**Life in 6 Words – Week 2 – “OUR”**

*“Our sins separate us from God.”*

I am sure all of us experienced a “dead zone” while on a cell phone call. But what’s the worst dead zone you’ve ever been in?

Illustration: On my birthday, in July, I was on my way to Melkbosstrand and on route to the west coast road, just past Ankerlig and the Old Railway Station, in the cell phone dead zone area, I got a tyre burst.

The first thing I checked was if I had cell phone reception, which I didn’t have. And so, the next thing was to check if I have a spare wheel that can work, which I did have.

But if I didn’t have a good spare wheel, and I needed to call someone, then it didn’t matter what service provider I was with, because that was a cell phone dead zone where we were stuck. And I was cut off from any potential help that we may have needed.

But my worst dead zone was before I came to Christ…the spiritual dead zone. Sin is the ultimate dead zone because it caused us to lose connection with our Creator.

But service has been restored!

*Colossians 2:13-14, “When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.”*

Last week we began a new sermon series called “Life in 6 Words” - God. Our. Sins. Paying. Everyone. Life. These words spell out “GOSPEL.” Last week, we started with “G” - “God created us to be with him”. We were created in the image of God, for the glory of God, and designed to have a complete, uninterrupted connection with him.

But then sin changed everything. And just like a cell phone dead zone, the

connection was cut off. That brought separation. This week we are talking

about that “Our sins separate us from God”.

1. **Our sins separate us from God.**

*Genesis 3:23,24, “So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.”*

The Garden of Eden represented the personal presence of God. According to Genesis 2:8, God Himself planted this garden – His perfect of Paradise in a perfect world, and when they sinned He kicked them out of the garden – they were cut off from His presence.

Why does sin separate us from God?

* 1. **It breaks God’s commands**

*Genesis 2:16,17, “And the LORD God commanded the man, ‘You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.’”*

There was only one command. You have total freedom to enjoy everything but one tree was off limits.

Love that is true must be tested. Adam and Eve’s love for God had not been tested. Jesus’ love was tested in the wilderness three times by Satan and his love did not fail the test. Adam and Eve’s love was tested once in the garden and they failed the test. And that failure affected all of humanity.

*Romans 3:10-20:* “*As it is written: “There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.*

*Verse 15, 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.*

*Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God.*

*Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God’s sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin*.”

True love must be tested. Adam and Eve had one rule and they failed the test. We have the 10 Commandments, and we fail the test!

In Mark 12:28-31 Jesus sums up the ten commandments with “The Great Commandment”…Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and love your neighbor as you love yourself.”

And Romans shows us that, just like Adam and Eve, we fail the “love God/love others” test.

Sin Breaks God’s commands.

* 1. **It attacks God’s character.**

*Genesis 3:1-5, “Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”*

*The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”*

*“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”*

The serpent tempted Eve by questioning God’s Word and creating doubt in

her mind. Eve acted by disobeying God’s Word. Satan lied by distorting

God’s Word - declaring that they would not die and even declaring that they

would “become like God”.

That was not the whole truth. They would become like God in that they

would know the difference between good and evil, but all of mankind would suffer the consequences of being separated from God. Kicked out of the Garden – kicked out of the presence of God.

Satan directly implied that God was holding back something that they needed. And Adam and Eve believed the lie! Often we also believe Satan’s lies. And when we do, we attack God’s character. Sin is active rebellion when we tell God that our way is better than His.

Our sin is a direct assault on God’s character.

* 1. **It misses God’s mark.**

God’s mark is perfection, and we all miss it.

*“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” Romans 3:23.*

Sin is like shooting an arrow at the center of a target, the center of the bull’s eye. If we miss by one millimeter, we miss the mark. God demands complete perfection because he is completely perfect! And when we miss the mark by one millimeter, we are not perfect and that is sin.

Isaiah, standing before the presence of a holy God exclaimed, *“Woe is me! I am ruined! I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips!”*

Adam and Eve broke God’s command, attacked God’s character and missed God’s mark.

*Genesis 3:6, “When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.”*

**Sin is breaking God’s commands, violating God’s character, and missing God’s mark.**

1. **Our sin separates us from who we were created to be.**
2. **It kills us spiritually.**

*Genesis 2:16,17, “And the LORD God commanded him, “You may eat freely from every tree of the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; for in the day that you eat of it, you will surely die.”*

Because of Total Depravity we always choose what will kill us, sin! Unless God intervenes and changes the desires of our hearts!

Adam and Eve experienced an immediate spiritual death, a future physical death followed by an impending eternal death.

