

burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” (Rev 21:8)

Based on the above, it is evident that God vehemently hates sin! It is likely then, that we also should despise it, and the word **sin** should mean to us what God says it **IS**.

Thus we have established that God hates sin.

This was probably never a theological uncertainty in early Christianity. But what about the harsh descriptive adjectives that the older versions of the hymns opt for? Are they scripturally based, or were they just the theology of the time? Again we will look to the Bible.

“But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.”
(Psalms 22:6)

This one is truly incredible, as this Psalm is believed to be prophetic regarding Jesus our Lord, and His crucifixion! If this is in fact prophetic of the words of Jesus, what could make Jesus say this of Himself?

NOTHING BUT **OUR SIN**, WHICH HE TOOK UPON HIMSELF!

“Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.”
(Job 40:4)

This is Job after being in the presence of our Holy God!

“For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. (14) Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.” (Isaiah 41:13-14)

God refers to His people as "thou worm" and promises His help. We are NOTHING! God is EVERYTHING!

“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Romans 7:24)

Here the Apostle Paul states the reality of his condition before a Holy God. Only Jesus Christ can deliver him! After grace, after being a Christian, after writing books of the Bible, he still considers himself a "wretched man", whose **ONLY** hope is **Jesus Christ!**

“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:” (Rev 3:17)

Here Jesus is speaking to believers. He is pointing out the reality of their condition.

It is undeniable, that we are to consider ourselves as "unprofitable" or "unworthy" servants (see Luke 17:10). According to Revelation 3:17, it appears that when we think that we “are doing pretty good”, that is when we are in the **worst spiritual state!**

It is amazing that somehow the devil has **softened sin!** We rewrite the old hymns to soothe our egos. It is acceptable for us to be "sinners" but not "worms". Unfortunately, God still views sin as the heinous thing that it is. Simply because we can live with sin easier than we can our own vileness, does not change the fact that **God will not!**

Not until we **realize our own depravity**, can we fully experience the greatness of our salvation. Not until we **recognize our utter wretchedness**, can we look fully to Jesus to be our **total sufficiency**.

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By: Robert W. Dallmann

“For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.”
(Psalms 5:4)

When did God remove wickedness from sin? This sounds like a ridiculous question, but it is the subject of this writing. Obviously, the answer that every Christian would give is that God has never removed wickedness from sin. Therefore, what would cause us to examine such a question? While in theory, we denounce sin as evil, our words and practices indicate that perhaps we unknowingly think otherwise.

Sin has become something of an ethereal concept, to be agreed with doctrinally, but has no real impact on how we live. It seems to be just something to acknowledge in order to "**get to the good stuff**" of Christian life.

It is no longer the **vile thing that we ARE**, which separates us from God. It is not recognized as being the very thing **for which Jesus was brutally killed!**

The Gospel today is more, "God loves you and wants you to have a great life!" Rather than, "Jesus had to suffer a horrifying death and sepa-

WHEN DID GOD REMOVE WICKEDNESS FROM SIN?

ration from His Father, **because of our sin**. He was buried and rose again from the dead, to give us victory over our sinfulness. Jesus did all of this to bare the burden of our condemnation!"

Why would we think that sin today is seen as less detestable? Where might such an idea be demonstrated?

Perhaps one revealing place to look is in our new and revised Hymnals. Compare the following verses of these well known hymns and see the differences between the older versions and the more modern ones.

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"Alas, and did my Savior Bleed" - Verse 1  
(by: Isaac Watts)

A Modern Version Reads:

"Alas! and did my Savior bleed, and did my Sovereign die! would he devote that sacred head for sinners such as I?"

The last part in another version reads:  
"For someone such as I?"

The Original Version Reads:

"Alas, and did my Savior bleed? and did my Sovereign die? Would He devote that sacred head for such a worm as I?"

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"There is a Fountain Filled with Blood" - Verse 2
(by: William Cowper)

A Modern Version Reads:

"The dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day; and there may I, though sinful, too, Wash all my sins away,"

The Original Version Reads:

"The dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day; And there have I, though vile as he, washed all my sins away."

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"Amazing Grace" - Verse 1  
(by: John Newton)

A Modern Version Reads:

"Amazing grace! How sweet the sound... That saved a soul like me!..."

The Original Version Reads:

"Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!..."

It seems evident that the more dated versions indicate a depth of intimacy with Christ that the modern lyrics avoid or do not understand. Having the understanding that our sin has made us utterly detestable to God, will give us greater appreciation for the incredible and unfathomable Love of God.

Look at the substitutions that were made above. In "Alas..." the words "**for sinners such as I**" have replaced "**for such a worm as I**". Is being a sinner more acceptable than being a worm? It would appear so in today's Christianity. If "**sinner**" is not more palatable than "**worm**", why change it? Obviously we are more comfortable being "**sinner**" than "**worms**"!

"There is a Fountain..." contains this substitution: the words, "**though sinful, too**" have replaced the words, "**though vile as he**". Is being "**sinful**", better than being "**vile**"? Again, it seems that today it is! Being "**sinful**" is an acceptable condition, being "**vile**" is not!

Some have even found the old favorite "Amazing Grace", to contain **objectionable** wording. In one version the word "**soul**" has replaced the word "**wretch**". Are we not saying by these substitutions, that "**God can save my soul, but I AM NOT A WRETCH!**"

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Are The Older Versions More Accurate?

Certainly these substitutions represent the changing attitudes of people, but were the older versions necessarily correct? Just because they have been around longer, does not validate them as being right. To get accurate understanding, one **MUST** look to the Bible!

First, let's examine how God views sin! Read the following verses.

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Gen. 6:5)

"Thus saith the Lord GOD; Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas for all the abominations of the house of Israel! for they shall fall by the sword, by the famine and by the pestilence." (Ezek 6:11)

"And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness." (Luke 11:39)

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which