

Vatican Lists “New Sins”

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | March 15, 2008



This week I read the following headline from Reuters, “Vatican lists ‘new sins,’ including pollution.” The Vatican also included as new sins genetic manipulation and stem cell research.

What do you think about the idea that sins can be catalogued? That an earthly organization can determine sin? Do you find any problem with this premise? Do you see any dangers? If sin is determined by some organization, then what qualifies as sin today might not be sin tomorrow. Does that trouble you? Do you believe God operates like this?

Unfortunately, far too many people do see God in this way, a powerful being who makes up rules to impose on His creation and if we break those rules it is called sin and God is required to inflict punishment in order to be just. But such an idea is a gross mischaracterization of God. The truth about God is seen in Jesus who said that if we have seen Him, we have seen the Father. And Jesus said He did not come to be served but to serve. Jesus came to give, give, give, to love without measure. This is the Father lived out for our eyes to see.

God’s government is not based on arbitrary rules set up by a powerful potentate but is based on selfless love, other-centered giving, true beneficence. 1 Corinthians 13 states “love is not self seeking.” The law of love is a principle that emanates from the character of God and all life in the universe is created to

operate on this principle. Violations of this law of love, this circle of beneficence naturally result in death, unless God intervenes to heal and restore. Conversely, harmony with the law of love is harmony with God and results in health and happiness. Thus Paul states in Romans 13:8, "Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law." Love cannot be commanded, love cannot be codified, and love certainly doesn't change with time.

God is longing for the day we will see the truth of His character of love, the truth of who He is as revealed by Jesus, the truth that He is not an arbitrary Being codifying behavior and imposing His will. He is longing for the day we will trust Him enough to open our hearts and minds to Him, then He will restore in us His law of love (Hebrews 8:10). And when that happens, well, then He will come and take us to be with Him.