

## Sin - cont.

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that means 'I live for myself, for my own glory and happiness, and I'll work for your happiness if it helps me.' Communally, self-centeredness is destroying peace and justice in the world, tearing the net of interwovenness, the fabric of humanity."

### My Response

Call sin what is it, don't redefine it (1 Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 3:5ff).

### Quotations

Quick! Name the seven deadly sins! I admit, I had to look 6th century Pope Gregory's list: Pride, lust, gluttony, envy, greed, wrath and sloth. Now, a Vatican official has told the Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano his view of additional modern sins -- more "social" than individual. Mind-altering drugs, genetic manipulation, and economic inequality made his list. I suspect we can't really subtract from the "master list," if you will. But if you were adding to it, what would you say are some 21st century sins?

[Alex 51](#) wrote: *I'd like to add homophobia as one of the deadly sins. Having been SPAT ON by right-wing slavic "Christians" and told I am going to \_ \_ \_ \_ simply because I am gay is terrifying.* 3/25/2008.

## Sin - cont.

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### My Response

There is an attempt today to downplay sin, redefine sin, normalize sin, legalize sin, and promote sin. Yes, sin must be removed, but in the right way - through forgiveness in baptism for the sinner (Acts 2:38) and confession for the erring Christian (Acts 8:22; 1 Jn. 1:9). - Chris Reeves

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# THE WARFIELD BULLETIN

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.  
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

## Where Has Sin Gone? - Part 2

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**Note to the reader:** The quotations in this series of bulletin articles were taken from the following online article: "Has the Notion of Sin Been Lost?" by Cathy Lynn Grossman, USA Today.com/news/religion, 3/19/08. Each set of quotations is followed by my response. — *Chris Reeves*

### Quotations

The rise of secular culture also is exerting an influence. More than one in five Americans (22%) say they never go to church, not even on Christmas or Easter. And 12.1% told a new Pew Forum survey they believe "nothing in particular."

They may be without a church, but "most people still have a notion of sin — like bringing cheap wine to parties," jokes Karsen Case, 34, of Reno. "Seriously, you know what sin is when you get a feeling in your gut that something's wrong."

He hasn't been to church in a decade, although he grew up within the conservative Lutheran Missouri Synod. "I would call myself an atheist now," he says. "But I think the Bible has a lot of good stories. And I do connect with the story of Easter, of redemption and

rebirth. It tells me you are going to make mistakes, and you will get another chance to do right in the future."

Secular people still believe there's sin, judgment and punishment, says sociologist Barry Kosmin, a research professor in public policy and law and director of the Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society & Culture at Trinity College in Hartford, Conn.

It's just a different list of sinners than religious traditions teach. "What is unacceptable has changed," Kosmin observes. "Racism and sexual harassment, which were not sins in the past, are now. Adultery and addiction are just bad or sad behavior. And commercial sex is a no, but breaking the bonds of marriage is not. "Secularism is situational without fundamental, universal rules. Explanations are kosher. Mitigating circumstances, too. But if people are held guilty, the punishment, of course, has to be in this world, not the next. Secular people don't burn in hell, they burn in the court of public opinion."

### My Response

The more secular (removed from God) a person becomes the more sinful he will become (Jude 4,15; 1 Jn. 3:4; 1 Jn. 5:17). We must remember two things:

sin's penalty is separation from God (Isaiah 59:1-2; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-2), and unforgiven sinners will be punished, not just in this life, but in hell (Revelation 21:8,27; 22:15).

### Quotations

Two pastors serving youthful congregations in big cities, long the statistical capitals of secular culture, say they must talk about sin to be true to their calling. They just have to use 21st-century lingo.

Tim Keller of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Manhattan is a modern-day variation of the circuit-riding preacher. He dashes across Central Park to three different leased locations to serve 5,000 worshipers at five services on Sundays. When Keller, author of *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*, speaks about "sin" to his audiences, which are 70% single and younger than 40, "I use it with lots and lots of explanation, because the word is essentially obsolete. "They do get the idea of branding, of taking a word or term and filling it with your own content, so I have to rebrand the word 'sin,' " Keller says. "Around here it means self-centeredness, the acorn from which it all grows. Individually,