

Are all sins equal to God? Is all sin the same?

Some people read Matthew 5:21-28 where Jesus equates committing adultery with having lust in your heart and committing murder with having hatred in your heart and believe that Jesus taught that all sins are equal. But this is simply not true. Jesus was trying to teach that sin is still sin even if you want to do the act, without actually carrying it out. Jesus was teaching that God judges a person's thoughts as well as his actions. Jesus taught that our actions are the results of what is in our hearts (Matthew 12:34).

So although lust and adultery are both sins, that does not mean they are equal in guilt. After the Israelites committed idolatry, Moses said in Exodus 32:31, "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold." Moses said that they committed a great sin. Then obviously there has to be degrees to sin. Some sins are worse in guilt than others. In John 19:11 Jesus told Pilate, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." So clearly those who handed Jesus to Pilate had greater sin than Pilate according to Jesus. And just think about it, it is much worse to actually murder a person than it is to simply hate a person. Even though they are both sins in God's sight, they differ in the degree of guilt.

One of my favorite books, Steps to Christ, says the following, "God does not regard all sins as of equal magnitude; there are degrees of guilt in His estimation" So even though there are different degrees of guilt, all sins, whether small or big, bring guilt on the sinner. Every guilty sin will lead to death (Romans 6:23). All sin, no matter how small, or big, will lead to death.

And it is just as important to remember that there is no sin too big that God cannot forgive it. To understand what the Bible teaches about the unpardonable sin, listen to my lesson on that topic. Jesus died to pay the penalty for all sin (1 John 2:2; 2 Corinthians 5:21). Are all sins equal to God? Yes, and no. Equal in guilt? No. Equal in penalty? Yes. Equal in forgivability? Yes.