

to the hospital. As long as he lives, at least for a considerable time if he is still living, they can know == they cannot know what this man is guilty of. He has plunged the knife into him. The deed is done. Yet the man lives. He is only guilty of assault with a deadly weapon. That's all. If the man dies he's a murderer. So this man has to wait, the court has to wait until they can know if he is guilty of murder or not.

He did just as bad a deed in plunging the knife into him whether the man lives or whether he dies. But our courts have to try to make distinctions. It's necessary in life. But I believe that God wants us to recognize from this verse that sin is sin, and in God's sight gradations of sin is not a very reasonable statement. We are either sinners, or we are those who have been purified through the Lord Jesus. The quality of sin. The fact it is sin, not sins, that God judges.

In the third place I would like to see what we can gather from this verse about the nature of sin. Just what is sin anyway? Let us think what God is. God is the great holy, righteous ~~man~~ one. The one who is all-loving, all kind. God in His great mercy has created ~~us~~ us and he wants us to be happy. He wants us to be able to live together in peace and in harmony and happiness. But we've turned against His law. We say, I'm interested in number one. I want what's good for me. We scorn His righteous law. God has to make laws or we cannot live in happiness together.

Take traffic laws. Our law in this ~~country~~ country is that we drive to the right. Somebody says, I don't care about that law. I'm going to drive to the left if I feel like it. This is made very vivid to me a few years ago when I heard how in the first World War the British Army came up into India. In India the custom was like the British custom to drive to the left. So when the army went across there into Mesopotamia they introduced there the custom of driving on the left. On the other hand another British army went up into Palestine and Syria from Egypt where it was customary to drive on the right. So there they drove on the right.

When I visited there just a few years after World War I, I was told that if you wanted to go from Palestine and Syria by car over into Mesopotamia, you had a great flat desert to cross. You had more than 100 miles to cross in desert that you could drive anywhere. It was hard soil. You could drive here or there. There was a wide track. You might say 100 yards wide in general in which cars drove in going from one side to the other. Everyone once in a while, they said, a car would come 60 mph from one direction and 60 mph from the other and they would hit head on. The reason was they would not remember whether they were still in Mesopotamian area or in Syrian area. So they would both turn ~~z~~ out in the same direction.

You have to have laws in order to have happiness. You have to have regulations. You have to have a system. The man who says, I don't care what the system is, I'm going to do what I feel like, that is sin. The deadly nature of sin is brought out in this verse because the wages of sin is death.

I don't know how often you think of one type of sin that is very common. We find it mentioned in 1 Sam. 12:23. There we read how the people of Israel under the leadership of Saul had turned against God's righteous commands, and had done what was wicked in His sight. Samuel rebukes them in the strongest language for what they had done, in that 12th chapter. Then after he had done so, he said in v. 23, "As for me far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you." Here were these people going their own way on in sin, ~~tumbing~~ thumbing their noses at God's