

# Someone Will Sin Against You Today, Are You Ready?<sup>1</sup>

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Growing up in North Alabama, I remember going through specific routines in the event of an emergency. I doubt there was a kid who did not know why or when you need to stop, drop, and roll. We were trained in protocols in the event of a tornado, calmly lining up in the hallway and securing our heads from potential debris. We knew how to exit the buildings in case of a fire in a single-file line to safe zones outside. All of these procedures were responses to various kinds of potential disasters we could encounter while in school.

Now what, do you think, are the possibilities that I as a kid in elementary school would actually need to follow through on those drills? How often would a tornado tear through our building? How often would a fire consume the classrooms? Hardly ever, if at all, right? But we were still trained in how to respond in the very unlikely event that they might occur.

What if I told you that on a daily basis you are going to be faced with potential crises or disasters that required a response from you? What if it was not a distant potentiality but an eminent reality? How would you prepare yourself for such situations? Would you be trained to know how to respond? Let me break this down and make the case why every follower of Jesus must have a gospel response plan (GRP).

- Have you ever been hurt by someone else?
- Have you ever been criticized?
- Have you ever been offended?
- Has someone ever sinned against you?
- Have you sinned against someone else?
- Has your day ever taken one unexpected turn after another?
- Have other people let you down or betrayed your trust?
- Have you faced days of disappointment and despair?
- Have you experienced frustration and anger at the failure of others or yourself?

These are just a few questions addressing realities you and I face on a daily basis, and with every question/situation, a response will manifest from your life. But what kind of response will it be? We have a choice to respond out of our sinful nature (Gen. 3) or out of our new identity in Christ. Will our response be driven by guilt and shame, hiding and pretending, blaming and fearing like Adam and Eve in Genesis 3? Or will our response arise from repentance and faith out of a heart resting in God's acceptance of you in Christ?

You are a sinner living among sinners. You are a desperately needy person rubbing shoulders with desperately needy people. What weak, needy sinners need in every moment is to look to a strong, sufficient Savior. That's what we do when we respond to the gospel—we turn from looking to ourselves (whether out of self-pity or self-righteousness) in repentance and we look to Christ in renewed faith and trust.

The problem we have today, I fear, is that most Christians do not have a developed gospel response plan and, therefore, there is no functional repentance and faith response when things happen (internally or externally) in their lives. The default, then, is to look somewhere other than Jesus in our response. And this, I find, is a massive discipleship breakdown for believers.



Someone is going to sin against you. Will you handle that situation with a response that honors the gospel? Will you pursue reconciliation through forgiveness and view that person through the lens of grace? Or will you come across self-righteous and force that person to make atonement for their sin by working their way back into a right relationship with you based on their efforts?

You are going to sin against someone else. Will you handle that situation with a response that honors the gospel? Will you make excuses for your sin? Rationalize it? Blame others for it? Or will you own it, humbly confessing it to God and those whom you sinned against, seeking forgiveness? Will you hide away playing the victim card in self-pity, sulking in your failure, or will you take your sin to the throne of grace to your merciful High Priest?

Paul said, “As you received Christ Jesus the Lord so walk in him...” (Col. 2:6). You receive Jesus by repentance and faith, and you walk in that same repentance and faith. That is to say, this is how we “learn Christ” (Eph. 5:20) and “put on our new self” (i.e., our new identity in Christ). I think the most practically and helpful tool that Christians have today is to be trained to know how to respond to various situations they will encounter in a way that commends the gospel and flows out of a heart fully resting and secure in Jesus. We are not talking about potential dangers here. We’re talking about actual, real-life situations happening every day where Christians will either act out the old man of Genesis 3 or the new man being renewed by the Holy Spirit.

Think back in your life where sin has impacted your relationship with God and others. Are there people that are no longer in your life because of the functional absence of a gospel-driven response? Sadly, I can say that is true for me, and I suspect that if we are cognizant enough, nearly everyone would consent to that reality. But we don’t have to continue that way!

#### **So what is your Gospel Response Plan?**

You are sinner living in a fallen world. You are going to be hurt, betrayed, frustrated, prideful, annoyed, judgmental, pitiful, and so much more. It’s going to happen. But are you going to be trained as a follower of Jesus Christ to know, almost instinctively, how to respond with the gospel through premeditated prescriptions of specific ways to walk in repentance and faith?

Perhaps what we need to do each morning is prepare ourselves with some “gospel drills.” Think about one possible situation a gospel response will be required of you. For example, you are at a restaurant and your server is extremely slow and the food is cold. The server asks you if there is anything else you need, and you are tempted to treat her like her actions deserve. But instead, you respond by saying, “Thank you for serving me today, and by the way, as I pray over my food I would like to know if there is anything I can pray for you about?” Who knows? The server may already be feeling guilty and embarrassed by their service and surprised by your gracious response. They could be going through a terrible crisis in their lives, and they open up to you and provide an opportunity for you to minister to them (and perhaps introduce them to Jesus).

Why that gospel drill? Because you will get bad service and cold food. You will be tempted to act out of the old Adam and not out of the risen Christ. And this is one of countless other ways we need to “learn Christ” and “put on the new self” with a strategy to approach whatever comes our way to walk in repentance and faith and show the transforming power of Christ’s abundant grace actively working in our lives.

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<sup>1</sup> **Source:** Reproduced in its entirety [from www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com) and used for the express purpose of ministry by Men In the Hood Ministries at Gardenside Baptist Church, Lexington, KY, [www.gbclcx.com](http://www.gbclcx.com).

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