

January, 2007

# Pause Ponder Profit

## Sins Worthy Of Death

by James A. Brown

The sins "worthy of death", are mentioned by the apostle Paul in Romans 1:29-31. I present their rendering in several Bible versions (King James, New King James, American Standard, New American Standard Bible, Revised Standard Version, New Revised Standard Version, New International Version), along with a brief description in hopes that all will better understand these sins and avoid them at all cost.

**Unrighteousness** — (KJV, NKJV, ASV, NASB), **Wickedness** (RSV, NRSV, NIV): It means injustice, moral wrongfulness, unfairness, dishonesty, unjust. It describes the man who is a cheater and defrauder of his fellowman. One who has a general disregard for fairness, uprightness, integrity, and righteousness.

**Fornication** — (KJV), **Sexual immorality** (NKJV), omitted in most versions: It describes all kinds of unlawful and illicit relationships between men and women, men and men, women and women, humans and animals.

**Wickedness** — (KJV, NKJV, ASV, NASB), **Evil** (RSV, NRSV, NIV): It describes one who is devilish, morally bad, i.e., one who is profoundly immoral or wrong. It manifests itself in an evil disposition or ill-will not only toward God but also against one's fellowman. The evil man worships himself rather than God. He cares more for himself than for his neighbor. Wickedness is the direct opposite of an expression of goodness.

**Covetousness** — (KJV, NKJV, ASV, RSV, NRSV); **Greed** (NASB, NIV): It is avarice or a greed for gain. It is greedy and grasping, especially for that which belongs to another such as money, property, and even another's mate. The covetous man is willing to use unjust means to obtain what he desires.

**Maliciousness** — (KJV, NKJV, ASV); **Malice** (RSV, NRSV); **Evil** (NASB): It is the desire to injure, hurt, or damage another. It is the deliberate wickedness which takes pleasure in doing harm. It comprehends every evil disposition, injurious attitude, or action leveled at those disliked by the malicious man.

**Full of envy** — (KJV, NKJV, ASV, NASB, RSV, NRSV, NIV): It is the displeasure, discontent, or jealousy felt over another's good fortune, excellence, talents, successes achieved, and so on. It is the envy which is begrudging or resentful. It sees a successful man and is not moved to seek the same level of success, but to resent it.

**Murder** — (KJV, NKJV, ASV, NASB, RSV, NRSV, NIV): It is the total disregard for the dignity and worth of life. It is the taking of human life, with premeditated malice, by someone in their right mind. Abortion and

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euthanasia are examples of this sin. The death penalty or execution for punishment is not an example of this sin. The inspired man of God, Paul approved of the death penalty (Acts 25:11).

**Debate** — (KJV), **Strife** (NKJV, ASV, NASB, RSV, NRSV, NIV): The word “debate” here is not referring to a passionate argument respectfully conducted between truth and error. For Paul did that on more than one occasion (Acts 17:1-4). In the KJV of 1611, the word debate meant strife, wrangling, quarreling, fighting, and feuding. The quarrelsome and contentious person is guilty of this sin.

**Deceit** — (KJV, NKJV, ASV, NASB, RSV, NRSV, NIV): Deceit is wile, craft, cunning, treachery. It is dishonest practice i.e., the act or practice of deceiving or misleading somebody. It is something that is done to trick or mislead somebody. It is the very opposite of honesty. Deceit develops out of selfishness and disregard for the rights of others.

**Malignity** — (KJV, ASV, RSV); **Evil-Mindedness** (NKJV); **Malice** (NASB, NIV); **Craftiness** (NRSV): It is bad character, evil character, or evil disposition that tends to put the worst construction on everything. It is the spirit that always supposes the worst about other people and is always ready to destroy the object of one’s dislike.

**Whisperers** — (KJV, NKJV, ASV); **Gossips** (NASB, RSV, NRSV, NIV): This describes people who are secret slanderers. That is, they sneak about slandering others by whispering their tales in willing ears. “They always affect great innocence themselves, and tell their hurtful story regretfully. When done, they are sure to enjoin on you not to mention the matter to others lest it might do harm” (*Moses E. Lard*).

**Backbiters** — (KJV, NKJV, ASV); **Slanders** (NASB, RSV, NRSV, NIV): This describes those who will slander, defame and

destroy the character of another openly and publicly. They do not even pretend regret about making their defamatory statements, like the whisperers do.

**Haters of God** — (KJV, NKJV, NASB, RSV); **God-haters** (NRSV, NIV); **Hateful to God** (ASV): These are those who despise deity. They reject God and His authority over them. These are the ones who would gladly eliminate God if they could. These are the ones who would like to remove every mention of God from the society in which they live. An antonym would be a “lover of God”.

**Despiteful** — (KJV); **Violent** (NKJV); **Insolent** (ASV, NASB, RSV, NRSV, NIV): Describes one who is contemptuous, overbearing, and disrespectful. One is spiteful when he, without reason or provocation, shows an aggressive lack of respect in speech or behavior toward others. The one who is spiteful depicts a feeling of superiority which delights in or seeks to gain pleasure in insulting and crushing those believed to be inferior.

