

## Twisting The Truth – Session 6: It Is No Mistake

### Series Background

The CTU (Changing Truth Unit) gains a new member and works to train Agent Bender to become a valuable member of the group.

Each session in this series begins with Agent Bender learning new ways to succeed in giving the world new ways to think about what has always been God's will.

Andy Stanley follows that with a 30-minute teaching about what the truth has always been and what it always will be.

Session 1 – The Source of Deception  
Session 2 – All is Not as it Seems  
Session 3 – Says Who?  
Session 4 – Facing Forward  
Session 5 – It's Only Physical  
Session 6 – It's No Mistake

You know how amazingly weird it is — moments of clarity followed suddenly by moments of insanity. We may know the right thing to do, yet we go out and do the exact opposite. Why is that? Is something wrong with us?

Or could it be there is an invisible world impacting our visible world? Is there something we cannot see influencing everything we can see?

The Bible's answer is that, yes, there is an unseen world affecting our lives. It is all around us. It impacts every single thing we do, everything about us. It affects all our relationships. It influences our thinking, our attitudes, and our decision-making. It colors our perspectives on finances, on morality, and on how we do business. And it can actually be life-threatening — physically, emotionally, and relationally.

### Background

Sin. It is such a pesky word. And we do not use it much.

Imagine getting pulled over by a policeman for speeding, and as he steps up to your car window he announces, "You have sinned." Or you mess up a project at work, so your boss calls you into his office and tells you, "You sinned against the company." Or you get a letter from the IRS that begins, "You are guilty of sin against the government."

Not likely. We do not use the S-word. We do not like it. And no wonder. It does not make us feel good about ourselves. Sin makes us think of being accountable to God and his judgment and punishment. It brings to mind divine law and moral absolutes and, as the dictionary puts it, "a willful or deliberate violation of them. It implies we need forgiveness — and that we will have to ask for it.

There is another term we like a lot better: "I just made a mistake." That is all. *Okay, so I made a mistake. Nobody is perfect! Can we just move on?* No punishment required, no forgiveness.

There is a big difference between *mistake* and *sin*. Let us get straight on exactly what that difference is.

### Discussion Starter

Over the last two weeks, what are some mistakes that you have made? What were the circumstances or assumptions that caused those mistakes?

### Video Overview

The biggest difference between "sin" and "just a mistake" is this: If the wrongdoing is only a mistake, that makes me merely a *mistaker*. Without *sin*, I am not a *sinner* — and have no need for a savior.

If I am just a mistaker, all I need to do is try harder next time. Just break those nasty little habits. Be more consistent, more disciplined, more committed.

If I am a sinner, that is more fundamental to whom I am. Trying harder will not cut it. If I am a sinner, I need a savior.

If we are honest with ourselves, we can see through the twist. We do wrong and know exactly what we are doing. It is not careless or unintentional. We may fool others, but not ourselves.

There is also the matter of our disturbing thoughts. No one else sees them, but we cannot escape their repulsiveness.

And what about the guilt we feel? It is deep and dark — and it is real, not imagines.

As if all that was not enough, starting in Matthew 5, Jesus raises the standard on how good we must be in God's eyes. Jesus says that an angry word is like murder and a lustful thought like adultery. He says we must love and pray for our enemies. He says our righteousness — the right kind of living — must surpass anything we have witnessed in others.

Seeing such standards, we respond, "Then there is nobody righteous but God!"

Jesus says, "That is my point." And that is why we need a savior.

In the teachings of Jesus, we encounter two very opposing ideas” “God loves you,” and “You sin; you are a sinner.” Which is it?

“It is both,” Jesus tells us. “You are a sinner – but God loves you. You are worse than you thought, but God love you more than you imagined.” In that love, he provides the Savior from our sin – Jesus, his Son.

Otherwise, there is no hope for us. We will never be able to overcome our sin and meet God’s standards through our own efforts.

*We need a savior.*

### Discussion Questions

1. How have you seen the meaning of sin twisted by our culture?
2. Romans 3:23 makes it clear that everyone has sinned. While most people would agree that nobody is perfect, what is at stake when people buy into the twist and fail to realize the sinfulness that lies at their cores? Do you know people who have bought into this twist?
3. What was Jesus’ message concerning sin from His statement in Matthew 5? What are the different ways that His message affected people? What effect does it have on you?
4. What did God do in response to our sin?
5. Have you come to realize that you are a *sinner* rather than a *mistaker*? If so, when did this happen?

### Mileposts

- Our culture teaches us to view wrongdoing as “just a mistake” rather than as sin.
- Buying into this twist blinds us to our true need for a savior.
- Jesus teaches us not only that we are worse sinners than we thought, but that God loves us more than we can imagine. In that amazing love, Jesus is our Savior from sin.

### Moving Forward

The gospel of Jesus Christ is “good news” because of the “bad news” of our sin and its consequences. Have you embraced the reality that you are a sinner who needs the Savior?

If so, express again in a written prayer your gratitude to God for providing your salvation through the death of Jesus Christ, his Son. Learn to pay special attention to thanking God for this gift as often as you are able.

If you have *not* previously embraced the fact that you are a sinner who needs a Savior, but you want to do that now, you can pray something like this:

God, I am not just a mistaker; I am a sinner. I have sinned against you, and I owe you a debt I cannot pay. I believe that when Jesus died on the cross, He paid that debt for my sin. Today, I am personally receiving your free gift of salvation and your forgiveness of my sin. I no longer trust my own abilities and efforts; instead, I trust the work that Christ completed for me on the cross.

Or use your own words.

That is how sinners find forgiveness and enter the kingdom of God!

### Changing Your Mind

This statement from Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount is a good reminder of why we need a Savior. Your loving Savior himself is telling you this ... and He ultimately makes it possible for you, through your faith in Him:

*Be perfect, therefore,  
as your heavenly father is perfect.  
Matthew 5:48*