

# 3 – “Three Attitudes Toward Sin That Give You Assurance With God” // *Assured: 1 John 1:5–2:2*

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## Announcement:

At our church, one of our **plumblines** is that we *send out some of our best*. There is a cost to church planting. It means not only giving away a lot of money but sending some of our best people—and our best leaders—away. But we do it because we want to see the gospel go forward in places where it is desperately needed. *And we trust that for every 1 we send out God will raise up 3 in their place.*

- Brad and his team definitely fall into that category
- **Brad has meant a lot to me, personally.** He has been here nearly 10 years. He was our first college intern...*volunteered to do it for free...occupied almost every position on our staff...college pastor, missions pastor, local outreach, campus pastor...started the City Project, ServeRDU.*
- And Brad’s team includes one of our elders, some of our small group leaders, volunteers, student and college leaders... They have been leaders in our community... Some of our favorite people are standing on this stage. **They will not be easy to replace.** Are you sure you all want to go? But we sent them out gladly because the gospel is worth it.

**They’ve chosen to relocate** their lives, to move, to sell houses, to change jobs because cities like Baltimore desperately need the gospel.

**We’re not all called to go.** Some of us are called to stay here. But we are all called to leverage our lives for the Great Commission.

- So as we pray for these guys, I want you to also **let the Holy Spirit challenge** you as well. God has given you all something to be leveraged for the Great Commission.
- ***Do what you do well for the glory of God; and do it somewhere strategic for the mission of God.***

## PRAY

*I want you to know we are able to do this, and to launch the Chapel Hill Campus, which has averaged about 1200 for the last 3 weeks, because of how faithfully and sacrificially you gave and are giving to the **All-In initiative**. If you’re new here, “ALL-IN” is our 1-fund approach to how we do giving at the Summit. It funds everything from campus expansion to community ministry to church planting. If you have questions about that, you can always go to [www.summitallin.com](http://www.summitallin.com) or go to the next steps area at your campus.*

## Introduction:

**How do you know that you know God?** How do you **know he loves** you, that you’re **at peace with** him, and that you will **spend eternity** with him? How do you **know your experience** with him is real?

**That’s what the book of 1 John is all about.** I would submit to you that is the most important question you’ll ever consider. It’s more important than where you go to college; how high of a GPA you graduate with; what job you get; how much money you make; how many friends you have; how good your marriage is or even how happy you are in life.

~~A: It’s the most important theological question you’ll ever consider. I was reading a book the other day—it was not a Christian book, but a book about God and spiritual things—one of the best selling books out there about God—and the author, a Jewish rabbi, said, “There is only one question about God that really~~

matters: "Why do bad things happen to good people? All other theological conversation is intellectually diverting."<sup>4</sup> **I agree this is a very important question**, and one that proves to be a real obstacle to people's faith. I would not agree that that is the most important question you'll ever consider. **The most important question you will ever consider, according to Jesus and Paul and Moses and David and every other Bible writer** is how a sinful person can come into a right relationship with an infinitely holy and just God.

B. Imagine you're looking out the window of your corner office window on the top floor of your city's highest skyscraper, considering where to invest which of two companies to invest millions of dollars in. That would be an important decision. But say the date is Sep 11, 2001, you're office is in the World Trade Center and it's 8:00 am. In light of what is about to happen, even that decision seems trifling. Where you stand with God, and if you're right about where you think you stand with God, is, in light of eternity, the most important question you'll ever consider. If you get that question wrong, even if you get every other question right, you've lost everything.

Today we're going to look at the last half of the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter in 1 John, where **John identifies 3 signs** of someone who doesn't know God—even though they think they do.

- And what's really important about these things, that you should note, is that **John is describing religious people** here, not irreligious. He's not saying, "Here's 3 signs the pagans or atheists don't know God." No—"Here's 3 indications that a religious, spiritual person doesn't really know God."
- You see, and this is one of *the most important lessons* in the Bible, **you can be really religious, or, spiritual, and not actually know God** at all. Jesus' crucifixion was a **joint project** of the secular *and* religious establishments, which means that **religion is every bit as much an enemy** of Christ as secularism.

So what are these 3 things? He identifies the first 2 by the phrase, "If we say we have fellowship with him and... we do this and that we don't know God."

