There are two threats to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The first threat redefines it and robs it of its authority. The second threat redefines it and reduces our expectations of its power. When we redefine the Gospel as “**A** power of God unto salvation” it merely becomes a spiritual option at a spiritual buffet offering us many choices and combinations that we can place together. When we reduce our expectations of its power, the Gospel becomes irrelevant because it does not command or compel our surrender. Instead, it offers a kind and indulgent God who loves everyone without any judgment, Edward Bernays is not a household name. Yet he is considered the “Father of Spin” and the first “Spin Doctor” because of his creative efforts on behalf of tobacco and alcohol companies. *The Father of Spin: Edward L. Bernays and The Birth of Public Relations, by* Larry Tye, describes how Bernays applied his skill to reshape and normalize choices and behaviors which our culture previously thought socially unacceptable. Bernays employed an ingenious strategy to deceive people by concealing facts, fabricating evidence, and delaying the presentation of facts that might influence perception and choice.

# for the week of 23 February: The RUIN we shared before Jesus RUINED us

“Spin” has one purpose: to persuade an audience that what they think is “good” is actually “bad” and what is “bad” is actually “good.” It is designed to RUIN and replace our perceptions of wrong and right.

Sin is the ultimate “spin”. While sin RUINS the image of God in us and the goodness of creation, it also spins the understanding that many of its consequences are beneficial, normal, and natural. This “spin job” is as universally pervasive as it has been personally persuasive. None of us are untouched by it. Paul’s teaching on sin is a chance for us to revisit our own understanding of sin. Beware! A shallow understanding of sin will encourage a empty Gospel whose cross expresses God’s love but whose atoning gift is deemed unnecessary.

Enjoy your LifeGroup!



*Sin is believing the lie that you are self-created, self-dependent, and self-sustained.*

*–* Augustine

*You never find in sin that which you enter the sin to find.*

– Dr. James Borror

# This week’s Bible reading:

*Romans 1.16-32:* For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them …

Getting to know one another better...

What is one of your first memories of buying something that disappointed you because it did not do what the advertisers claimed? What was it and why were you disappointed?

on Sin

# Reflecting on Genesis 3

Read Romans 1.16-32. What are your first reactions to this passage?

Mark made the connection between God’s anger and God’s grace. How does this affirm or challenge your understanding of God’s character?

According to Romans 1.18-32:

- How does God reveal Himself to all people everywhere?

- Why are all people responsible to God for their faith or faithlessness?

* How do people suppress the truth of God?
* What are the consequences of sin impacting lives today?
* How does God hold us accountable for our sin(s)?

How does 1.16-17 relate to 1.18-32?

Reflecting together on our response and application

Does Paul’s discussion of anger (wrath) challenge your understanding of God and/or your faith? Why or why not?

How does Paul’s understanding of sin challenge or define your understanding of sin?

Paul is very comfortable placing God’s anger along side of His grace (1.16-18). How can God love us and express His anger at the same time?

“Everyone goes to heaven.” “All religions point to the same God.” “People are basically good.” How does this passage support or challenge these common understandings?

We use the word, “brokenness” a lot in the Church. How is this the same or different from Paul’s understanding of sin?

How do people in your life (family, friends, co-workers,) distinguish between “right” and “wrong”?

What sins does Paul list that our culture would agree with and disagree with?

We cannot truly and fully share the Gospel without sharing about our own sin that has been forgiven. How do you express this?

My prayer requests (think of what you want to share in advance)

# Praying for my group...

# Highlighting...

**CAPS Pregnancy Services**

**Upcoming Volunteer Training**

**Training Dates:** Tuesdays, 6-8:30pm on 3/18, 3/25, 4/1, 4/8, 4/22 & Saturday, 4/12, 9-5:00pm

Walk alongside those facing unintended pregnancies as they receive medical services, education, and resources.

Our upcoming training will equip you to serve as a Peer Counselor. Please contact Gay Salo for more information at [gaylsalo@gmail.com](mailto:gaylsalo@gmail.com)

# Upcoming...

**Welcome to Faith Luncheon-** Mar 9 11:45 Children’s Center. Sign up at the Welcome Table at [**faithsandiego.org**](http://faithsandiego.org).

**My FCC Scavenger Hunt** ends Mar 4th!

**MOP’s Movie Night Fundraiser-** Mar 14, 5-9pm Fellowship Center

**Third Sunday night of prayer -** Mar 16, 6-8:00pm Worship Center

**Pursuing The More Healing Presented by Inviting His Presence-** Mar 21-22 Register on line at My FCC