

# I Hate Sin

By Morris D. Norman

"ABHOR THAT WHICH IS EVIL" (Rom. 12:9)

How anyone can contemplate the terribleness of sin and what it has done to all of mankind, and not de-test sin, is hard to understand.

### SIN IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Every physical pain since Eden;
  - Every tear of sorrow ever shed;
  - Every mistreated husband or wife;
  - Every divorce that destroyed a home; Every abuse ever heaped on a child;
  - Every broken-hearted parent over a wayward offspring;
  - Every illegitimate child ever born;
  - Every ruined and misspent life;
  - Every loved one lost by death;
  - Every injustice done to any man;
  - Every war that ever was waged;
  - Every ill-feeling toward any brother;
  - Every disturbance in any church;
  - Every division and apostasy from Truth;
- (ad infinitum).

But what is of graver consequence, sin has estranged every sinful soul from God. Every soul that goes down to hell will be there because of sin.

"The soul that sinneth it shall die" (Ezek. 18:20). "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God;" "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 3:23; 6: 23). Sin damns!!!

The terribleness of sin is seen in the extreme price that had to be paid to redeem man from sin. It cost heaven the Son of God. Sin holds man in such bondage that it is impossible for man to escape by any deed or merit of his own. It was necessary that a sinless offering be made to meet divine justice, so that man could be saved. Jesus, born of a virgin by the Holy Spirit, was God in the flesh to offer Himself for the sin of the world. "He came to deliver us from the present evil world" (Gal. 1:4).

"I HATE SIN!!" I have given the feeble efforts of life to the preach-ing of the gospel, God's power to save man from sin. I would that all persons would so hate sin that they would give the efforts of life to the overcoming of sin's power. There is no way to completely eradicate sin from the world in which we live, but it would be a far better world to live in if all men would apply the gospel's power to live as far above sin as possible. But only through Jesus Christ can this be made possible.



"How beautiful heaven must be!" There will be no sin there!

Lisa Carter (Luke's mother)	Jesse Godwin (Troy's father and Mac's grandfather)	Nell Holcomb (Ben's grandmother, Joannetta's aunt)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Jamin Hymel (Chad's son)
Madeline Morton (Greg Lanier's g'daughter)	Alexander Locke (Jeremiah's cousin's son)	Betty Bradford	Hazel Gilliland and Sherry Carroll (Toni's relatives)
Ricky Tucker (Tyler's cousin)	Ermogene Laxson (Sara Lail's grandmother)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	William Smith (Ken Sullivan's brother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Arabelle Rich (Joannetta's aunt)	Sasha Rozier (Makenzie Reynolds' cousin)	Eva Jean Cavender (Matt's grandmother)
Bonnie Rhodes Kirkley (Toni Herd's family)	Howard Vaughan (Mary Ann's Granddad)	Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephew)	James Palmer (Rachel Hobbard's grandfather)

### November Birthdays

- 1-Paulina Zacarius
- 2-Debbi Coleman
- 6-Troy Godwin
- 6-Bridgette Borden
- 7-Amy Godwin
- 8-Ashley Miller
- 9-Darla Hahn
- 11-Andrew Hahn
- 12-Randal Porterfield
- 13-Toni Herd
- 13-Emerson Daniels
- 13-Dylan Bartlett
- 13-Ronaldo Henriquez
- 16-Nicole Pender
- 16-Alexander Dunaway
- 18-Alaina Bagents
- 23-Mary Ann Roberts
- 25-Olyvia Winslett
- 25-Silas Weldon
- 27-Scott Fowler
- 28-Will Harris
- 30-David Simpson

### News and Notes

- ☒ - Carson Fowler suffered a knee injury last weekend but should recover through rehab without surgery.
- ☒ - Chuck Hunt's dad, Charles, has been diagnosed with bone marrow cancer and is scheduled to begin chemo on Tuesday.
- ☒ - Laura Humphrey's dad, Frank Hand, continues to make progress and the thyroid news for Laura's mom, Crystal, looks good, but they will do a CT scan on Tuesday.
- ☒ - Congratulations to all our newlyweds! Blake and Bethany (Bradford) Tolliver; Will and Ali (Ingram) King; Chris and Beth (Lingerfelt) Zeannah.
- ☒ - Please pray for Abbie Harrison's grandmother, Jean Buchanan, who is suffering with cirrhosis.
- ☒ - Please pray for our expectant mothers: Amanda Stephens, Brooke Perkins and Jenna Vaughn.
- ☒ - The heart issues that Christopher and Anna's dad, Gerald White, is having do not appear to be serious.
- ☒ - Please keep those in your prayers who are in the adoption process: Kevin and Jessica Anderson.
- ☒ - Please pray for the Moreno's in the visa process...

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# The Auburn Beacon


Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)



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## Holding a Church Hostage

By Edward O. Bragwell, Sr.



### Thoughts to Ponder

We therefore ought to receive such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth. (3 John 8)

"I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us. Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish do, putting them out of the church." -- 3 John 9,10.

A brother may unilaterally decide on a course of action for the church. He may be unable and/or unwilling to reasonably try to persuade the church of the validity of his judgment. ... He usually couples his demand with a threat - either stated or implied.