Here they are. I'll give them to you all at once. You don't know God if...

1. **You sin (willfully; habitually)**
2. **You say you have no sin**
3. **You have no confidence before God because of your sin**

## 1 John 1:5–2:2

[5] *This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. (contrary to what Buddhism teaches—God is not yeng/yang.)* [6] **If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.** [7] **But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.**

### 1. You don't know God if... you sin (1:5–7)

- He doesn't mean if you *ever* sin. (Saying that you *never* sin would be its own problem that he'll deal with in a minute...)
- He means if you willfully, defiantly, pursue sin.
- Note his use of the imagery of light. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."
  - Darkness here, of course, refers to moral darkness: injustice; hypocrisy; hatred; unfaithfulness; impurity.
- You can't say you love God, the light, if you continue to walk in darkness.
- If you have really been saved, you have a new spirit that loves the light.

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<sup>1</sup> Harold Kushner, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*.

- (Review: Dog and vomit illustration.)
- ~~Creatures that love darkness are by nature nocturnal animals. You'd have to force a bat out into the light. So if you love the darkness, that shows you have the nature of a nocturnal animal, regardless of what kind of how religious or spiritual you think you are or what ritual you went through in your church.~~

David said in Psalm 19:8, "*The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes; the law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.*" Is that how you feel about the laws of God? Are they desirable, or are they cumbersome?

**3 ways "church people" are often still in darkness:** These are common; I see them a lot.

- **A. Believing without repenting.** I remember a girl explaining to me one time that she had "accepted Jesus as her Savior but not as her Lord," as if you can take Jesus apart or sample parts of him like he's a salad bar.
  - **You can't believe without repenting.**
  - Repentance was the **first response** Jesus called for in his first preaching of the gospel (Mark 1:15); the **first command** Peter gave to those the first time he preached the gospel, (Acts 2:38); and **what Paul said God had commanded** all men everywhere to do now that Jesus had been resurrected (in Acts 17:30; Acts 3:19; Acts 26:20 and etc.)
  - You can't be saved by the light if you hate the light.
  - Could I say to my wife, "I want to be married to you but I want to maintain my relationships with other lovers?" No. What if I said, "Don't worry, baby, you're still #1 out of all the girls." She'd say, "I don't want to be #1; I want to be the only 1."
- **B. Being casual about, or even openly embracing, sin.**
  - Christians who say to me,
    - "We **live together**... I guess that's wrong, but we still consider ourselves Christians."
    - Or I know church people who **cheat on their taxes** or **steal music** on the internet and they say, "Yes, it's wrong, but no one is perfect..."
    - Or a **college student guy** who gets drunk and sleeps with his girlfriend but still makes church a part of his life.
    - Or people who say: "Well, I disagree with what the Bible says about **homosexuality** so I'm going to be a Christian homosexual," as if God allows you to opt out of the things in the Bible you don't agree with.
    - **You can't say you know Christ as Savior and Lord and not have forsaken what he has forbidden.** You can't **love Jesus** and embrace what he died to put an end to.
  - **"Whoever says, 'I know him' but does not keep his commandments is a liar." (1 John 2:4)**
    - **If you know Jesus**, you don't know him as a life-coach or an advisor who offers helpful suggestions for living. You know him as Lord. Jesus said,
    - **Luke 6:46**, Why would you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things I said? And if you're the kind of person who insists on agreeing with Jesus before you'll submit to him; I don't think you get the concept of Lordship. Lordship is total. He's right about everything.
    - BTW, I'm not saying you agree with me about everything. You have to study the Bible on your own, with a surrendered mind and humbled heart, and decide for yourself. But from the beginning you have to resolve that where you and Jesus disagree, he's right and you change.
    - And I'm not saying you become a perfect person. You fall often, but there is a decided resolution that Jesus is Lord and that his way is right and you're going to follow him.
- **C. Praying a "sinner's prayer" with no accompanying life change.**

- I told you on the first week of this series of *a 2011 Barna study<sup>2</sup> shows that 50% of Americans say they have prayed some kind of sinner's prayer*, even though half of them have no regular presence in any kind of church or have lifestyles and worldviews that in no way differ from those outside of the Christian faith.
- God doesn't save you because you went through a prayer ritual at the front of your church. **It's not the prayer that saves; it's the repentance and faith behind the prayer that lay hold of salvation.**
- I compared it to **sitting down in a chair... I could stand up here** all day long talking about how much I trust the chair, but I'm not trusting in the chair until I sit down.
- **The question is not what prayer you prayed to Christ**, but what posture you assumed toward Christ. Did you actually repent and believe?

