THE PROBLEM AND POWER OF PAIN
WEEK 4 • DAILY BRIEFING 4 • SORRY, NOT SORRY

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 32:10

Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD.

This week follows Sunday's sermon, "Self-Inflicted Suffering." You can watch or listen to the sermon at 1mso.church or on the One Missoula app.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I confess that I give too much weight to the opinions of others when I fail. Forgive me for the times I have said I was sorry just to protect my reputation and get back to what I want. Give me the courage to confess my sin and turn from it, and thank You for the mercy You promise to the humble. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

TODAY'S TEACHING

On Sunday we talked about self-inflicted suffering and why radical ownership is the way out of it. Today is about the moment you actually get caught. There are two ways to say "I'm sorry," and only one of them is authentic ownership. One kind of sorry attempts to protect your image, but the other kind surrenders to God. Earlier this week we looked at Adam blaming everyone else for his sin. Today's problem is harder to spot, because the person doing it says all the right words for the wrong reason.

You have heard both kinds of sorry. Every parent has heard the "sorry" that really means "please stop talking so I can get back to my video game." Every few weeks a celebrity or a CEO posts an apology that sounds humble, but it was written by a PR team to protect the brand. The words say "I was wrong," but the goal is "please keep liking me." People do the same thing at home and at work. They admit just enough to make the problem go away, and they never deal with the sin underneath it.

The first passage today is about Saul, the first king of Israel, who reigned roughly a thousand years before Jesus. God spoke to Saul through a prophet named Samuel and gave him a specific command about a war with an enemy nation, including what to do with everything they captured. Saul obeyed part of it, but he kept the best of the sheep and cattle (1 Samuel 15:9). On his way home, he stopped and set up a monument to himself (15:12). When Samuel the prophet arrived, Saul greeted him with, "I have performed the commandment of the LORD." Samuel answered, "What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears and the lowing of the oxen that I hear?" (15:13–14). After a lot of back-and-forth, Saul was finally forced to admit he had sinned. Pay close attention to what he says right after that.

By contrast, the second passage is about David, the man God chose to replace Saul as king. Years into his reign, David slept with the wife of one of his own soldiers. When she became pregnant, he arranged for that soldier to be killed in battle to cover it up. It was a shameful scandal. In response, God sent a prophet named Nathan to confront him, and Nathan brought the conviction that David needed (2 Samuel 12:7). By most people's measure, David's sin was worse than Saul's, but his response was completely different.

The third passage comes from Proverbs, a book of short wisdom sayings about how the world works most of the time. Proverbs 28 belongs to a collection of sayings from Solomon that scribes copied and preserved under King Hezekiah, about 250 years after Solomon died (Proverbs 25:1). Solomon was the son David later had with that same woman from the scandal (2 Samuel 12:24).

READ & MEDITATE

1 Samuel 15:24–25, 30

Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. [25]Now therefore, please pardon my sin and return with me that I may bow before the LORD." … [30]Then he said, "I have sinned; yet honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may bow before the LORD your God."

2 Samuel 12:13

David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die."

Proverbs 28:13

Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.

As you read, notice what each king says after the words "I have sinned."

REFLECT

Answer these honestly. This is between you and God, and nobody else needs to see what you write.

Saul gave Samuel a reason for his disobedience.

1. Fill in the blank from 1 Samuel 15:24: "because I feared the _____ and obeyed their voice."

Whose approval was Saul really living for?

Saul admitted his sin twice, but he did not stop there.

2. What did Saul ask Samuel for in verse 30, and why do you think it mattered so much to him?

Saul was afraid of losing the respect of the elders and the people, so even his confession was about protecting his position. He was sorry he got caught, but he was not sorry he sinned. Paul writes that "godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death" (2 Corinthians 7:10). Saul had worldly grief, and he lost the kingdom anyway (1 Samuel 15:28).

David’s confession is one short sentence.

3. Compare David’s words in 2 Samuel 12:13 with Saul’s words in 1 Samuel 15:30. What is missing from David’s confession?

What does Nathan’s answer tell you about God?

David did not ask to keep his reputation, and he did not explain himself. He called his sin what it was, a sin against God, and God forgave him on the spot. Forgiveness did not erase every consequence, and David’s family paid a heavy price for years. But David walked away forgiven.

Solomon’s proverb puts both responses side by side.

4. Fill in the blank from Proverbs 28:13: “he who confesses and _____ them will obtain mercy.”

Why is confessing a sin not enough by itself?

To forsake a sin means to leave it behind. Confession without forsaking is how the same sin keeps showing up year after year. When you own your sin and walk away from it, you can address it instead of repeating it.

When they are confronted, most people reach for a Saul response long before they reach for ownership.

5. When someone confronts you about something you did wrong, what are you usually trying to protect?

What sin have you confessed to God but never forsaken?

Saul’s apology came with a “yet” attached.

6. Who do you need to own something with this week, without a “but” or a “yet” attached?

PRAYER

Bring what you just wrote to God. Write your prayer or pray out loud.

MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite Psalm 32:10 from memory.