Illustration: If I offered you a glass of cool refreshing water on a hot summer day. But if I took a drop of poison, and dropped it in that glass of water, would you be willing to drink it? Not you would not. That one drop contaminated that whole glass of water. This is how it is with sin. One sin committed by Adam and Eve contaminated their relationship with a holy God and separated them from him. It contaminated all of humanity’s standing with God. We are ALL separated from him because of sin.

Adam and Eve sinned, and they passed their sin problem, that same sin nature down to all of us. Adam and Eve were the representatives of humanity, and we reap the benefits and consequences of their decisions. Same thing happens today with our political leaders. Whether we elected them or not, their decisions affect us.

We don’t become sinners because we sin. We sin because we have a sinful nature. And we are held responsible for our own behavior and actions because we do the sin, personally.

Sin kills us spiritually. If Jesus did not intervene, we would be completely dead in our sin. Adam and Eve died spiritually immediately as a result of sin. And in the future they would suffer a physical death.

*Genesis 5:5, “Altogether, Adam lived a total of 930 years, then he died.”*

And without God’s intervention, they would have suffered an eternal death.

*Revelation 14:10,11, “…they, too, will drink the wine of God’s fury, which*

*has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. They will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb.****11***

*And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name.”*

The final and ultimate consequence of sin is eternal death. We should take hell seriously. Sin leads to spiritual death, physical death and eternal death in hell forever.

1. **It destroys our innocence.**

*Genesis 3:7, “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked…”*

Innocence was lost. And humanity became self-aware and self-obsessed.

1. **It impacts how we view ourselves.**

*Genesis 3:7, “…so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.”*

Shame entered the world because of sin. Adam and Eve hid themselves. We hide behind social media profiles, sports, grades, hobbies, friendships, religion or anything to cover our shame.

Sin ultimately forces us to hide from our ultimate source of joy.

*Genesis 3:8-9, “Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, ‘Where are you?’”*

We were not made to be separated from our Creator. But sin took us away from Him. And so, man’s response was to cover up his own sin.

God knew all along and it broke his heart. And it breaks his heart when we sin. Why? Because our sin separates us from God and from who we were made to be.

1. **Our sins separate us from each other.**

The blame game: we can blame all of this Adam and Eve. After all, Eve blamed the serpent, and Adam blamed Eve AND God! (Genesis 3:10-13). But it doesn’t change the fact that Adam and Eve were held responsible for their own sins, and we are held responsible for our own sins as well.

It wasn’t just Adam and Eve. It was their sons. In the next chapter Cain kills Abel out of jealousy.

Families that are in trouble. Marriages that are a mess, relationships that become more centered on conflict than communication – it is all a result of how sin separates us from each other.

**But thank God for the cross!**

Two important verses in Genesis 3 that point to the cross:

*Genesis 3:15, “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”*

*Genesis 3:21, “The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.”*

Adam and Eve couldn’t cover their own sins and we can’t cover ours. God made “garments of skin” to clothe Adam and Eve, implying that an animal had to be sacrificed to cover them. Jesus, the Lamb of God, was the sacrifice for OUR sins when he died on the cross for us.

As believers, we have been saved from the penalty of sin. But we must still deal with sin here on this earth and rely on the presence of Christ to overcome the power of sin. The main problem with sin is that it broke our relationship with God. Although that relationship has been restored in Christ,

it can still affect our relationship with the Father.

*1 John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”*

John is speaking to the church. As believers, we don’t confess our sins to get saved, or to stay saved. We confess our sins to get close to God and stay close to God. It’s not a matter of trying to escape judgement. But it’s like a child approaching a loving Father, saying “I’m sorry.”

Marriage is a union that is not meant to be broken. Maria and I have been married for 23 years. But it takes a daily commitment and communion to grow in that relationship, and to love each other in the way we should. It’s not a perfect relationship but a progressing relationship.

Child of God, is the Holy Spirit dealing with you about sin in your life right now? Even now God could be revealing these things, calling you to confess and forsake the sin that interferes with your relationship with God.

**The GOSPEL:**
God created us to be in an awesome love relationship with Himself. But our sins separate us from Him, and we cannot fix what has been broken. No good deeds can remove our sins, and we cannot save ourselves.

But paying the price for sin, Jesus died and rose again. And everyone, who trusts in Him alone has eternal life. And that life starts with Jesus and it starts at the very moment you trust Him, and it lasts forever!

If that is what you want to do, will you pray this prayer right now:

*“Dear God, I know that my sins have broken my relationship with you and that nothing I could do could ever change that. But right now, I believe that Jesus died in my place and rose again from the dead. I trust in Him to forgive me for my sins. Through faith in Him, I am entering an eternal relationship with you. Thank for this free gift! Amen.”*