

Putting the Finger on Iniquity

Romans 6:18 (NKJV) – *And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.*

‘Sin’ by definition in the Greek is ‘missing the mark’. That means, not coming up to God’s standard. Sin can happen in many ways and be in many forms, such as accidental or deliberate. One form is called “besetting sin”¹, which means one that is consistently happening in a person’s life because it easily ensnares them. This consistent sin comes from iniquity, which is a defective heart attitude that gives rise to sin when it isn’t smothered by the person or destroyed by the Lord.

It’s interesting to note that the both Jesus and the NT writers never presented the teaching that we are to use the 10 Commandments as the basis of all our life’s judgements. ***This is true!*** Yet the church system I grew up in had the 10 Commandments as the centre-piece of the life of believers. Instead, the focus of the NT church was on the Law of Love², not the Law and commandments. Paul stated numerous times that Love fulfils the Law.³ James refers to this as the ‘Royal Law’.⁴

Speaking of the Law...for those who follow the OT food laws saying they are binding, Paul taught that “nothing is unclean”.⁵

We very easily look at sin as an array of severity from simple mistakes up to “sin leading to death”⁶. However, sin is sin, and we should see it this way – apart from the unpardonable sin⁷. When we don’t, we start to concentrate on the ‘big’ sins in others’ lives and ignore the ‘little’ sins in our own. This is a dangerous way to think as it puts us in a precarious position of justifying sin which God doesn’t.

All sin needs to be rooted out of our lives, but to do that we must be prepared to give it up and eliminate every skerrick of it. The starting point is to recognise the vast gamut of things that are sinful – things that don’t come up to God’s standard. For example:

Galatians 5:19-21 (NKJV) – *Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 (NKJV) – *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.*

Revelation 21:8 (NKJV) – *But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.*

Colossians 3:5-10 (NKJV) – *Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,*

1 – Hebrews 12:1

2 – John 13:34; 2 John 1:5

3 – Romans 13:10; Galatians 5:14

4 – James 2:8

5 – Romans 14:14

6 – 1 John 5:16-17, Romans 6:16

7 – Matthew 12:31-32

1 Peter 4:15 (NKJV) – *But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters.*

Putting them in a list for easy examination, we have these to begin with:

1. Murder(Matthew 5:22, Romans 13:9, Galatians 5:21, 1 Corinthians 6:9, 1 Timothy 1:9)
2. Thievery(1 Peter 4:15, 1 Corinthians 6:10)
3. Evil deeds(1 Peter 4:15)
4. Lust(Matthew 5:28)
5. Outbursts of wrath(Galatians 5:20, Colossians 3:8)
6. Anger(Matthew 5:22, Colossians 3:8)
7. Adultery(Romans 13:9, Galatians 5:19-21, 1 Corinthians 6:10, James 4:4)
8. False witnessing(Romans 13:9)
9. Fornication⁸(Galatians 5:19, 1 Corinthians 6:9, Colossians 3:5, 1 Timothy 1:9, Revelation 21:8)
10. Lewdness(Galatians 5:19, 2 Corinthians 12:21)
11. Sorcery(Galatians 5:20, Revelation 21:8)
12. Idolatry(Galatians 5:20, 1 Corinthians 6:9, Revelation 21:8)
13. Hatred(Galatians 5:20)
14. Contentiousness(Galatians 5:20, Colossians 3:5-10)
15. Jealousy(Galatians 5:20)
16. Selfish ambition(Galatians 5:20)
17. Dissension(Galatians 5:20)
18. Heresy⁹(Galatians 5:20)
19. Envy(Galatians 5:21)
20. Drunkenness(Galatians 5:21, 1 Corinthians 6:10)
21. Revelry(Galatians 5:21)
22. Homosexuality¹⁰(1 Corinthians 6:9, Romans 1:27)
23. Sodomy(1 Corinthians 6:9, 1 Timothy 1:9)
24. Covetousness(1 Corinthians 6:10, Ephesians 5:3, Colossians 3:5)
25. Reviling¹¹(1 Corinthians 6:10)
26. Extortion(1 Corinthians 6:10)
27. Lawlessness(1 Timothy 1:9)
28. Insubordination(1 Timothy 1:9)
29. Ungodliness(1 Timothy 1:9)
30. Profanity(1 Timothy 1:9, 6:20, 2 Timothy 2:16)
31. Kidnapping(1 Timothy 1:9)
32. Perjury¹²(1 Timothy 1:9)
33. Cowardice(Revelation 21:8)
34. Unbelief(Revelation 21:8)
35. Abominableness(Revelation 21:8)
36. Evil desires.....(Colossians 3:5)
37. Sensual appetite¹³.....(Colossians 3:8)
38. Impurity.....(Colossians 3:8)
39. Malice.....(Colossians 3:8)
40. Lying(1 Timothy 1:9, Revelation 21:8)

8 – Including male and female prostitution.

