

Proverbs 6:16-19  
7 Deadly Sins: Introduction  
WRCOB 6.9.19

<https://youtu.be/Q8jhb5NnADM>

Sherward Swartz is not a name you'd likely know.

He's the guy who created Gilligan's Island  
The TV sitcom that ran from 1964-67.

So if you are as old as dirt as I am  
You'd remember this show.

Interestingly  
Swartz confessed years after the show ended  
That he patterned his characters  
After the 7 deadly sins.

One character for each of the seven sins.

The professor, pride  
Mr. Howell, greed  
Ginger, lust  
Mary Ann, envy  
Mrs. Howell, extravagance or gluttony  
The skipper, wrath  
And Gilligan, sloth

The concept of the 7 Deadly Sins is widely known.

So why would these almost petty sins get so much attention?

That is what we want to find out.

You won't find a list of the 7 deadly sins in your Bible.

Oh there's lists of sins in the Bible, don't get me wrong  
The Ten Commandments being the best-known.

But nowhere is there specifically these particular seven.

The closest list we find to the 7 Deadly Sins  
Is today's passage.

Proverbs lists the things God deplors

- Haughty eyes
- A lying tongue
- Hands that shed innocent blood
- A heart that devises wicked schemes
- Feet quick to rush into evil
- A false witness who pours out lies
- And a person who stirs up conflict in the community

It was Pope Gregory in 600 AD  
That essentially boiled down all the different sins  
Into the seven categories we know today.

He places them in order of severity, the least to the most severe

- Lust
- Gluttony
- Greed (Avarice)
- Sloth
- Wrath
- Envy
- Pride

Pope Gregory believed pride was the father of all sins.

As I said a couple of weeks ago  
The word sin has become rather archaic.

We no longer pay attention to the word  
Because of its overuse, misuse, and abuse.

But according to Scripture  
Ever since first man and first woman  
Succumbed to the temptation to disobey God

The world has suffered because of it.

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Call it anything else, and it has a certain appeal to it!

Just look at television programing  
The advertisements, movies and best-selling books  
We're obsessed with it.

Sin is entertainment!  
Sex and violence sells.

Look at what we watch!  
Look at the video games we play!

The constant exposure to it  
Numbs us to its destructive nature . . .  
Taunts us into saying, "ahh come on. It's not so bad!"

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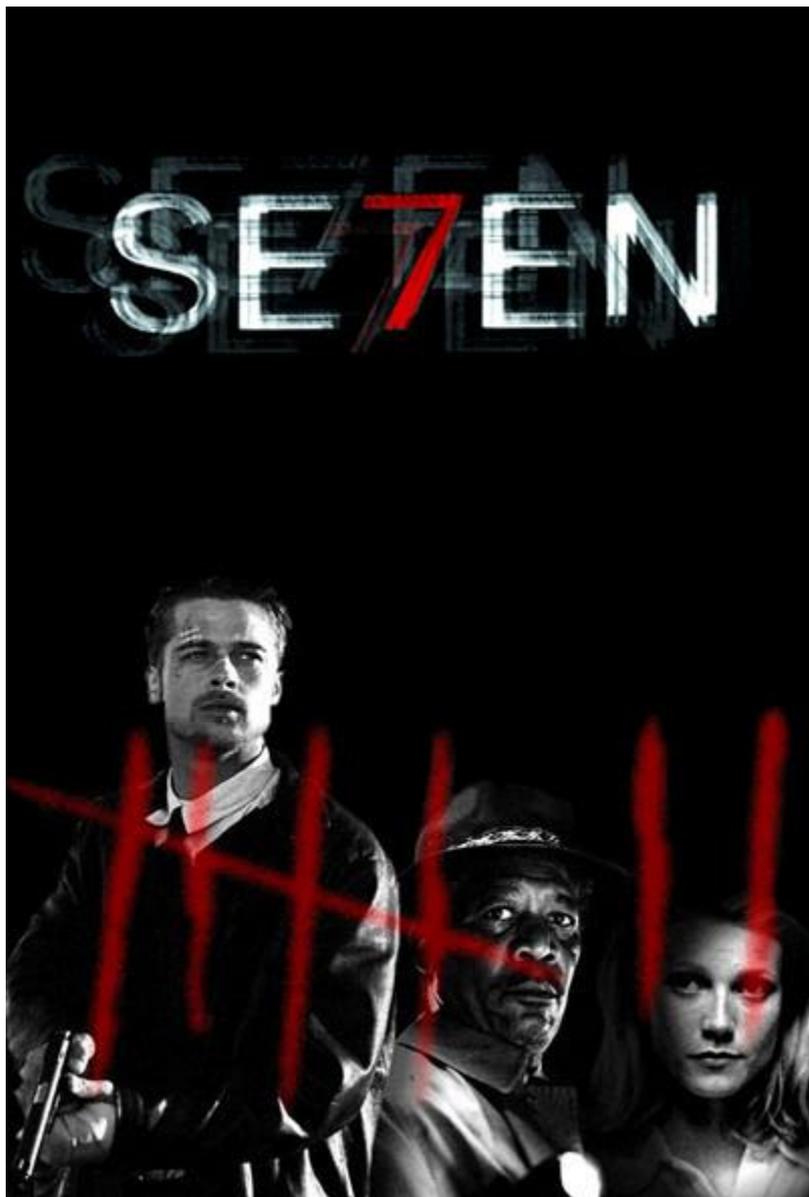
Down through the centuries the seven deadly sins  
Has had a certain lure and appeal.

