

# MAKING SIN EXCEEDING SINFUL



Dr. Gary L. Mann

# **Making Sin Exceeding Sinful**

**What Must Our Sin Look Like?**

Dr. Gary L. Mann

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## **DEDICATION**

This book is dedicated to my parents, Francis and Eleanor Mann and to my wife's parents Gene and Charylene Skaggs. They all have helped me so much in my life and ministry and have been some of my biggest supporters through the years of serving our Lord. Sherry and I love them very much and thank them for their unending love and encouragement.

## O GOD OF GRACE

Thou hast imputed my sin to my Substitute, and hast imputed His righteousness to my soul, clothing me with a bridegroom's robe, decking me with jewels of holiness.

But in my Christian walk I am still in rags; my best prayers are stained with sin; my penitential tears are so much impurity; my confessions of wrong are so many aggravations of sin; my receiving the Spirit is tinctured with selfishness.

I need to repent of my repentance; I need my tears to be washed; I have no robe to bring to cover my sins, no loom to weave my own righteousness;

I am always standing clothed in filthy garments, and by grace am always receiving change of raiment, for thou dost always justify the ungodly;

I am always going into the far country, and always returning home as a prodigal, always saying, Father, forgive me, and thou art always bringing forth the best robe.

Every morning let me wear it, every evening return in it, go out to the day's work in it, be married in it, be wound in death in it, stand before the great white throne in it, enter heaven in it shining as the sun.

Grant me never to lose sight of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the exceeding righteousness of salvation, the exceeding glory of Christ, the exceeding beauty of holiness, the exceeding wonder of grace.

-Author unknown-

*“If our  
righteousness looks  
like filthy rags to  
God –  
I wonder what our  
sins look like?”*

*Dr. G.L. Mann*

SAMPLE  
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## INTRODUCTION

As I lay in bed early in the morning thinking about how God must see us, the thought came to me that if our righteousness looks like filthy rags to God, I wonder what our sins look like? Needless to say, I did not get much rest that night. After thinking about this for a while, I thought of the verse in Romans 7:13 which says,

***“Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.”***

I believe we have entered into a generation where sin is acceptable and really not so bad...and I am not only talking about the lost person's attitude, but the saved person's attitude as well. Indeed some of the reasons for this downward spiral has to do with our society where, as found in Isaiah 5:20, it warns,

***“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”***

I fear our world has degenerated as found in Romans 1:32 from the rejection of God, which is also the basic premise of secular humanism, to,

***“Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”***

With all the influence of the movie industry, television, music and the internet, literally everything goes and immorality is now moral, murder and death are no longer shocking and sin has just become a natural part of everyday life where anything goes. But even more devastating than that, is that we have a view of sin in Christendom that is accepting and agreeable with the

worlds concept of sin as not being so sinful. After all, this is a new century and we must not be so out of date.

I must re-ask the question, if our righteousness looks like filthy rags to God, then what must our sins look like? I must also ask the question, where is the thunder from the preachers warning people about sin? With the watered down version of sin that is prevalent today from our preachers, combined with the humanistic views being more acceptable so as to be viewed as politically correct, sin is not exceeding sinful anymore.

Thus, I have endeavored to put some of the sting back into sin with the chapters of this book. May we get back to not only making sin exceeding sinful in our preaching, but may it also become exceeding sinful in our daily walk. This dark world must have light and as the moon reflects the light to the earth from the sun, may we as Christians reflect the light from the Son to the dark world we live in by our walk in holy living once again.

## CHAPTER ONE

### The Relationship Between the Law and Sin

Romans 7:7-13

***What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.***

Most people do not truly understand the relationship between the law of God and sin. Because of a false teaching on how to go to heaven, most people believe that if they do their best to keep the Ten Commandments then they will go to heaven. They believe that the law of God is the formula for getting to heaven when the Scriptures clearly teach in Galatians 2:21,

***"I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."***

It is clear here, and in other places, that the law, and the keeping of the law DOES NOT get anyone to heaven. This is not the purpose of the law. Look at the following verses with this in mind.

Galatians 2:16

***Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified***

Ephesians 2:8 & 9

***For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:***

***Not of works, lest any man should boast.***

Christ died on the cross to pay for our sins. If we could get saved and go to heaven by always trying to obey the law, which always brings great frustration in a person's life which will be explained later, then, according to Galatians 2:21, "Christ is dead in vain." He did not need to die on the cross IF we could obtain righteousness by the keeping of the law.

I said above that when a person is always trying (which is the key word) to keep the law, it always brings frustration. Why? The answer is quite simple, ***we can't!*** There is nothing more frustrating than trying to be perfect because, ***we can't!*** Try as hard as you can to just keep the Ten Commandments and you will always be frustrated because no one can do it – NO ONE!

