

SIN IS A VINDICTIVE CONCEPT

Sin is an offence against God or to put it another way, it is breaking the law of God. Its a crime not against the civil law of the land but the civil law of God. Crime is that which cannot be tolerated. Thus Christians worthy of the name will not tolerate sin. They will vote so that the law of the land does not tolerate it either. Some sin breaches the civil law of God and the other sins violate his moral law.

Sinner means the same thing as lawbreaker - the law concerned is the law of God. Law is needed to regulate human affairs - we can't have chaos. So why does God need law? He doesn't need it for he is powerful enough to stop say some president destroying the world in nuclear war. He doesn't need to set up laws forbidding this.

The concept of sin is necessarily vindictive. Sin is going against what God expects of us. He is unhappy when we sin. He hurts himself because we sin. If you feel hurt at the actions of others it is because you let yourself feel that way. God is all-powerful and does not need to suffer over our sins. If he does then he is punishing himself because we sin. He is mentally disturbed. He is angry at us for what he does to himself. He would take it out on us. He is vengeful.

If somebody says they are a fool, you know this is not true. They are not summed up by any mistake they make or any wrong they do. But if you believe in sin that deserves and takes you to the everlasting punishment of Hell, mortal sin, then clearly you are to be summed up by your mortal sin. No wonder the Church says that if you commit a mortal sin of say masturbation and do not repent all the good you do will bring you no merit before God. He will not reward it for he sees it as you trying to be good on your terms not his. Mortal sin and hate go together.

Prayer of Pope Pius XII which he composed for the Marian Year "Oh Immaculate Mother of Jesus and our Mother Mary . O Conqueress of evil and death, inspire in us a deep horror of sin, which makes the soul detestable to God and a slave of Hell!"

This prayer implies that we do not have a deep horror of sin and need it. So we must be sinners and hated by God. Mary is prayed to because God hates us. She has a civilising influence on God.

Evil implies hateful. It implies very bad. It implies there is no goodness. This is far too strong. Life is not that black and white. There is no right and wrong or righteousness or unrighteousness. What you have is good and less good. To accuse people of being capable of evil is just excoriating them.

Even if a person who does something with the "evillest" of intentions, the fact remains that they intended some good as well.

To accuse somebody of sin or to say that sinners deserve Hell is really saying you hate them at some level. The hate is real no matter how much you pretend its not there. For the Church to condemn sin as very very serious and to make an abomination of it and then to let them off lightly with it shows its good training for somebody that wants to trivialise suicide bombings etc. The intention to trivialise is there in both cases. It shows that the Church is capable of being very uncaring and can easily descend into vindictiveness.

To call somebody evil is to call them worthy of hate or hateful. To call somebody sinful is to add on to this. It is even worse.

You receive somebody's gospel. You make that message your own message. It becomes all yours then. You might have got it from somebody else but now that you have made the message your own you might as well have created it yourself. There is no difference in what it is like - how you got the message makes no difference. It does not matter any more if it was invented by you or the other person.

With that in mind, we cannot believe Christians who go, "You feel we judge your sin. It is not us but the Bible that judges." They are covering up their true attitude.

To say that only God can judge is to say, "I would judge you if I knew and judge you as fit for Hell." It sounds like, "I love you but..." Yet Christians who claim that saying God judges not them use this claim as proof that they actually love sinners! Keep your barbed love thanks very much guys!

Christianity says sin is the worst evil for it insults the perfect and infinite love and goodness of God. So sin is worse than a

plague that takes the whole world to a long and agonising death. Such a faith is neither sane nor good. When belief in God presents human evil as being that bad, the belief is simply vile.

The concept of sin is vindictive. If somebody does wrong, its done. What matter is encouraging that person to open their heart to living a better life. That is what matters not categorising what they did as sin. It is true that if a person does evil the person deserves to suffer for it. But it is not that simple. It is not going to encourage the person to change for the better. If the person has it in them to change the person may change whether punishment is on the menu or not.

There is no need for accusing anybody of sin even if there is a right to accuse of them of doing wrong. The concept of sin goes over and beyond what is needed. Thus it is clearly vindictive.

