

Loving a Total Sinner

Sin is a crime against the law of God. The Church says it is not merely breaking a rule but also doing damage to yourself and making yourself a threat to God and others. To love a threat to you and others and God would be to hate yourself and others and God so you would end up evil. It is different if the sinner has repented and tried to rebuild the ruined relationships.

The doing of damage to yourself is unintended. When you steal £50, you do it for the £50 and not to hurt yourself and you don't want to hurt others by them finding out. So any damage done must be attached to the sin by God but it is not intrinsic to the sin. That is why Amy can be as bad of a prostitute as Tammy and yet have less damage done to her personality. God obviously wants to reinforce and sanction and honour the rules by attaching a price to them and that price differs from sinner to sinner though one may be as bad as the other. So the rule comes first not the damage. The damage is the servant of the rule.

It would be strange to be as worried about people harming themselves by sin as you are about the rule being broken. It would be stranger to be more worried about people harming themselves than about the rule being broken. Both would be sinful with the second option being the bigger sin. In that light, loving the sinner and hating the sin would be absurd. You would worry about the rule being broken more than the person. Thus you could not claim that hating the sin does not mean you hate the sinner. You would be in denial about your hate for the sinner if you did.

How can you wish evil on a sin (hate) and love the sinner?

The notion that a sinner has a good side and we must see them more as good people than as sinners does not help. It is still saying you must hate them in so far as they are sinful.

To see them as good really means to see they should be given the reward of love. But that presupposes a person having the ability to deserve hate. You cannot regard love as legitimate without automatically sanctioning hate.

If you say you love the sinner for the sinner is not all bad and hate the sin, that implies that if you met a person who has hardly any good qualities at all you would have to hate that person. It is saying you condone and encourage that. Even if you think no such person exists, the fact remains you hold hate in your heart. You would hate them if they did exist. You still have the intention to hate. Religion gives you the potential to hate. An atheist might have a great potential to hate but a Christian person has an even bigger potential for she or he regards sin as such a grave insult to God that it merits everlasting torment in Hell.

Love the sinner and hate the sin is as silly as love the nurse and hate the woman who is the nurse. The teaching that we must love the sinner and hate the sin because we are sinners ourselves suggests that hating the sinner is good but only if you are not a sinner! It involves wishing you were in a position to be able to hate the sinner! That is a fine love - it is really a demonstration of how we prefer looking good to being good.

The Bible says we are sinners by nature. We are not sinners because we sin. We sin because we are sinners. We are sinners by nature like a frog is a frog for it is made that way. This doctrine that we are by nature sinners means that there is no part of us that is really good. The good we do has mercenary motives. Perhaps we only help the poor for the sake of the principle of helping others that we cannot live without. Its about us not them so our kindness has self-interest all over it. Doctrines like that encourage hatred towards the sinner.

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