**How to Curb Sin and Influence People**

Based on [Acts 2:1-21](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Ac2.1-21), [Genesis 11:1-9](Genesis%2011%3A1-9)

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The Day of Pentecost

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We know that God’s Law is good when it is used lawfully. We who know that we are saved by Jesus Christ have died to sin. We want to do good works, not as people-pleasers but because God loves us, and we love God, and our reward is in heaven. We also know that our sin is and remains great, because the Law shows us our sin, and our need for a savior.

But there is also a purpose of the Law that is not eternal, not beautiful…that doesn’t save and only curses, that doesn’t build up, but tears down. It is God’s alien work of the Law, and it is the use of the law to curb and restrain sin.

Someone, I think it was President John Adams, said that the American Constitution was founded by moral people, and it cannot work without them. We have laws that punish murder and theft, etc. But for the most part, people do what is right because they know right from wrong, and there are pangs of conscience that God has hard wired into humanity, so that people feel bad…guilty…if they do what they know to be wrong. And even for evil people, that bad feeling that accompanies clear transgressions of God’s law keeps people in line. Even Judas felt bad for betraying Jesus, and he was the son of destruction.

When you empathize with the poor, the weak, those who suffer injustice, it is not because you’re a good person. It’s because God has gifted you with a conscience. But a conscience won’t save you. And, like any other organ of the body, the more it is abused the more it is damaged, and the more it is damaged, the less it can do, and when it is finally too much, it will die.

Scripture warns of a seared conscience, an irredeemably hardened heart, an unforgivable sin. I’m not sure if they are precisely the same thing, but they all warn people who still have a conscience not to take their sin lightly, but to get it taken care of by finding a remedy. And the only real remedy, that is not mere palliative care, but a real cure and fount of immortality, is the body and blood of Jesus Christ, who redeemed us from all evil, and prepares us to love our heavenly Father. This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, taught to the disciples through the Holy Spirit whose fiery tongues made them bold to preach and comprehensible to foreigners on the day of Pentecost.

After the flood, Noah’s sons had their own descendants who, after some 500 years, had made a good start at repopulating the earth. God had made a covenant with Noah, wherein he charged him with the same charge given to Adam and Eve…be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. However, Noah’s descendants said, “**Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth**.” God said, “**multiply and fill the earth**”…instead they said, “**let us gather together in our own name, and not fill the earth**.” And they built a city and a tower, pooling their minds and resources were striving to find a way to preserve their race without the help of God, or the need to submit to his laws.

And God said, “**Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they do will now be impossible for them**.” God loves humanity, he created us…but we want the milk without the cow, we want the gifts without the giver, we want to rule creation without serving the creator. In short…we sin. We sin and our hearts turn away from simple obedience to God, and instead try to use his blessings to build for ourselves walls and safeguards. We carve out our own kingdom to keep God out. And when God is out, satan is in and there is no end to the evil and sin and corruption that will happen when God is made out to be irrelevant to truth and life.

That is the spiritual problem of Babel. For the first time, man used technology in an attempt to make God unnecessary. It wasn’t the last time. But, at the abomination of Babel…God did not destroy humanity again. He did not send another flood. Instead he confused their language. He broke down communication so they could not cooperate in sin and increase their wickedness. It’s why there are checks and balances in government. It’s why there are opposition parties, to restrain the powerful from doing too much damage. It’s why fascism is the exact imprint of the Babel mentality…humanity can do anything if it works together and is not restrained by God, or compelled to His morality.

Instead of destroying them, he confused their language in order to curb their sin and reduce their capacity for coordinated evil. And just a reminder, evil is not merely suffering or starvation or murder or theft…evil is doing *anything* without fear, love and trust in God above all things. Maybe someday, our civilization will be able to cure cancer, end poverty and crime, and create a technological superstate…but if it does so without God…it has only succeeded in doing evil on a grand scale. Indeed, God could cure cancer and end poverty and crime right now…but he has been working on a greater cure, the moral and spiritual redemption and return of his people to his kingdom.

At the time of Babel, humanity did not have the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The dividing of tongues was God’s first step in carving out a people for himself from the loins of Abraham, through whom he would send his own Son into the world, to give his own life as a ransom for many. And his Son came with a gospel of peace and redemption, binding up the broken-hearted, healing the lame and the sick, and releasing the captives from the bondage of sin.

Christ has come, bringing a Gospel of peace left in the charge of his church on earth, built upon the apostles and prophets…Christ himself being the cornerstone. You have sinned, that is why this world is a veil of tears for you. Don’t trust in princes, or pensions or technological progress for your deliverance. Trust in Christ, whose message is clear to every nation tribe and tongue from one end of the earth to the other. All who are baptized and believe on him will have forgiveness and salvation in His Name.