Deserving means earning. If you hate anybody and wilfully wish evil on them, then you deserve to be hated similarly yourself. Many religions claim that hatred is wrong. But if they are to make any sense, they cannot say it is wrong because it is undeserved. Can they say that it is wrong because it is painful for the person who hates and sours them and can put things out of control? No - what if a person enjoys the pain and is going to die before it makes them completely nasty and bitter? They are forced to make do with the lame statement that God forbids hate. That is good for nothing. Its not a reason. To condemn hating is to condemn the choice of the person who chooses to hate. Your choice is never something you do - strictly speaking - but something you become.

If you can't deserve to be hated then you can't deserve to be loved.

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.

The teaching that you reject an eternity of happiness with God by having sex outside marriage is really ordering you to reject it if you have this forbidden sex. The Church teaches that you can feel that this sex is good and even sacred and feel no need to repent. Then, rejecting God and true love can be deceptive. You can do it and convince yourself you are not doing it . The Church is saying that evil can be a clever counterfeit of love. It can blind you to the way to Heaven and leave you in Hell. Anyway the point is, the Church can say that those who live in sin are doing it wilfully even if they say their conscience is clear. The Catholic Church is saying, "If you masturbate then intend to commit mortal sin by it. See it as worse than what it is." Such a religion would be the Devil's work if there is a Devil!

The belief that acts such as masturbation are seriously sinful and will take you away from God forever if you die is the cause of the intention to separate from God by this so-called sin. The Church keeps Hell full!

The Handbook of Atheist Spirituality says that ethics is nothing more than doing what reflects my dignity (page 42). In other words, I demean myself if I hit a stranger on the street for nothing. If one is religious, one may feel uncomfortable with the thought that ethics is about me and not God. This shows that religious morality is about doing what looks good but not really about true concern for human dignity.

Consider the following options.

If I hit the stranger for nothing I demean my dignity.

If I hit the stranger for nothing I demean God's dignity for I must honour God by obedience.

The first is more encouraging to the one who wishes to do good. The second is off-putting for its not about me but about God. And its about obedience and nobody likes to obey - they want to do things because they want to and not because its about obeying.

The doctrine of sin is about obedience and thus is discouraging to the good person.

Also, the more you think you have a reason to hit the stranger the less you demean yourself or God. If you think God has a purpose for evil - and he will do if he lets you do it - then it follows that of the following:

If I hit the stranger I demean my dignity.

If I hit the stranger I demean God's dignity for I must honour God by obedience.

The first option gives the biggest incentive not to hit. Belief in God diminished the incentive a bit at least. It might not be noticeable but it's there.

We regard the usage of terms such as tinker as indicating hatred for the travelling community. It is time we had the same attitude to those who use the term sin or sinner. The Christian may say, "I say I am a sinner and I say others are sinners. I do not do this in a spirit of pride but in humility for I am saying I am a sinner as well." But that is an attempt to manipulate. What would you think of somebody who said, "Everybody is scum but I am scum too!" Would that be any improvement? No. Indeed including yourself makes it worse! You are important too! And if you think everybody is scum but you, you are saying, "I can be better than they are and be good to them. And I will be." If you think you are scum you won't help.

One notorious example of Roman Catholic vindictiveness is in the Roman Catholic doctrine that it is a mortal sin to miss Mass on Sunday through your own fault. Unless you get forgiveness, you will be punished forever in Hell for this sin. It is a huge punishment for what on the face of it seems to be a small act of service. The Church reasons that missing Mass is done with such great malice that the smallness of the service is what makes the sin so bad. One out of contempt for God refuses to do the small service for him. But that does not explain how missing Mass is a hell-deserving sin. It only accounts for the disposition behind missing Mass. In reality, saying missing Mass is a mortal sin means that you will go to Hell forever by divine law regardless of how much or how little you hate God. Hating God intensely would be a separate sin altogether.

Sin is a vindictive concept.

It may be wrong to respond in a hateful way to a person who hates you. But to be vindictive against a system is different. If religion has hateful attitudes to certain wrongs then it has to admit that secularists have the right to hate its masses, its holy statues, its Bible, its teachings and to try and turn people against them.