So, **1. You don't know God if... you sin.** (Positive version of that) **You do know God if you are in a posture of surrender.**

- And of course I'm not talking about perfection. You fall often. But after you fall, you always get up and re-assume the posture.

(TRANSITION): *Which leads me to number 2...*

**[8] If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us... and verse [10] If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.**

## **2. You don't know God if... you say you have no sin (1:8–10)**

This is an error on the opposite side. John says that being unaware of the sinfulness of your heart is a sign you don't know God.

Because one of the first evidences of the light of grace coming into your life is that you have eyes to see the sin in your heart.

- Imagine if you were in a **filthy room** but it was completely dark. Stuff was all disheveled; all out of place. You couldn't tell. Is this room messy? You might say, "I don't know." And **if you wanted to be known as a clean person** you would say, "Yes, it's very clean in here." **Spray some Febreze:** "smells like apple cinnamon."
- But then I light a **small match**, and in the light of that match you can see the **dresser overturned** and what looks like clothes on the floor. Then we hand you a **flashlight** and you can see that the **bed isn't made** and the sheets are filthy. Then I turn on a **halogen bulb** and you can see the dust on the top of the furniture and mildew around the baseboards.

This is what awakening to God is like. The first sign of God's grace is you get a sense of how wicked your heart is.

- This is one of the things people are so resistant to admitting. People will admit they are not perfect, or they make mistakes, but *that they are worthy of God's condemnation?* They chafe against that. At our core, we want to insist that we are good people who deserve good things.
- I agree with **Francis Schaeffer**, one of our country's greatest apologists, who was once asked what he would do if he met a modern man on a train and had just one hour to talk to him about the gospel. He responded, *"I would spend 45–50 minutes on the negative, to really show him his dilemma—that he is morally dead—then I'd take the last 10–15 minutes to preach the (good news of the) gospel. I believe that much of our evangelistic and personal work today is not clear, simply because we are too anxious to get to the answer without having a man realize the real cause of his sickness, which is true moral guilt (and not just psychological guilt feelings) in the presence of God."*

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.barna.org/faith-spirituality/514-barna-study-of-religious-change-since-1991-shows-significant-changes-by-faith-group>

But this awareness is the first evidence of the light of the gospel shining in our hearts.

BTW, this is not something that happens only to non-Christians. The sign that you are growing in Christ is you are becoming more aware of the sin that remains in your heart.

- If you're the kind of person who feels like they have no more problems with sin, you're more blind than you realize.
- It irritates me when Christians talk like that has happened. *"I used to be bad but now I'm perfect."* You ask them, "What are you struggling with?" "Oh, sometimes I care too much about other people. Sometimes I give away so much money I don't have enough for my own needs." And they say, "What are you struggling with?" And I say, *"Well, on the way over here a guy cut me off and I felt like pulling him out of his car and stomping on his face with golf cleats... but now I don't feel like telling you that anymore."*

**The clearest sign that you are growing in grace is not that you no longer sin but that you are more aware of how much sin pervades your heart.**

- The **other day** I was reading the story of John the Baptist, how he always deflected the glory that came to him back onto God... and God revealed to me how much of my life had been spent not doing that... how I've always been more concerned with people being in awe of me than in awe of God... Every week I go through a **GLORY WAR**.
- Now, I am growing and changing... there is progress... **but the point is that I feel more sinful now than the day I was converted because God's light in my heart is brighter and thus I can see even more of the dust of my sin on the furniture.**
- **Church: Closeness to God doesn't make you feel holier; it makes you feel dirtier.**
  - In **Isaiah 6** the prophet Isaiah found himself standing before God and he said, *"Whoa is me. I am ruined. I am a man of unclean lips..."* Isaiah was a prophet of God—the top of the religious pyramid. But when he found himself in front of God, he doesn't come out thinking, "I feel so holy and good and close to God." No—when he got close to God what stood out was his sinfulness.
- **When someone carries themselves with an air of how good they are that shows they don't know God at all—even if they are very religious.** Theological B.O.

