

What Is Sin and How Does It Work?

I. Your Child's Sin Nature

- Genesis 3; Romans 5:12; Romans 7:22; Romans 8:5; Romans 7:15-20; Psalm 51:5; Isaiah 59:2
- Imagine a gigantic brick wall, and secured to that wall is a six foot bungee. When fully stretched — and keep in mind that it takes a lot of effort to stretch the bungee — this elastic rope can just barely reach the opposite wall which is twenty feet away.
- Now, picture that the day your child was born they were fastened to that bungee. There they were, as infants, connected to the bungee and completely incapable of moving it even when it wasn't taut. As they grew older they built the necessary muscle to stand despite the bungee, and they even came to the point where they could stretch it an extra inch.
- Of course, as they've grown we've told them about the joys of "the other wall" and we've told them about the destruction that comes from staying next to the wall on which their bungee is fastened.
- And we've constantly and consistently educated and reprovved them, and sometimes our kids have responded and participated in our counseling and training.
- Imagine your child physically and literally strapped to a concrete wall, and they are pulling against the bungee, and — let's say — they're doing a good job stretching it an extra foot. . . there is no way on earth they're going to stretch it the remaining thirteen feet on their own. They're simply not strong enough. No matter how hard they try in their own strength, that bungee is going to win. And the harder they try, the easier it will be for the bungee to win.
- The wall is sin. The bungee is our sin nature that keeps us returning to the things we hate like a dog returns to its vomit.
- Good parenting is not a parent and child lounging in the backyard together without the kid trying to jump over the fence.
- Good parenting is you (as the parent) standing next to your child who is straining and fighting the pull of their bungee, and you are helping them take that next step, stretch the bungee another 6 inches.
- Of course, this only works if the child is working with you. If you're teaching them and reinterpreting life for them, but they refuse to even pull against the bungee, there's nothing you can do. You will not be able to drag them over to the other wall.
- But when they finally acknowledge that they need to make it to the other wall, and they're working *with you*, not against you, then you can lock arms and strain against the constant pull of the flesh.

II. Your Sin Nature

- Romans 3:23; I John 1:8-10
- Your child may be able to stretch the bungee a foot on their own, but they're still on the sin side of the room! And even with your help, they won't be able to necessarily cross the centerline of the room because we must not forget that *you* have a bungee strapped to you too!
- You've had more practice, and you're — hopefully — spiritually stronger, but you're not only trying to help them fight their bungee, you're having to fight yours as well.
- So, there you are pulling against these massive bands trying to reach the other side of the room together.
- Parenting is hard. Discipleship is hard. It's no yard; it's a moment by moment fight to glorify God in all we do.

- But we have to be a little more honest with ourselves. Working all out, your child and you are likely only going to be able to stretch our bungees about three feet. And that's only if you're helping one child at a time.
- Have you ever felt like you were trying to help one kid fight their bungee while another child was pulling on both of you in the opposite direction?
- So, as we fill out our picture, we also see that the devil and the world system are trying to do their best to pull your child as close to the wall as possible.
- And every time we allow our child to be influenced by unbiblical movies and music and friends and teachers and politics ideologies, you're basically inviting more people to grab your child's bungee and pull her back toward the wall of sin.
- So, there you and your spouse are (if you have one), and some of your kids are so young and immature that they can't even bear the weight of the bungee when it's not stretched. And some of you have older children who are still incapable of walking their bungee out to its full length. And some of you have kids who can stretch their bungee to seven whole feet, and some of you have kids who should be capable, but who aren't even trying, and some of you have kids in nearly every category, and you're trying to fight your own sin nature while you also help each other and your kids fight their sin natures, and then you have the world and the demonic forces actively trying to pull your whole family back to the wall of sin and death . . . and potentially for the first time in your life you now have a biblical view of what it means to be a parent.
- It's impossible to be a successful parent.
- The picture that's been painted is impossible. There is no way you're going to reach the other wall, twenty feet away, let alone help even one of your family members get there.

III. God's Part of the Picture

- Philippians 2:13; I Corinthians 10:13; Philippians 2:12
- If we are born again then "*It is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.*" We can't stretch our bungees over the middle line, but God can.
- When temptation comes, the only way we can pull against the external temptation of the people yanking at our bungees and fight against the internal temptation of the bungee itself is God.
- God the Holy Spirit is in this room with us, and He wants us to glorify the Father by reaching the other wall. And He's waiting for us to acknowledge our needs, be grieved by it, and humbly ask Him for help. That's **justification**.
- Then He's going to come over to us in our need and take us by the hand and comfort us and empower us in a way we could never work up on our own. But we have to participate. He's not going to drag us kicking and screaming. That's **sanctification**.
- But the Holy Spirit also wants to use us. As He's helping us cross the room, and we're sweating as we cooperate with Him, those counseling and training roles are going to require us to link arms and help our kids step onto the Christ-honoring side of the room.
- And hopefully we're building community in our lives that will be helping us and our kids.
- This illustrates us doing the right thing in the right way for the right reasons in the right power. Then and only then is it true obedience.
- But, we need to remember that the Holy Spirit is not going to help our child cross the center of the room if the child is unsaved, and there's nothing we can do to help our child cross the center of the room if they're unsaved.
- They have to have a relationship with God.
- Parenting is a fight against our very sin natures and the temptation of the world and Satan. And — even on a good day — it takes an act of God in our lives to do it well.