verb in that promise. God gives. God puts. God removes. Not you.

What does Ezekiel 36:26 tell you about who is actually responsible for changing a human heart? Why do you think so many people, including Christians, still try to do this work themselves?

Fill in the blank from Ezekiel 36:26:

"And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of _____."

(Ezekiel 36:26)

**These fill-in-the-blank questions use the ESV text. Your Bible may use different words for the same idea.*

Why do you think God used the image of stone being replaced with flesh instead of just describing a stone heart slowly softening over time?

This week has traced evil from how it infects a whole society all the way down to one person deciding they know better than God. The same trail leads back the opposite direction. Change starts with you.

Looking back over this whole week, which day landed the hardest for you personally?

Before you spend more energy diagnosing what is wrong with your family, your workplace, or your culture, what is the one thing God has been trying to show you about your own desires, drives, attitudes, values, and thoughts this week? Do some honest introspective self-assessment before moving on.

MY "I WILL" STATEMENT

A concrete, written commitment in the form of an "I will" statement turns what you read and prayed into something you do. James warns against being a hearer of the Word and not a doer (James 1:22–25), so instead of closing this page and moving on, name one specific, measurable thing you'll actually do this week because of it.

Sample: *This week I will identify one specific "log" in my own life, something I have been more eager to point out in someone else than deal with in myself. I will name it honestly on paper, confess it to God, and tell one trusted person so they can help hold me accountable rather than just noticing it and moving on.*

This week, because of what God has shown me in His Word, I will:

A NOTE ON WHAT COMES NEXT

Next week the series turns from what evil does to where it actually starts. The heart. Not just what you feel, but what you want, what drives you, how you see things, what you value, and what you think about when no one is watching. Week 2 is called "It Came from Within," and this week already started clearing the ground for it. Show up ready to let God do more than manage your behavior. He wants to replace what is driving it underneath.

PRAYER

Write your prayer or pray out loud. As we've read, God's ear is not dull. Talk to Him like He is listening and wants to hear from you.

MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite 1 Corinthians 5:6 from memory:
