

Mars Hill Church Deletes Mark Driscoll's Teaching on Jesus Making Mistakes

May 19, 2014 By Warren Throckmorton

WMWJD?*

On May 4, Mark Driscoll preached on Acts 6:1-7. In keeping with usual procedure, the video of the sermon was not posted on the [church website](#) until yesterday.

Those who watch the sermon on the website are missing some material from the live delivery two weeks ago. **A segment of nearly six minutes was deleted from the sermon after discussion internally and some questions were raised externally. I have obtained a copy of the original sermon and have the missing material here.**

In question is Driscoll's teaching on the difference between sin and mistakes. In general, the [Acts 6:1-7 sermon](#) sounds like a self-defense. However, his teaching on Jesus making mistakes was of enough concern that MHC leaders deleted it. You can watch the edited version of the sermon at the [Mars Hill site](#). At 30:11 into the video, a nearly six minute segment was snipped out. In the video below, I start with point four, "The Difference Between a Sin and a Mistake." The deleted section starts about two minutes into the video:

Transcript:

Ok, ready, what I'm going to tell you now might be a heresy. I'm not sure. We'll see. Ok, um, I'll just say that, so that if it is, I have an out, ok? So, what I'm going to say now is uh, ok I'll just say it. Jesus never sinned, will you give me that, He never sinned, true? Good, you've been well taught, I think. Ok, so never sinned, never violated any command of the Bible, but question, question, here goes, brain explode, ready? Here we go, is it possible that he made some mistakes?

Meaning; when he was a little kid, when Joseph sat him on his bike, he needed no training wheels, didn't wobble, just rolled around Jerusalem. When he played Little League, if he played Little League, every time he got up, it was like, 'Ahhh, walk 'em! Do not throw the ball to Jesus cause he hits

a home run every time! Every time he hits a home run.' Do you think he ever hit a single? He ever hit a double? Do you think he would've ever swung and missed? If the ball was on the outside corner and it was a strike, maybe one time, hypothetically possibly, he didn't swing at it.

Did he ever make a mistake? Not a sin, a mistake. Did He ever have to do something twice because he didn't get it right the first time. When he was learning as a little kid how to write his letters, was it like, 'I can do this, mom, I made the heavens and the Earth. Watch, I can do cursive too. Or, or, did He have to, 'ok, this is how you make, oh, ah, ok, I got it right the second time. What do you think? What do you think? It says in Luke that Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and favor with men and God. He grew. What that means is that he had to learn how to do things. You're going to need to learn how to do things. One of the ways we learn how to do things is we don't get it right the first time. We fail. So then we learn from it and we figure out how to do it, that's how we do things, right? Some of you are paralyzed by religious perfectionism. I need to get it all right, I need to get it all right the first time. You're not Jesus. And you know what? Jesus may have learn how to do things by figuring it out, maybe not always getting it 100% right the first time.

Let me be careful with this. It's not immoral. It's not sinful. It's not ungodly. It's part of your humanity. You don't need to repent of being human. You need to give yourself a little grace and be human. We need to give grace to one another. Otherwise you're like one of those parents to the kid like, 'you got it wrong!' And the kid's like, "and that's how I learn. I need to try it and figure it out. So much of life is growth through mistakes, and in that category of failure, sometimes it's a sin to be repented of, but sometimes it's a mistake to be learned from. You get the difference?

This is why, my son's in the middle of baseball season and track season for my daughter, we figured it out, we've got a hundred games with my son, and they keep raining out and rescheduling and now my son, it's time for all-stars cause we need more games and so I was working with my 8 year old son Gideon yesterday, he's trying out for all-stars and he, when he was in the outfield, running him in the infield, outfield, getting him ready for everything, he would push the ball and it would (made an arc motion) he doesn't realize that he's gotten bigger and stronger and he's got a good arm, and he can take his crow hop and come right on over the top and he can throw the ball on a straight line from the outfield all the way into home. So

yesterday we're playing catch and Gideon pushed the ball (made arc motion) instead of throw the ball. Here's what I didn't say, 'Gideon you're in sin! When Jesus played outfield, He never had a loop on the ball. He threw it straight by the power of the Holy Spirit. You should throw it straight by the power of the Holy Spirit and repent of the pushing and looping the ball! Be like Jesus!' I didn't say it like that to my 8 year old son. What I said was, 'Hey, Giddy, you know what? You're arm's gotten stronger, you don't need to push the ball, you can throw it, you're strong enough to get it all the way in on a line buddy. He needed a little coaching, a little encouragement, and he learned. That's what life's like. That's what God the Father's like. But that's not always what religious teaching is like.

I might revisit the theology in this teaching in a future post. In the mean time, I hope my theologically inclined readers will weigh in.

I can't help but remember that Mark Driscoll defended himself against plagiarism charges by saying "[mistakes were made](#)." I wonder if Driscoll thinks Jesus would have made "[citations errors](#)," yet without sin.

The textual basis for this sermon is Acts 6:1-7 where the Greek Jews were bothered that their widows weren't getting as much care as the Hebraic Jews. We are not told in the Bible that the differential treatment was a mistake but Driscoll interprets the passage that way. From there, he contemplates Jesus as a boy doing things He never did.

The fact that Mars Hill leaders thought this passage should be removed is intriguing. Was Driscoll making an analogy to himself? It seems so because he follows this section up with a reference to leaders:

Every leader fails at something. And your failure doesn't need to be the end of you; it could be the beginning of your learning.

Reflecting on Jesus' humanity is a worthy theological topic but in this context, it seems like a distraction from the many calls from former members and pastors to enter into reconciliation and mediation over alleged sins, not mistakes. Former and current members don't care much about hitting a baseball or writing in cursive. They have other concerns and deleting questionable sermon material won't change that.

(*What Mistakes Would Jesus Do?)

Read more:

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/warrenthrockmorton/2014/05/19/mars-hill-church-deletes-mark-driscolls-teaching-on-jesus-making-mistakes/#ixzz34Z1LpSH9>