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WRITER: Chinasom U Elekwachi

EDITOR: Chinasom U Elekwachi

CONTACT: chinasom.elekwachi@outlook.com

The Truth 2: Following The Rules of Righteousness

ARTICLE HIGHLIGHTS

- Intentional sin.
- An example of intentional sin.
- Mistakes (unintentional sin)
- An example of a mistake (unintentional sin)
- Article Pinpoint 1
- Article Pinpoint 2
- The VMFCP: Reflection, Extension & Response (RER) Framework/Activity

ARTICLE SUMMARY

This brief article is written to provide further insight about what is, and what is not counted as a mistake, therefore highlighting what is counted as forgivable sin, or the sins which leads to the condemnation of the soul. Regardless, it is the choice of the Lord, the Most High God that determines how many times someone chooses to wilfully sin before He condemns them. In brief, it has always been clear that conscious actions or choices whether in word, spirit (major sorcery) or physical in nature are choices, whereas sins related to emotion or feeling are the main grey moral are, where people are exempt from guilt, but God's judgement still depends on other factors. The simple reason why, and the most basic explanation is this: people don't get angry on purpose, and a person may feel jealous, but they do not make poor lifestyle choices because of it. Overall, this short article uses an Aljazeera news story to provide a real-world example of the difference between intentional sin and a mistake – which should provide some peace of mind and more insight about “The Rules of Righteousness” to new and future Christians.

INTENTIONAL SIN

Intention can be defined as, “what one intends to do or bring about” (Merriam-Webster, 2023a), with intends plainly inferring planning and/or choice. In the simple context of intentional sin, if I wanted to harm another person using sorcery, then I would choose to complete one step or multiple steps to bring about spiritual harm, whether it is a spell, hex, jinx or ritual (major sorcery cannot be used without intention) (C.U. Elekwachi, 2022). The aforementioned sorcery example makes it clear that certain sins are always intentional, and these types of sins are choices that people already know to be wrong. Hence, the sins that are strictly banned are fixed commandments, which is why the bible specifically informs people not to do them, but sometimes there are grey moral areas among some of them, but not the worst types of sin, such as major sorcery or rampant theft:

- **Mark 10:19** - *You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not give false testimony,’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘Honor your father and mother.’”*
 - **NOTE:** Harming or killing someone in genuine self-defence is not counted as murder, rather it is considered rightful self-preservation. Nor are soldiers or police penalized if they kill someone while on official active duty. However, the following does not count as self-defence: I used divination and foresaw that Chinasom will judge our nation poorly, so I will try to kill her to avoid it. The aforementioned is just plain evil, and a future that was created by those who made such evil and selfish choices, as in the absence of trying to murder me, nothing negative would have ever happened (it’s your own fault). More so, making better choices can still change that future, as it still remains that not all things are set in stone. Therefore, “kings” and “queens” are reminded to not let the fear of the possible future cloud their judgement because it is how the worst outcome could occur.

Throughout the Holy Bible there are many lists of sins that people should not commit, which are listed and summarised in ‘Calling: Special Edition’, such as Galatians 5:19-21, where most definitions are plain, or are provided by information from the Old testament (C.U. Elekwachi, 2020). This means that the Holy Bible remains the authoritative Christian document on what is classified as sexual immorality, which is described in Leviticus 18, and so, there will always remain continuation between the Old Covenant and New

Covenant. It is just that the laws are relaxed where they are irrelevant to being a good and upright person, meaning that where random commandments have no real moral, ethical or natural application to people's lives they become an unnecessary or excluded part of the law, which is summarised by 'The Rules of Righteousness'. Overall, this means that in relation to certain sins like sexual immorality, there is no grey moral area that exists, because it stands as a strict New Covenant law that Christians would naturally choose to uphold, just as it was expected to be upheld under the Old Covenant:

- **Galatians 5:19:21** – ¹⁹*Now the deeds of the flesh are obvious, which are: adultery, sexual immorality, uncleanness, lustfulness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, strife, jealousies, outbursts of anger, rivalries, divisions, heresies, ²¹ envy, murders, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these; of which I forewarn you, even as I also forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit God's Kingdom.*
- **Romans 3:31** – ³¹*Do we then nullify the law through faith? May it never be! No, we establish the law.*
 - **NOTE:** The meaning of establishing the law is accepting and practicing the commandments as a natural lifestyle, just as law abiding citizens live according to the laws of a nation.

In the commandments where grey moral areas are evident, they tend to exist where lawful interpersonal relationships, and emotions or feelings are involved in the matter. For example, if my parents have wrong me, then I am entitled to end the familial bond entirely, or if they have put me in trouble then I am at full liberty to defend myself because I love (respect) myself. The simple reason is because it is not right or fitting to bear what is detrimental to the self, especially when other people are in the wrong. Therefore, Christians are reminded to not let other people manipulate them based on how they want you to treat them, as and doing so could be very unwise:

- **Matthew 10:16** – *“Behold, I send you out as sheep among wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.*
 - **NOTE:** Doves are indicative of being good natured or morally upright.