In James 2:8-11 it states,

***"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law."***

There are some very interesting things said in those verses which will be referred to later, but what is important for now is what is found in verse 10 which says, “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.” Any honest person would look at the Ten Commandments and have to admit that, yes, he has broken one or more of the Ten Commandments. Then in agreement of the verse mentioned, if we have broken one of these commands, we are just as guilty as if we had broken them all.

For example, have you ever, at least one time in your life, used the Name of the Lord God in vain? Come on now, be honest! Ok, how about this one. Have you ever lusted after some other persons spouse or looked at someone and lusted? Have you ever one time dishonored your parents? We all have. Then breaking one of these laws ONE TIME makes us a sinner! You might be good in one point of the law but not so good in another. Then you are a sinner! Remember what it says in James 2: 8 & 9?

***“If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.”***

You are convinced of the law as transgressors! By your actions or thoughts, the law says that you are a sinner! Galatians 3:10 puts it this way...

***“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”***

Now we are starting to get a true understanding of what the law does in relationship to sin. Now that we are here, let's look again at Romans 7:7-13.

***“What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law:***

*for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.”*

We understand now because of this set of verses that we know what sin is because of the law. Are there other verses that show us this relationship? Let’s look at these...

Romans 3:20

*“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”*

Galatians 3:24

*“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. “*

The law was not given to tell us what to do, or, how to live to get to heaven. The law was given to show us, or teach us, that we are sinners who sin. Remember, the breaking of the law convinces or convicts us a transgressor. The law is our schoolmaster showing us we are sinners and need a Saviour. Again in verse 7 of Romans 7, “...I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” That verse also asks the question “Is the law sin?” The partial answer is, “God forbid.” The rest of the answer is found in verses 8 through 11. Then in verse 12 it says,

“Wherefore the law (which is not sin) is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good.” Why? For the very same reason all laws are written, to keep us from harm. In 1 John 5:3 it says,

***“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”***

The commandment, or the law, is not grievous but it is a good thing. Why? Because it teaches us our need of the Saviour since we have transgressed the law – we are sinners. The law warns us of what will ultimately hurt us.

All the signs on the roads we drive are there for our good and for our protection. If I did not have a speed limit sign, I would not know what speed I could drive legally and safely. And, conversely, if I go faster than the limit posted, I am breaking the law and when caught I am responsible for my actions. It is not the law that is sinful or bad, it is the breaking of the law that is bad. In the case of the law of God, it is there to warn me and show me the things that please and displease God. The law is not sin, the breaking of the law is sin, and, as we will see later, sin when it is finished brings death! The law warns me of the things I do and do not do that are sinful and shows me my need of a Saviour!

Before the law was given the law was dead, but again Romans 7:9b says,

***“...when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.”***

Also in verse 13 is the important statement, “...but sin that it might appear sin...” Paul also wrote, “...for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” Without the law being given to us, we would really not know all that God hates as sin. So the law was given that sin might appear to be sin!



NOW we know what God says is sin and He gave the law to us so we could know what sin is and that we need a Saviour because we are transgressors of the law and are sinners. But that is not all that God wants us to know. He also wanted us to know how foul sin is to Him and how foul it should be to us. Again, in verse 13 it says,

***"Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."***

As I have already said a couple of times, and will repeat often in this book, If our righteousness looks like filthy rags to God, what must our sins look like? God gave the law so we would understand what is sinful and that sin is exceeding sinful. It does not matter what sin it is, it is vile to God. He is Holy and wants us to reflect Him as His children by faith in Jesus Christ. We have a tendency to view sin as not so bad but God's view is that sin is exceeding sinful and He wants us to have the same view of sin.

How much does He hate it? In Hebrews 1:9 it says about Jesus,

***"Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."***

To the degree that Christ loves righteousness, I would say that at the opposite end of the spectrum that is the degree that He hates sin. He hates sin enough in our lives that He came to the earth to die for our sins, which is a huge amount of love and an awful lot of hate for sin.

William Burkett in his expository notes on the Bible wrote the following on Romans 7:13,

***"From what the apostle had said in the former verse, he moves an objection unto this verse: "Seeing***

the law was holy, and just, and good, how comes it to be unto death?

Was that which was good made death unto me?" To this he replies, both by way of negation, God forbid; for to find fault with the law, is to find fault with God himself! And also by way of affirmation, asserting, that sin is the true cause of death.