9 – Literally: ‘causing divisions’

10 – Literally: ‘catamites’, ‘male prostitute’

11 – Literally: ‘railing’, ‘abusive speech’

12 – Literally: ‘false swearing’

13 – Passion

41. Blasphemy.....(Colossians 3:8)
42. Filthy language.....(Colossians 3:8)
43. Being another person’s unauthorized overseer(1 Peter 4:15)
44. Complaining(1 Corinthians 10:10)
45. Gossiping(1 Timothy 5:13)
46. Busybodying/Meddling¹⁴(1 Timothy 5:13, 2 Thessalonians 3:11)
47. Idle Babbling¹⁵(1 Timothy 6:20, 2 Timothy 2:16)
48. Prejudice¹⁶(James 2:9)
49. Extravagant living¹⁷(2 Corinthians 12:21, Galatians 5:19, Ephesians 5:3, Colossians 3:5)

NOTE: You’ll notice that divorce is missing from this list. The church today regards it as a ‘mortal sin’, but it doesn’t rate a mention in the 1st church’s teaching. Absent also from the list is: Sabbath, Christmas, Easter, feasts, tithing, Sunday meetings¹⁸, and the 10 Commandments, all of which the church system imputes a person as sinful if they neglect them in any way.

The above list is very legalistic, but the law is designed to point to sin, not to bring deliverance.¹⁹ Rules point out what is wrong so we can deal with it. Without highlighting what is sinful, any person, spirit-filled or not, can harden their heart to the nudging of the Spirit and cover up iniquity and sin. We don’t live in a kingdom of legalism, so **this is why it is important to have sound doctrine, discipleship, mentoring, fathering/mothering, as well as openness and accountability within Kingdom community²⁰**, all to keep us in line when we stray.

The response of the person to a list of sin like the one above is what matters, instead of any legalistic or religious outcome that could eventuate. The spiritual reaction to uncovering any of these in your life is to: confess; repent; turn to God for deliverance; and ask for forgiveness – in that order. These sins should not become fruit in your life, but rather, eliminated with the Spirit’s help. It is also essential that you bring your mind under the Blood and protect yourself from condemnation after being forgiven, by pressing ‘delete’ and moving on from sinful experiences.²¹

Jesus told the religious leaders – the ‘holy men’ of his day – that he should see fruit²² in their lives that they had repented.²³ We are no different. Members of the holiness movement and spiritual people today, like these holy men in the Gospels, can also be blind to various sins in their lives as they focus on what is their main intent. Imbalance does this to us, it sidelines our oversight of ourselves.

Imbalance occurs as we focus on the spiritual rather than our relationship with Father. It’s not about being spiritual or gifted, but about being sons who love to please their heavenly Dad, and lovers who love to please their Beloved.

Finally, did you know that there are a couple of broad-sweeping statements about what is the standard of sin for us that contain no lists – no specific actions to identify?

Galatians 4:3 – *We, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. [So don’t get involved in bondage again]²⁴*

1 John 5:17a (NKJV) – *All unrighteousness is sin*

Romans 14:23b (NKJV) – *for whatever is not from faith is sin.*

14 – Busybodies want to know everyone’s ‘business’. Meddlers want to interfere in other people’s lives.

15 – Literally: ‘empty discussions’, ‘discussing useless subjects’

16 – Literally: ‘servile regard’ or ‘personal favouritism’

17 – Literally: physically - ‘uncleanness’; morally - ‘lustful, luxurious, profligate living’

18 – Meetings are recommended, not a legal obligation. See Hebrews 10:25

19 – Romans 3:20

20 – Jesus chastised some of the 1st churches because they didn’t deal with Jezebel and the Nicolaitans. See Revelation 2:15, 16, 20

21 – This is a Mike Bickle expression

22 – The KJV uses the word “meet” in Jesus’ statement which translates to: ‘answerable to amendment of life’

23 – Matthew 3:8

24 – Inference added. [LDS]

We've got to get past the Pentecostal belief that we are at that point in time where Jesus has written his law in our hearts and we obey him automatically²⁵. History and experience in the Pentecostal system over 30 years has shown me that this is a false assumption, as well as false teaching. Iniquity and sin still abound in spirit-baptised believers – the evidence is irrefutable.

We've also got to get away from legalism which categorizes things and lists misdemeanours and activities to be done. Any form of “Don't do this” and “Don't do that”, is legalism and has nothing to do with life in the Spirit. Remember Paul's astonishing statement:

1 Corinthians 6:12a (NKJV) – *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful.*

The key is choosing what is righteous and occupying ourselves in what will build us up as a Kingdom Son. **By 'righteous', I mean what God approves of – not what rules specify.** Judging our actions and speech this way – God's way; the Kingdom way – also brings our focus onto what we don't do and don't say, as well as what we refuse to do and say out of our rebellion.

Example: In the 1980's the Lord taught me a lesson. He informed me that he wanted me to do what was righteous, not what was right. You see, I had been doing something that was not illegal according to the law of the land, but not what he wanted. His message refocused me from legalism to righteousness.

What, then, keeps ignorant of what is sinful when the knowledge of it is written on our hearts?²⁶ Simple – the flesh, rebellion, unbelief, doubt and a heart of stone²⁷ all contribute to dulling our spiritual knowledge of sin. Searing our consciences is also a cause according to Paul.²⁸

So, we must keep in our mind and heart that sin is not coming up to God's standard, not a set of rules or commands like the 10 Commandments. We'll never be perfect in our thinking, speech or actions, but the blood totally covers these. Therefore, we must keep operating in a repentant lifestyle so that we appropriate the perfection before God that the blood affords us.

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RESOURCE

Check out the DVD 'Genius'²⁹ by Ray Comfort. Also the video's trailer on YouTube.³⁰
It's available in Australia from Living Waters Downunder.³¹

25 – Romans 8:10; 10:16

26 – 2 Corinthians 3:3

27 – Ezekiel 36:26

28 – 1 Timothy 4:2

29 – geniusthemovie.com

30 – youtu.be/ZW2lhWfa28g

31 – au.livingwatersdownunder.com