Sin is Sad

Two of my children were in a musical production of the book of Acts a few years ago. It was an excellent telling of the story of the early church. And the discipleship that happened among the children learning their roles and becoming the apostles was unmeasurable.

My favorite part of the play was when Ananias and Saphira died. And the reason that I loved it, was that the way they portrayed the early church’s reaction was grief-stricken. Not angry, not scornful, not satisfied, not critical, not entertained, not scandalized, not unconcerned, not defensive… heartbroken.

I resonate with this feeling as I think of my friends who have been lost to sin. My friends who had affairs and broke their families. My friends who are stuck in addiction. My friends stuck in bitterness, anger, and unforgiveness.

Sin is real, and it is so so sad.

I am heartbroken for them.

So is God. Read your Bibles. Occasionally God responds with anger when spiritual leaders are sinning against him for their own glory and selfish gain. But usually, his response to sin is sadness and compassion.

“Don’t tear your clothing in your grief, but tear your hearts instead. Return to the Lord your God, for he is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He is eager to relent and not punish.”

Joel 2:13 NLT

It is God’s heart that not one be lost.

“For I have come down from heaven to do the will of God who sent me, not to do my own will. And this is the will of God, that I should not lose even one of all those he has given me, but that I should raise them up at the last day. For it is my Father’s will that all who see his Son and believe in him should have eternal life. I will raise them up at the last day.””

John 6:38-40 NLT

“But I will gather together the remnant of my flock from the countries where I have driven them. I will bring them back to their own sheepfold, and they will be fruitful and increase in number. Then I will appoint responsible shepherds who will care for them, and they will never be afraid again. Not a single one will be lost or missing. I, the Lord, have spoken!”

Jeremiah 23:3-4 NLT

Often my own unplanned reaction to sin is not sadness. Often it is anger. Sometimes it is scorn, frustration, derision, or disgust. Occasionally it is satisfaction, as though someone else’s failure somehow validates and secures my own good standing. Gross.

I think when my reaction is anything other than sadness, it is a sign that I am lacking compassion, and lacking love. Which loops back to forgiveness. “Whoever has been forgiven little loves little.” Luke 7:47

And if I find myself having been forgiven little, certainly it isn’t because God has been less forgiving toward me, but rather that I have been less repentant.