

# Sin Will...

This is my own take on a sermon I heard many years ago. I think it was by Stuart Rodger, but maybe it was Ravi Zacharias, I'm not certain. If it was by you I apologise, (but at least I remembered what you said). The sermon was based on a famous but anonymous quote, "Sin will take you further than you wanted to go, hold you longer than you wanted to stay, and cost you more than you wanted to pay."

When I met Ravi Zacharias, at a leadership conference in 1989, I was impressed by how full on and intense he was. So if it was him who preached that, it's kind of ironic - because since his death, his sin is now public knowledge, and it seems that Ravi's sin took him further than he wanted to go, held him longer than he wanted to stay, and cost him more than he wanted to pay.

Even when he preached that, back in the late 80's... he was speaking as someone in the know. Someone who was caught up in his sin, desperate to get out, but being held there.

And before you think I'm sitting in judgement on him, let me add... So am I.  
And before you get all self righteous, let me add... So are you.

We all have sins. In fact from my conversations with people over the years. I'd say we each have one particular sin that we really struggle with. Lust, pride, selfishness, greed. You know which one is yours.

And while, once we're Christians, most sins aren't difficult for us to overcome, it seems that for each of us, there is one which is. One which keeps coming back to drag us in again, one which we genuinely wish would just go away and stay away. And one which somehow we just seem to keep inviting back.

Sometimes we think we've conquered it. We think we've won.

And then something out of the blue triggers something in us, and we're ashamed to pray to God because we've done it again and we're too embarrassed to face him.

Sin is basically defined as us trying to get something ourselves, our way, instead of waiting for Yahweh to give it to us in his way.

We want attention, or love, or power, ... and we want it NOW.

Jacob schemed against his brother to get the inheritance which wasn't rightfully his.

He ended up having to run away from home and hide in a foreign country for more than 20 years. And even when he returned all those years later, he was still doing his best to deceive his own brother just to protect himself.

Saul, already king, got impatient waiting for Samuel to come to offer the sacrifice to Yahweh. Saul thought he knew better than the rules made up by Yahweh, (requiring a priest), so he did it himself. That arrogant impatience cost him his throne.

Later, Yahweh told him to totally destroy the Amalekites. Everyone, including livestock.

But again, Saul had a better idea. He kept the best animals to offer as a sacrifice to Yahweh. And he decided that the Amalekite king could live as a prisoner, when Yahweh had told him to kill ALL the Amalekites, including the king.

I'm sure he thought it must make sense. That it was just more rational to do it his way.

But Saul's arrogance and pride destroyed his kingdom.

And perhaps the most obvious and well known example. David. God's chosen king for his people.

Someone Yahweh described as "A man after his own heart".

David. At home in his palace while his soldiers went off to war without him to lead them.

Sees an attractive woman bathing on a rooftop.

She had nowhere else to go. He should have turned away and given her some privacy.

Instead he has a bit of a perve, and then asks someone who she is.

She's Uriah's wife. Darn. She's married. To one of his best soldiers.

But sin takes him further than he should have gone... he invites her over.

And then sleeps with her! No excuse. He knows who she is. He knows who her husband is. (He's even off fighting to defend David's kingdom!)

But there are consequences. The story isn't over. (As if it wasn't already bad enough).

She is pregnant... and obviously not Uriah's since he's off at the war.

So David's sin held him longer than the one night stand he thought he was having. And his sin takes him even further. He comes up with an idea... invite Uriah back home, and then he'll sleep with his wife, and he'll think the baby is his. David thinks, "I'll know. Bathsheba will know. But Uriah won't, and I'll get away with it."

But Uriah is way more honourable than David. He's not going to sleep with his wife when his fellow soldiers are still at the battle.

So sin grabs David and takes him much much further than he ever thought. And makes him pay way more than he ever dreamed.

He had Uriah killed. But in a way that no-one would think that David did it.

Except the captain, who was ordered to push Uriah to the front and then abandon him.

The captain's no fool. He knows Uriah is a dead man walking. He knows the king is killing him.

Uriah dies.

READING  
Romans 2  
2 Samuel 11  
2 Samuel 12

*That's why you're without  
defence, honourable person —  
every one who judges. Because  
when you judge others you  
condemn yourself, because you,  
the one who judges, practise  
the same things.*

David, finally, does the “right” thing. And marries the widow Bathsheba and covers up the fact that she’s already pregnant. And the child is born as the child of the king. But even this was his sin dragging him along.

So what did it cost him?  
This man after God’s own heart... except in the matter of Uriah.

Nathan the priest tells him what Yahweh says, “Therefore the sword will never depart from your house”.  
And, because of this one sequence of events. David is forbidden from building the temple for Yahweh. And instead his son Solomon has that honour.  
For eternity David knows why Solomon built the temple and not himself.  
And so do we. And David knows that we know. For eternity.

David’s sin took him way further than he wanted to go, it held him there way longer than he thought, and it cost him more than he could imagine.

And outside the Bible too. I remember reading an article, I think it was in Christianity Today’s “Leadership Journal” back in the mid 90’s. It was by a famous, (but I think anonymous), pastor who was having an incredible struggle with lust. Things like, he was so addicted to pornography, that as a reward to himself if he finished his sermon preparation early he would let himself watch some pornography!!  
One day his wife found a hard core pornography video under the seat of his car. It had all started with “soft” core pornographic magazines when he was young, and just got worse and worse over the years.  
(It held him longer than he wanted, and dragged him further than he ever imagined).

But, after being found out, and confessing, he managed to make some progress. He saw a weekly counsellor, and found help in Neil Anderson’s *The Bondage Breaker*. I’ve never read that myself, but maybe it’s something you should check out?

People with “secret sin” do everything they can to stop from being found out, because they think their life will fall apart when they are. And perhaps they’re right, perhaps their ministry *will* have to stop.

But being “found out” wasn’t a disaster for that pastor. It did impact his ministry, and his marriage, but being discovered, and his confession to his wife, was the beginning of healing. It was the beginning of learning to fight against the sin which was taking him further than he wanted to go. Which had held him longer than he wanted to stay. And which was costing him so much more than he wanted to pay.”

So of course there is an obvious question.  
Where is your sin taking you?  
How long is it going to hold you there?  
What is it going to cost you?

When are you finally going to do whatever it takes, pay whatever it costs, to let God deal with it - his way.