**2. You don't know God if... you say you have no sin.** (The positive side of that one:) **You do know God if you deeply aware of your own sinfulness.**

**And when God's light presses in on us, we will do one a few things. Some people...**

**A. ... will simply retreat back into the darkness**

- Sometimes when people are exposed to the light of God, they want to go back into the darkness.
- Darkness is comfortable when you are used to it.
- *Like when you come out of a theatre—usually you go through a hall that helps your eyes get adjusted, and are greeted by light?* That's what is happening to you...

**B. ... insist on their goodness**

- Well, my sins are not that bad; I'm really a good person otherwise;
- Or make excuses: I hung out with the wrong crowd.
- This is foolish for a couple of reasons.
  - **First, it is to call God a liar.** Vs. 10: "If we say we have no sin, we make God a liar..." **The Bible says that we are children of wrath; sons and daughters of disobedience; born in iniquity;** we don't sin because we hang around with the wrong crowd; we sin because we are the wrong crowd.
  - **Second, it shows complete blindness** to the holiness of God. Your and my sinfulness before a holy God is like walking into an **operating room covered** in excrement. When a doctor is

going through prep for operating? Trash on the floor? Imagine walking into an operating room after having fallen into a sewer. Or as the doctor pulls back the sheet to make the incision for an open-heart surgery, three roaches run across the chest of the man.

- A sinful man coming into God's presence is like a **tissue paper touching the surface** of the sun.
- When you are awakened to God you become deeply aware of your sinfulness that all you can say is, "Whoa is me, for I am undone."

### C. **Come into the light and confess it.**

*(TRANSITION): Which leads me to #3...*

## 3. You don't know God if... you have no confidence before God because of your sin

*[2:1] My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, (we all sin) we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. [2] He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*

Two key words in there: **propitiation** and **advocate**.

- **"Propitiation."**

- Propitiation is a **hard word**, and probably not one you use often in day to day conversation.
- BTW, some preachers say we should avoid words like this, don't take people deep. **I say 1) it's my job** to teach these words to you, because the richest truths of the Bible are found in the meanings of these words; and 2) **if you can learn drink names** at Starbucks, you can learn the meanings of these words. AMEN? **If my 4<sup>th</sup> grader can learn** where every hidden bonus is on Super Mario Brothers, you can learn where the best truths in God's word are hidden.
- **The word "propitiation" means** that a claim against you has been satisfied (*literally, wrath has been absorbed and good will will has replaced ill will*). For example, if you caused a traffic accident, doing several thousand dollars worth of damage to someone else's car, they have a "charge" against you. When you pay the sum total of the damages caused to another person by your accident, that person is "propitiated." They have no more claim against you.
- **Jesus propitiated the holy wrath of God against our sin by suffering the full penalty in our place.**
- On the cross, **every ounce of penalty** you and I deserved for our sin was poured into him. **That's why the cross was so bloody...** "Why is it so bloody; blood is gross and gruesome." That's the point; your sin is gross and gruesome to God and only the blood of Jesus could pay the penalty for it.

- Which leads me to the 2<sup>nd</sup> word: **"Advocate."**

- "Advocate" is a **legal term**, referring to someone who argues **your case before the bar** of justice on your behalf.
- *If you are a Christian, Jesus is your advocate before the Father. He stands like there like a lawyer, pleading your case.*
- **But what is he arguing?** Usually an advocate argues your innocence. But we've established you don't have any worthiness. So **he argues his propitiation; his substitutionary work** on your behalf. He says, "Father, you can't hold J.D.'s sin against him; I suffered the full penalty for that sin for him."
- I have told you that **I used to see this idea** that Jesus was standing as my advocate before God and think that it meant Jesus was standing before God pleading for leniency on my behalf, and that provided **very little comfort to me**. I imagined Jesus going into the heavenly courtroom with a stack of **case folders with one marked "Greear,"** which he pulled out and said, "OK, Father, Greear again. Can you give Him one more chance? He's a good kid, really. Please? Pretty please? Come on, Father, you owe Me. I went to earth and everything for you..." Deep down I'd

wonder when I would reach the end of God's patience—I'd sin for the 491<sup>st</sup> time and the Father would say, "That's it. No more leniency for Greear. Even with you in his corner, Jesus. He's going to have to pay for that one."<sup>3</sup>

