

All Sin  
December 7, 2014

On May 27, 2011, Anthony David Weiner sent a link to a woman who was following him on Twitter. The link was to a sexually suggestive photograph of himself. His Twitter account was hacked and the picture became public. After several days of denying he had posted the image, Weiner held a press conference at which he admitted he had "exchanged messages and photos of an explicit nature with about six women over the last three years." He apologized for his earlier denials. The next month he announced that he would resign from Congress, and did so a few days later.

When the story came out in the news people were dumbfounded that someone so prominent would do something so stupid. But then he did it again. A second scandal began two years after this, in July of 2013, several months after Weiner returned to politics, this time running for mayor of New York City. Explicit photos were allegedly sent under an alias to a 22-year-old woman with whom he had contact a few months before. He lost the election to become mayor of New York City.

Here was a man guilty of adultery and pride. Here was a man who should have been humbled by his public humiliation. But here was a man who failed to learn from a very bad mistake and repeated it.

This whole thing would be especially shocking if it wasn't so common. Very smart people in very public positions do bad things, stupid things, unethical things, even commit crimes, over and over again. People hear their stories and walk away shaking their heads in disbelief.

A recent newspaper article in the Washington Post was titled, "Allegations of Double Life Stun Friends." This was about an FBI agent who had been accused of dealing drugs.

Other stories that bother us are the business leaders who disregard public safety, just to make a little more money. The oil well at the bottom of the gulf might still be pumping oil safely if the company had followed best practices when putting it in. But they tried to save time and money and the result was an ecological and financial disaster.

We know from experience that businesses, especially large businesses often use exploitive business practices to drive smaller, rival businesses out of business. Some have recently lied on financial statements to keep their stock price from falling. Some purposely hire illegal workers to keep personnel costs low. Some dump all kinds of toxins into wells, lakes, rivers, and the ocean polluting these natural resources for the rest of us.

And so it goes. And why is it like this? Why do people keep doing bad things? Why do some politicians work for themselves instead of their constituents? Why won't congress solve our nation's problems? Why do some entertainers act like they are kings we should bow down to? Why is sex and violence growing more prevalent and more depraved in our entertainment? Why are people running stop signs more and more in my neighborhood? Why do so many people expect to drive 45 miles per hour down Waugh Chapel Road when the speed limit is 35?

The answer to all of these questions concerns something we have in common. Everyone on the planet has several significant things in common. What is true for every person on earth? What do we all have in common?

What we have in common is not money. Not everyone has money, or enough money, or too much money. What we have in common is not education, nor opportunities to get an education. What we have in common is not health or illness. What we have in common is not tooth decay. One member's brother has never had a cavity.

While every person came from an egg and sperm, not everyone was raised by both a mom and dad. Some people were raised by only one parent, some by another relative, some by foster parents or in an orphanage. Some children are even growing up on the streets with no one but other kids to raise them.

The first thing we all have in common are basic life needs.

### **1. All people need food, water, and air.**

Without these we won't live very long. Clothes and shelter are helpful, but not necessary to all places on earth. But every person needs food, water, and air to live.

Another thing that we all have in common concerns our questions about people doing bad things.

### **2. All people are sinners.**

Why are things stolen from stores? Because all customers are sinners. And some of them steal things.

Why do people get ill treatment from police? Because both they and the police are sinners. And some of each hurt the other.

Why do children get abused? Because all their caregivers are sinners. Some of these caregivers acted selfishly instead of meeting the needs of the children.

Why do religious leaders fail in their duties? Because all of them are sinners. And some go astray.

Why do government leaders fail to act for the public good? Because all of them are sinners. And some take bribes, resist cooperation, or use their power as a license to serve themselves at the taxpayers' expense.

Why do teachers not give 100% to teaching? Because all of them are sinners. Why do students not give 100% to learning? Because all of them are sinners. Why do employees not give 100% to their jobs? Because all of them are sinners. Why do Christians not give 100% of themselves to God? Because all of us are sinners.

**Romans 3:9c-18 (NIV)** We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."

"Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips."

"Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness."

"Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know."