During the Iranian hostage crisis, a TV news series was called: "America held hostage". It showed how a few fanatics with a few weapons were virtually holding the most powerful nation in the world hostage. It was a trying time for our government's officials. If the nation gave into their demands, it would encourage them to more such actions. If it acted against them without meeting their demands, someone was bound to get hurt -maybe innocent people. There seemed to be no good solution.

The daily news tells us of new instances. Some at home. Some abroad. A few zealots demanding that the world dance to their tune - or else. One shuttered at what might happen if such ones rose to the top in some powerful nation. Perish the thought.

Diotrephes was a spiritual terrorist who held the church where he was a member hostage. He loved preeminence. Somehow he gained the control of the church. The results are well

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Worship .....10:20 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM  
**Wednesday**  
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM  
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known. He opposed the apostles. He refused to receive those sent by them. He used malicious words against them. He was not content with not receiving faithful brethren, he forbade others from doing so. If they did he put them out of the church. Can you imagine what it must have been like to have been a member of that church? Can you imagine the tension that must have existed? Brethren would almost be afraid to breathe for fear of crossing Diotrephes.

Not everyone who loves preeminence has the ability to gain control of the church like Diotrephes. One may not have enough power and support to put anyone out of the church. He is not qualified for real leadership or scriptural oversight. (If he were he would not love preeminence or be self-willed nor would he want the kind of power he now desires). He or she can still, to a great degree control the church by holding it hostage with an ungodly temperament. Other members live with the constant threat of trouble or embarrassment if his demands are not met. Often brethren will meet his demands to avoid the scene he can create.

In a business meeting several options (authorized under generic Scriptural authority) for doing the Lord's work may be discussed. Brethren try to decide which option is the most expedient for this time and place. It is obvious to all present that one method is likely the best choice for them. Obvious to all, that is, except Diotrephes, Jr. He must exercise his power of objection. If the method is not the one he suggested, no telling what he might do or say. He might threaten to go elsewhere. He knows no church likes losing a member. He might just sit back and take

verbal pot shots at those who are working the option adopted by the brethren. He might just pout and dare anyone to try to involve him in the work.

A brother may unilaterally decide on a course of action for the church. He may be unable and/or unwilling to reasonably try to persuade the church of the validity of his judgment. He simply tells them what he thinks they ought to do or not do. He usually couples his demand with a threat - either stated or implied.

If something is his idea, then he will work his head off for it. If not, then he finds ways to hinder the work. If brethren want his cooperation and/or avoid trouble, then they had best follow his recommendations. All too often, brethren will give into his demands to avoid the hassle.

A favorite sport a few brethren is nit-picking. Legitimate constructive criticism, properly discussed with those who can help and be helped it, is good. This is not what I am talking about. Capable, but sensitive brethren are discouraged from preaching, teaching, leading singing or some other work that needs doing because of such nit pickers. They know the price they will have to pay. If one does accept a work, he is constantly aware that anything he says or does could be a target for the nitpicker. So, the work of the church is held hostage out a real fear of being picked apart by such characters.

Let us have more "fellow workers for the truth" (**v. 8**) and fewer like Diotrephes who seek attention and power - even if it means controlling the church by pettiness. The Bible does not teach that a congregation should be ruled by majority vote - nor, does it teach that it should be ruled the whims of some sorehead.



## Love and Not Obey

By Gary Henry

I delight to do Your will,  
O my God, And Your law  
is within my heart.  
**(Psalm 40:8).**

Growth in our knowledge of God means making progress toward real delight in doing whatever is pleasing to God. Spiritual maturity must include this element of joyful conformity to God's will. It is not enough to be able to identify what is

good, or even to appreciate its value. If godly wisdom has given us a taste for the good, then we must do the good which we've come to appreciate. This is what constitutes devotion to God.

The person whose love for God does not result in obedience is practicing a religion that amounts to idolatry. Thomas Cranmer wrote, "Love God with your whole heart. Do everything for his sake. And above all, obey God. For if we merely revere, love, and trust — but do not obey — God, we are making God into what we want; we are making him into a false god." This is an important point, worth sober consideration by every seeker of God.

If we say to God, "We love you, but we'll only obey you if your will meets our approval," we're not bowing before the God who objectively exists. Instead, we're engaging in a subjective exercise: whittling God down, smoothing Him out, and mak-

The important thing is not whether He pleases us, but whether we please Him, and reverence means adjusting ourselves to Him lovingly. Let us pray for the good sense to recognize what God's will is, and let us not hesitate to act accordingly.

ing Him into something more agreeable to our preference. We're adjusting God to our will, perhaps expecting Him to obey us rather than us obeying Him. To do this, of course, is to worship not God but a figment of our imagination. And in its lack of reverence, this kind of idolatry is not far behind that of the ancient worshiper who made a physical object to his lik-

ing and then bowed down before it (**Isaiah 44:9-20**). The idolatry of disobedience, whether ancient or modern, is a mistake we must be careful to avoid.

It cannot be said too often: religion is primarily about God, not about us. In an age when many feel free to conceive of God in any way that pleases them personally, we need frequent reminders that the objective reality of God cannot be bent to fit the shape of our philosophy. The important thing is not whether He pleases us, but whether we please Him, and reverence means adjusting ourselves to Him lovingly. Let us pray for the good sense to recognize what God's will is, and let us not hesitate to act accordingly.

"True devotion is a constant, determined, prompt, and active will to do what we know is pleasing to God" (Francis de Sales).