- Jesus, however, does not appeal to God for mercy on my behalf. He appeals for justice. He has **satisfied all the claims** against me, and now says to the Father, "Father, I paid the full price for this sin. I took the penalty due to him so that he could have the credit due to me. It is only right that he not be held accountable for that sin."<sup>4</sup>
- Notice vs. **[9] If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**
- Not "merciful and kind" to forgive us our sin, but "faithful and just." God forgives our sin not because he is lenient but because he is just. Because God is just he couldn't demand two penalties for the same sin.
- That gives me GREAT confidence before God.

*BEFORE THE THRONE OF GOD ABOVE, I have a strong and perfect plea; a Great High Priest, whose name is love, who ever lives and pleads for me.*

*My name is graven on his hands; my name is written on his heart! I know that while in heaven he stands, no tongue can bid me thence depart.*

*WHEN SATAN TEMPTS ME to despair, and tells me of the guilt within, upward I look and see him there, who made an end to all my sin.*

*Because the sinless Savior died, my sinful soul is counted free. For God the just is satisfied, to look **on him**, and pardon me.*

*BEHOLD HIM THERE, the risen Lamb, my perfect, spotless righteousness! The great unchangeable I Am, King of glory and of grace.*

*One in himself, **I cannot die**. My soul is purchased by his blood. My life is hid with Christ on high, with Christ my Savior, and my God!*

***This is the assurance of the gospel!*** I know that I am received by God, safe before God, not because of how well I've lived, but because of Christ's finished work.

Which is why I say, "Do you really get the gospel if you are unsure about your salvation?"

- You see, if I say to you, "**Are you a Christian?**" and you say, "Well, I'm trying. I'm doing my best." That shows me you don't get it. **You still think there is a level** that you need to perform at to qualify for the title. **A Christian is one who realizes they could never earn the title; Jesus earned the title and gave it to them as a gift.**
- When you believe that, you become secure in your salvation because it is no longer dependent on how righteous you are but in what he accomplished in your place.
- **My salvation** is now as secure as Jesus Christ, because he is my substitute. He is my claim to enter heaven. I'm going under his name, not mine.

***Belief in the gospel leads to confidence.***

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<sup>3</sup> Inspiration for this illustration comes from Tim Keller preaching a sermon on Hebrews 7:17–27 at Redeemer Presbyterian in New York City in 2005. Keller credits Dick Lucas as its source.

<sup>4</sup> Note that I am not trying to imply that the Father wants one thing and Jesus another. Jesus is the Word of the Father, which means He perfectly expresses the heart of God. What Jesus feels, the Father feels. I am simply illustrating that no claim against us can stand. If anything, it would be more accurate to say that Satan is the one who stands before the Father accusing us.

**In fact**, the gospel produces two things in you that no other religious or spiritual truth can produce, *at least not simultaneously*: **humility and confidence**.

- Usually what you believe about yourself produces **either humility or confidence**. Either you're **made to realize how bad you are** and because of that you don't understand why or how God could love you and so you have humility... Or you've **succeeded at your religion** and you think you're righteous and so you're really confident before God but you look down in pride on others who haven't done as well as you.
- **There are some of you in here in both camps.**
  - **Some of you are more humble**—maybe you had a condemning father or you just realize how much you have failed in life and so you constantly beat yourself up.
  - **Others of you soar with pride** because people have always told you how awesome you are and you've **started to believe it** (*You're like, "the word awesome ends in 'me'"*)
- **Both "camps"** of you need the gospel—which is that you are simultaneously more wicked than you ever imagined but also more loved and accepted than you ever dared hope.<sup>5</sup>
- This produces both humility and confidence: because you recognize how sinful you are, on the one hand, which produces humility; but on the other you recognize how complete Christ's work is on your behalf, and that produces confidence.
  - The mark of the gospel is that you have both.
- Martin Luther used a phrase in the 1520's that he said holds the whole church up; a phrase on which the church, he says, rises or falls. If someone gets this phrase, they get the gospel; if they lose it, they lose everything: ***simul iustus et peccator***.
  - *You are simultaneously worse than you ever imagined AND more loved and accepted than you ever dreamed.*
  - **'So, cheer up; you are worse than you think. But God is better than you'd hoped.'**
    - Known and loved