"There is no fear of God before their eyes."

(1 Kings 8:46; Romans 3:23; Galatians 3:22; 1 John 1:8)

They have no respect for God, no humility before God, no submission to God. In short, everyone on the planet is a sinner. Everyone sins. There are no innocent people. There are no good people. Some are not as bad as others. But all of us are bad. All of us are sinners. People are not basically good. People are basically sinful, bad, even potentially, evil. This is what the Bible teaches.

**Romans 3:23 (NIV)** ... for all have sinned...

This truth is what Christianity is based on. Without this, Christianity is no different than every other religion on the planet. Every other religion on the planet starts with the idea that man is basically good and can earn his or her way into God's heaven. Christianity says that no one is good and no one can earn a way into heaven. Christianity teaches that all are sinners deserving of hell.

All people are sinners. This is what most of us say we believe. So, then, sin shouldn't surprise us. All of us prove this theology to be true everyday by sinning. We sin because we are sinners. Some of us hide our sinfulness better than others, but in our hearts, way down deep, we are all sinners. We are self-serving. We are rebellious against God's will. We dislike authority over us. We push back against rules and limits and guidelines, even ones we make up ourselves, for ourselves. That's why diets and resolutions usually fail.

We are all sinners. That is why there is bad news on TV every night.

That's why it doesn't matter which party you vote for. There were many people running for office recently who wanted to rollback government regulations of business. Most of these were Republicans. They say that businesses will be able to put more people to work with less regulation. And they may be right. What they fail to understand, or they just ignore, is that most government regulations are put on businesses in the first place because we can't trust businesses to do good. Businesses are run by sinners for sinners. And left to themselves, they tend to sin. They endanger employees, foul the environment, and bribe politicians.

Businesses do a terrible job of regulating themselves. Take doctor associations for example. The doctor associations don't regulate doctors. Too often such associations are good-ole-boy networks to protect bad doctors from losing their licenses.

We can't trust businesses to regulate themselves. This is true for every industry. We've learned we can't let the meat industry regulate itself, or the drug companies, or the oil companies. We set government regulations to restrain unfair, unethical, and unsafe business practices from hurting people.

So, the Republicans don't get it. Or they do get it and want freedom to be bad. And the Democrats aren't any better. The well-meaning ones think that if we pass enough laws or create enough programs then that will solve our nation's problems. What they fail to understand is that all those new programs will also be run and operated by sinners who sin.

Every government worker is a sinner. Everyone in congress is a sinner. The military is made up of sinners. And not all of these people have the same moral compass that we have. So they may steal, lie, ignore laws and regulations, and even torture people. America is humiliated. And our enemies gloat.

The report on hydraulic fracturing in Maryland says that it will be an acceptable risk if the drilling companies follow best practices and there are government inspectors that keep a close eye on everything. That won't happen. It never happens. But the drilling companies and politicians want to believe that it will happen. Then they will be shocked and sadly shake their heads when ground water becomes polluted.

All people are sinners and all sinners sin. That is a basic fact of life.

Why is America not getting better? Because all Americans are sinners who sin. Why are we not closer to world peace? Because all nations are made up of sinners who sin.

Most people want to believe that man is born basically good and then some go bad. But the truth is the opposite. Man is born bad and some go good. But no one is good enough. All are still sinners who sin.

So...

**If you really believe that Christianity is true, then don't be surprised at the next scandal.**

The next scandal will be perfectly logical, given that all people are sinners who sin. If we believe what we teach, there is no reason to be surprised by sinners sinning.

There are a few other things that all people on earth have in common.

### **3. All people are loved by God.**

God loves all the bad people, the really bad people, and even the worst people. We are all one of these. We are not good people. We are sinners. That is why we sin.

But God loves us. And because God loves us, He sent us the savior that we needed. Jesus died in our place to solve our sin problem. God sent Jesus to pay the penalty for our sin.

The other thing we have in common is that...

### **4. All people can be saved from sin.**

You can be saved from your sin today if you will

- admit your sin to God.
- believe that Jesus is the Savior you need.
- turn your life over to Him as Lord.

Do so today.