Dear Open Door Family,

As a teenager I thought of sin mostly in terms of those things that I should not do, or say. Especially the obvious things like lying, stealing, and cheating. It was clear that those things were wrong; they were sin. As I grew in my walk with the Lord, I started to realize that God wanted my words and actions to conform to His standards. But He was also very much interested in my thoughts and my motives. So it was no longer enough NOT to say sinful words; I had to make sure that my mind was not thinking them. It made me realize that God was so much bigger than I had ever imagined. He could see ALL my actions, hear all my words, understand my thoughts and motives. But I still saw sin primarily as NOT doing, saying, or thinking something sinful. That is seeing sin primarily as the wrong things we do. But sin can also be about things we do not do. Look at a verse with me please.

James 4:17 (NET) So whoever knows what is GOOD to do and DOES NOT DO IT is guilty of sin.

*James 4:17* (ESV) So whoever knows the RIGHT THING TO DO and *fails to do it*, for him *IT IS SIN*.

As I was reading these verses I was challenged to think about sin in a different way. This was no longer merely staying away from those things which God has forbidden. This is the idea that if I know of something that God wants me to do and I refuse to do it, then I have sinned. For example if God has placed before me the opportunity to say something encouraging to someone that is hurting but I am afraid that what I say might not be received and as a result I refuse to try, then for me that is sin. Hughes explains it this way: *Be concerned not only about what you do - but also about what you fail to do*. In the past these have been called sins of Omission - those things we should have done, those good things which God placed before us to do - but which we chose not to do. In all of life there are those things to which God has said NO. There are other things in our walk with Jesus that may not be wrong but they may not be of any benefit before God (1 Cor. 10:23). We may decide that they simply do not help us to walk a more godly life. Then there is this last category of things which God calls sin. When we KNOW - the RIGHT thing to do - the GOOD thing to do - then the challenge for us is to OBEY God by doing it. That may be what Paul had in mind when he said:

## *Ephesians 2:10* (*NLT*) For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can DO THE GOOD THINGS **HE planned for us long ago**.

**PRAYER:** Lord God, help me to become more and more aware of those things which I think, say or do which are sinful. May I turn from them and hate them as much You do. Lord, please help me also to see those good things which You are placing before me to do. Give me Your wisdom to see them, and give me Your Help to Accomplish them.

Pastor Mark Kieft