So—**3. You don't know God if... you have no confidence before God because of your sin. You do know God if you rest confidently in the finished work of Christ.**

**Conclusion:** **What to Do:**

**Here's what I want you to do:**

- A. **Assess.** Which of these things John warns about is true of you? Depending on your personality, you probably gravitate toward one, or some combination thereof:
- Are you the kind to **harden your heart** about sin and refuse to submit to the light?
  - Do you try to **cover up God's statements** about your sinfulness with self-justification?
  - Do you have a **hard time believing** and receiving God's grace?
  - You see, **the gospel requires you believe two really difficult things: that you are so bad Jesus had to die for you, that he was so gracious he was glad to die for you.**<sup>6</sup>
    - We don't like either side of that: we don't like to think of ourselves as all that bad; and it's hard to conceive of a God that is that loving.
    - We prefer this mushy middle where we are not that bad and God doesn't need to be that gracious.
    - But that's the gospel, and that's why it is so hard for people to believe it, and why so few people actually do.

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<sup>5</sup> Phrasing owed to Tim Keller.

<sup>6</sup> Keller.



- And it requires you surrendering, not part of you, but all of you, to him. And you will forever be in his debt, for the rest of your life, because he saved you.

**John shows you that 3 kinds of people will never know God:**

- Those who willfully and defiantly sin and so will never submit to Jesus as Lord.
- Those who refuse to admit their sinfulness and so will never receive Jesus as Savior.
- Those who will not believe the gracious promises of the gospel and never embrace Christ's gift righteousness.

***Don't be one of those people. Repent and believe the gospel today!***

**B. Learn to cherish conviction and repentance.**

- Many Christians think of repentance like a trip to the woodshed, in which God beats you up over your sin.
- No, repentance is like a bath in which you wash away the darkness off of you and bathe yourself in his light.
- And it is made pleasant because the Father gives this to you in intense love. He is washing away your sin in love.
- Why else would he have died for you if he did not love you tenderly, more than any earthly father or mother has loved their child?
- If you trust God, repentance becomes sweet, because you are not being taken to woodshed, you are brought back home.

**C. Keep coming toward the light.**

- Some of you are like I was describing with that theatre. Just starting to see but it hurts! Stay out in the light; your eyes will adjust.
- Don't go back in!
- Once you've been in the light, you'll say, "Why did I ever want to be in there?"

\*\*\*MUSICIANS HERE\*\*\*

**Conclusion and Invitation:**

Do you know God?

- If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins...

Will you acknowledge your sinfulness?

Will you surrender to his Lordship?

Will you believe the gospel?

## Bullpen:

**Question for you:** What do you think is the most important question about God you'll ever consider? I was reading a book the other day—it was not a Christian book, but a book about God and spiritual things—one of the best selling books out there about God—and the author, a Jewish rabbi, said, *"There is only one question about God that really matters: "Why do bad things happen to good people? All other theological conversation is intellectually diverting."*<sup>7</sup>

I agree this is a very important question, and one that proves to be a real obstacle to people's faith. I would not agree that that is the most important question you'll ever consider. **The most important question you will ever consider, according to Jesus and Paul and Moses and David and every other Bible writer** is how a sinful person can come into a right relationship with an infinitely holy and just God, and how you can know that you have come into relationship with him. It's the most important question for people all over the world.

Explain Romans 7: I do what I don't want to do; don't do what I do want to do?

### **D. Don't give up on repentance!**

- All of a Christian's life is repentance. You will struggle over and over. You'll become even more aware of your sin.

If these 3 things are true of you, then you don't know God, no matter how religious you are. And if the opposite of these 3 things is true, they are signs that you do know God, because these are distinctive marks of gospel light.

/You don't have confidence that God has forgiven you of your sin

Repentance literally means "a change of mind" (in Greek, *metanoia*: *meta*—new; *noia*—mind) about Jesus. Repentance means understanding that Jesus is Lord and that you have lived in cosmic treason to him and reversing your direction based on that.

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<sup>7</sup> Harold Kushner, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*.