From the 1400s' Dutch painter Hieronymus Bosch's 7 Deadly Sins  
With each panel representing one of the seven deadly sins



To the 1990s movie *Seven*  
Starring Morgan Freeman and Brad Pitt

Who chase down a killer intent on killing people  
Representing each of the deadly sins.



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Maybe our fascination with the 7 deadly sins  
Has to do with our own complicity in them.

They're our sins.

If I were to take a survey here in this sanctuary right now  
I won't . . .

But if I would  
And ask . . . of the 7 categories of sin  
Is there one with which you struggle?

If we are honest ourselves  
My guess is all our hands would be raised.

The seven deadly sins are the sins we commit!

But for the most part, we'd never admit it.

Church has a hard time admitting sins.

We seek to live in an atmosphere that we have it all together.

Will Willimon in his superbly, entitled book  
*Sinning like a Christian*  
*A Contemporary Look at the 7 Deadly Sins*

Tells the story of someone who found healing from alcoholism  
Through Alcoholics Anonymous  
And as a result starting attending church.

But he found the church superficial  
No one, honest about their struggles with sin.

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My attempt to preach the 7 deadly sins  
Is not to call each of you out  
For the sins you are committing.

My attempt is to help us identify these sins.

Find ways to nip them in the bud.

And discover ways to replace them with real hope and joy  
Purpose and meaning in life through our faith.

Marshall Regal, writer for John Piper's Desiring God website.

*Many people think following Jesus means surrendering our happiness. You can either enjoy a fun, passionate, and exciting life here for a short time or live a bland, boring, but safe life forever with God.*

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The motivation for preaching the 7 deadly sins  
Is to identify the ills of our contemporary society.

I believe our personal problems  
As well as many of the world's trouble  
Are rooted in these 7 categories of sin.

Throughout this summer  
We will look at each of the deadly sins  
And see how they play out today.

By naming them we can diffuse their allure  
And with intent, replace their appeal  
With the deep joy of a Christ-like life.

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Why 7 sins?

Why deadly?

Is not all sin deadly?

As people throughout the ages  
    Studied scripture and observed human behavior  
    They began to see patterns in sin.

For instance, why would a person take delight  
    In a neighbor's misfortune?

Or what compels a person's relentless urge  
    For more and more and more?

Contemporary ills of society are rooted in these 7 deadly sins.

Pornography, sex trafficking, and date rape  
    Contemporary problems stemming from what sin?

Lust!

Commercialization, consumerism, materialism,  
    Our incessant need for more material possessions  
    Rooted in which sin? Greed!

So on and so forth!

Most of these sins aren't deadly in themselves.

Quite ordinary and rather benign sins, really.

I mean, we can all over-eat  
    Or sling a temper tantrum  
    Or be envious of our neighbor's lawn  
    Or enjoy looking at an attractive person

What's the harm in that?

These, of themselves, are ordinary and universal impulses.

So why are they deadly?

Because, these seven sins are considered  
The source or root of the larger sins.

Murder, adultery, deception  
Mass-shootings, genocide, and war.

The real, horrific social ills in the world today originate  
From one or multiple sins found in the 7 deadly sins.

That's why, Jesus said

**Matthew 5:27-28 NIV You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.**

According to early church thinking  
If you can control the urge  
To commit these rather nonthreatening sins

They would not manifest themselves into something bigger.  
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The sermon series will explore these modern-day sins  
To know, to name, to fight, and to heal from them.

Ryan Griffith professor at Bethlehem College writes

*Diagnosing the root of sinful behavior entails identifying what we foolishly believe will make us more happy than joy in Christ. . . Identifying seven especially deep, especially pervasive strains of sins will likely be helpful.*  
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Here are some of the important questions we will ask  
And to answer during this sermon series.

What compels us to knowingly disregard better judgment  
And engage one of the deadly sins?

What stressors in life trigger our need or desire . . .  
What brokenness are we experiencing . . .  
That motivates us toward reckless living?

How do we channel those desires and motivations  
Towards a healthier and wholesome lifestyle?

And finally, how do we live a life pleasing to God  
But also satisfying to one's own self?

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From the very beginning,  
God designed and created us  
To live happy and contented lives.  
Having become separated from God  
As part of the plight of the human condition  
We yearn for wholeness and healing

We seek to attain some sense of happiness  
Through petty and temporary pleasures.

These short-lived pleasures  
Leave one empty, unfulfilled, and needing more.

From John Piper

*Pride, envy, anger, sloth, greed, gluttony, and lust are woefully inadequate substitutes for the wonder, beauty, and affection of God.*

*They will rob you, not ravish you. They will numb you, not heal you. They will slaughter you, not save you.*

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Seven sins . . . one hope.

True happiness and contentment that lasts for eternity  
Is found in our relationship with God through Christ.

True peace in the face of all our brokenness  
Is experienced when we acknowledge our dependency  
On one another in the community of faith

And on God our Creator  
Christ, our Redeemer  
And the Holy Spirit, our advocate.

Let us pray.