The commandment indeed condemns, or is death to the sinner, yet not of itself, but because of sin; as we say of a condemned malefactor, it is not the judge, but the law, that condemns him; or, strictly speaking, it is not the law, but his own guilt, that condemns him; the judge is but the mouth of the law, to denounce the sentence that guilt deserves. And hereby sin appears to be what really it is, sin sinful, exceedingly sinful, masculinely and vigorously sinful, excessively and out of measure sinful, extremely and beyond all expression, nay, beyond our comprehension, sinful.

Learn hence, 1. That the law of God, in the whole, and in every part thereof, is holy in its institution with respect to man: for it was ordained unto life, Ro 7:10.

Learn, 2. That this good and holy law violated and transgressed, condemns and kills, and assigns a person over unto death.

Learn, 3. That though the law condemns man's sin, and man for his sin, yet still the law is good, and not to be blamed; the law is to be justified by man, even when it condemns man: as man had no reason to break the law, so he has no cause to find fault with the law, though it binds him over to death for the breaking of it.

Learn, 4. That 'tis not the law, but sin, that worketh man's death and ruin. Sin aims at not less, and will end in no less; for the wages of sin is death.

Yet, 5. Sin certainly worketh man's death and destruction by that which is good, to wit, the law; for when sin hath used man to break the law, it then makes use of the law to break man; that is, to undo him by condemnation and death for breaking of it.

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Lastly, from hence it follows, that sin is therefore exceedingly, yea, unmeasurably sinful, poisonous and pernicious, because it kills men, and not only so, but it kills men by that which is good, to wit, the law. That which was appointed for life, becomes the occasion of death; consequently was in the world.

"Ah! sinful sin, hyperbolically and out of measure sinful, thou art a contempt of God's sovereign authority, a contrariety to his infinite holiness, a violation of his royal and righteous law, and the highest affront that can be offered to the majesty of the great and glorious God.

Thou hast made man like a beast, like the worst of beasts; worse than the worst of beasts; yea, sin is worse than the devil himself, than hell itself. Sin made the devil what he is: A devil and hell never had an existence till sin had one: God was never angry till sin made him angry.

Oh sin! 'tis thou that makest hell to be hell; and the more sin the more hell. Well might the apostle then say here, Sin, that it might appear sin, worketh death in me, and is become exceeding sinful."

John Gill, one of the pastors previous to Charles H. Spurgeon pastoring the Metropolitan Tabernacle wrote,

**"Was then that which is good, made death unto me?....** An objection is started upon the last epithet in commendation of the law; and it is as if the objector should say, if the law is good, as you say, how comes it to pass that it is made death, or is the cause of death to you? can that be good, which is deadly, or the cause of death? or can that be the cause of death which is good? This objection taken out of the mouth of another person proceeds upon a mistake of the apostle's meaning; for though he had said that he died when the commandment came, and found by experience that it was unto death, yet does not give the least intimation that the law was the cause of his death; at most, that it was only an occasion, and that was not given by the law, but taken by sin, which, and not the law, deceived him and slew

him. Nor is it any objection to the goodness of the law, that it is a ministration of condemnation and death to sinners; for "lex non damnans, non est lex", a law without a sanction or penalty, which has no power to condemn and punish, is no law, or at least a law of no use and service; nor is the judge, or the sentence which he according to law pronounces upon a malefactor, the cause of his death, but the crime which he is guilty of; and the case is the same here, wherefore the apostle answers to this objection with abhorrence and detestation of fixing any such charge upon the law, as being the cause of death to him, saying,

**God forbid;** a way of speaking used by him, as has been observed, when anything is greatly disliked by him, and is far from his thoughts. Moreover, he goes on to open the true end and reason of sin, by the law working death in his conscience;

**but sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good;** that is, the vitiosity and corruption of nature, which is designed by sin, took an occasion, "by that which is good", that is, the law, through its prohibition of lust, to work in me all manner of concupiscence, which brought forth fruit unto death; wherefore, upon the law's entrance into my heart and conscience, I received the sentence of death in myself, that so sin by it, "working death in me, might appear sin" to me, which I never knew before. This end was to be, and is answered by it, yea,

**that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful;** that the corruption of nature might not only be seen and known to be sin, but exceeding sinful; as being not only contrary to the pure and holy nature of God, but as taking occasion by the pure and holy law of God to exert itself the more, and so appear to be as the words καθ' υπερβολην αμαρτωλος, may be rendered, "exceedingly a sinner", or "an exceeding great sinner"; that being the source and parent of all actual sins and transgressions; wherefore not the law,

but sin, was the cause of death, which by the law is discovered to be so very sinful.”

I will end with these verses from 1 John 3:1-3,

***“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”***