**Proud** — (KJV, NKJV); **Haughty** (ASV, RSV, NRSV); **Arrogant** (NASB, NIV): The proud are the haughty, egotistical, and arrogant. It is an attitude of conceit. Proud, designates the man who, from a feeling of his own superiority, regards others with snootiness. He delights in making others feel small.

**Boasters** — (KJV, NKJV); **Boastful** (ASV, NASB, RSV, NRSV, NIV): These are empty pretenders. They seek to attract admiration by claiming advantages they do not really possess. R. L. Whiteside in his commentary on Roman said, “He likes to talk about himself; he is a little man swelled up. Such fellows are shoddy goods marked up.” “He is the Big ‘I’ with all others the little you. He is a package of wind wrapped up with the ribbons of egotism” (*Studies of Romans, Robert R. Taylor, Jr.*)

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**Inventors of evil things** — (KJV, NKJV); **Inventors of evil** (ASV, NASB, RSV, NRSV); **They invent ways of doing evil** (NIV): Inventors of evil things spend their days meditating on the evil they can engage in and the evil they can do to others. They have become tired of the old ways of sinning and set out to create, devise, and conceive of new ways to commit the same old sins.

**Disobedient to parents** — (KJV, NKJV, ASV, NASB, RSV); **Rebellious toward parents** (NRSV); **They disobey their parents** (NIV): This denotes the man who refuses to listen to the wise counsel of his parents. He rejects parental authority. When this take place in one's life, he will also fail to respect civil and divine authority.

**Without understanding** — (KJV, ASV, NASB); **Undiscerning** (NKJV); **Foolish** (RSV, NRSV); **Senseless** (NIV): This describes the man who is a fool. He will not learn lessons from experience. He will not use the mental faculties God gave him. He will not reason from an established, true, beginning point. Like the Gentiles (Rom. 1:18-32), they rejected God; thus had no proper beginning point. They had no proper point of progression. They were without understanding.

**Covenantbreakers** — (KJV, ASV); **Untrustworthy** (NKJV, NASB); **Faithless** (RSV, NRSV, NIV): These people dishonor promises and renege on agreements. They will not keep their word. They are neither faithful, dependable, or trustworthy. They will not even be bound by a contract. Those who violate their marriage vows certain fall into this category.

**Without natural affection** — (KJV, ASV); **Unloving** (NKJV, NASB); **Heartless** (RSV, NRSV, NIV): This is simply an absence of affection and love among parents, children, brothers, sisters, and relatives. It is being heartless towards those who should be dear to us from the ties of blood. This familial affection should exist

naturally, but is rejected in the unloving. This sin is clearly seen in such things as abortion, child abuse, and the neglect of aged parents. William Barclay commenting on this sin, in the first century, said, "It was quite true that this was an age in which family love was dying. Never was the life of the child so precarious as at this time. Children were considered a misfortune. When a child was born, it was taken and laid at the father's feet. If the father lifted it up that meant that he acknowledged it. If he turned away and left it, the child was literally thrown out. There was never a night when there were not thirty or forty abandoned children left in the Roman forum. Even Seneca, great soul as he was, could write: 'We kill a mad dog; we slaughter a fierce ox; we plunge the knife into sickly cattle lest they taint the herd; *children who are born weakly and deformed we drown.*' The natural bonds of human affection had been destroyed."

**Implacable** — (KJV); **Unforgiving** (NKJV); omitted in most versions: This sin describes those who can never be placated. They are obstinate and stubborn, unwilling to be appeased and impossible to pacify.

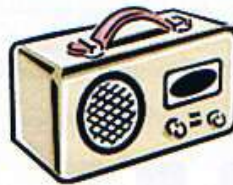
**Unmerciful** — (KJV, NKJV, ASV, NASB); **Ruthless** (RSV, NRSV, NIV): This refers to those who lack feeling, sensitivity, sympathy, concern, care, compassion or pity.

*"... Those who practice such things are worthy of death..." (Rom. 1:32)*

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## Acceptable Worship

by James A. Brown

In Genesis 4:1-8, Cain and Abel both worshipped God by making an offering to Him, but their worship was altogether different. Abel offered the firstlings of his flock and their fat. God was pleased with his sacrifice. The Scripture says God respected Abel and his offering. In contrast, Cain's offering was of the fruit of the ground. God was not pleased with his sacrifice. The text says that God did not respect Cain, nor his offering. The ultimate difference in their worship was that Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, in that Abel offered his sacrifice to God by faith (Hebrews 11:4).

Both men were worshipping God, but only Abel's worship was respected, why? Abel's sacrifice was respected over Cain's, because Abel offered "by faith". Man's worship to God will never be accepted unless he worships by faith. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). Abel heard and obeyed God's instructions in reference to offering up sacrifice and Cain did not heed God's word. If Cain had obeyed God's word, then, he too would have offered "by faith".

We must worship God according to His word. For it is God's word that will produce in us the kind of faith that pleases Him. Without God pleasing faith, we will never offer true worship — acceptable worship (John 4:23-24).

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Pause — Ponder — Profit is a monthly publication of the Second and Walnut Church Of Christ, Paragould, Arkansas.

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