- *Ephesians 5:15-17* — ¹⁵ Therefore watch carefully how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore don't be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
- *Ephesians 5:22-23* — ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Therefore, Christians should understand that most people fail to walk wisely when: they are too busy policing other people based on commandments that they do not understand, as such people are 1) unlikely to follow basic commandments (most normal things that people agree are wrong); 2) use the commandments to try and benefit from other people (presumption that Christians must forgive everything, be selfless and accommodating to everyone's needs, excluding their own; and 3) are inherently narcissistic to certain degrees, meaning that when they read "treat your neighbour like yourself" it means "give me what you have, or you don't have love"; and if you don't love me then it means that you have sinned, "so I am justified in my poor behaviour towards you". Yet, in such foolishness the unwise would have unlawfully harmed their "neighbour" (another person). People who err in this manner need to learn about proper decorum and personal boundaries, while fixing their attitude of entitlement that conveys a complete lack of humility, and inherent selfishness.

AN EXAMPLE OF INTENTIONAL SIN

An example of intentional sin is provided by a recent news article called, 'Iran's Raisi says hijab is the law as women face 'yoghurt attack' (Aljazeera, 2023), where a man threw yogurt at women who chose not to wear a hijab in public. This incident is shocking and presents with a few issues that should help Christian see how their choices can impact their wellbeing in multiple ways; and is a clear example of where emotional, feeling and thought based sins turn into poor choices or actions.

Following Societal Laws is Christian

It is expected of Christian people to be law-abiding citizens, and so, if wearing a hijab is the law in a country then it should be followed. Wearing a hijab in public may seem like a small issue, but in terms of maintaining healthy societal order, it suggests that if someone cannot follow a basic or minor law, then they may not follow more significant laws. This situation is not desirable for any nation because it pertains to, and could feed into anarchy, which is a circumstance that is damaging to all levels of society.

- Romans 13:1-7** - *Let every soul be in subjection to the higher authorities, for there is no authority except from God, and those who exist are ordained by God. ² Therefore he who resists the authority withstands the ordinance of God; and those who withstand will receive to themselves judgment. ³ For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. Do you desire to have no fear of the authority? Do that which is good, and you will have praise from the authority, ⁴ for he is a servant of God to you for good. But if you do that which is evil, be afraid, for he doesn't bear the sword in vain; for he is a servant of God, an avenger for wrath to him who does evil. ⁵ Therefore you need to be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake. ⁶ For this reason you also pay taxes, for they are servants of God's service, continually doing this very thing. ⁷ Therefore give everyone what you owe: if you owe taxes, pay taxes; if customs, then customs; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor."*

NOTE: Following societal law is basically how most condemnable sins are avoided, and it can keep people from harm or trouble by not getting involved with dangerous or questionable people (criminals).

To summarise, following societal laws is important because it is the basis for peace of mind, life progress and opportunity – as the truth remains that people who are peaceful law-abiding citizens have less chance of trouble (my situation is rare). However, if people are unhappy with government choices or laws then they should think of more constructive methods of engaging with lawmakers, so that they remain safe or unpenalized while trying to make positive societal changes during these times.

- NOTE:** Citizens may feel that government laws are unfair or oppressive, and for this reason want change, but people must also learn that unwise, aggressive or destructive behaviours are often not helpful, and could put them in danger.

Personal Safety

The man who threw yogurt at the women for not wearing a hijab technically committed multiple sins, as his behaviour was aggressive, harmful and disrespectful. The main reason why the yogurt-villains actions was counted as sin, is because his response to seeing a woman without a hijab was a disproportional to what is a minor breach of law. The fact remains that he could have “confronted”, or rather addressed the woman by calmly and politely talking to her. In the video footage, his demeanor suggests that he just wanted to abuse the women, and that the hijab issue was just an excuse to act poorly towards them.

- **Romans 12:17-21** - ¹⁷ *Repay no one evil for evil. Respect what is honorable in the sight of all men. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as much as it is up to you, be at peace with all men.*
 - **NOTE:** In context, the yogurt-villain should not cause harm because the women weren't wearing hijabs. If he was so offended then he should have prayed for her judgement and left her alone or he could have called the police. Even if the above reactions are extreme, they are less harmful, and more righteous choices.
- **James 4:17** - ¹⁷ *To him therefore who knows to do good, and doesn't do it, to him it is sin.*
 - **NOTE:** Everyone knows that it's wrong to assault people by throwing yogurt on them. This is reaffirmed by the upstanding Iranians men's defence of the women, as their reaction to the situation means that they understand that his behaviour towards the women was wrong.

To help people better understand how sins relate to lifestyle choices, the sins committed by the yogurt-villain are outlined below, and are briefly elaborated upon using the sin definitions described in the comprehensive Christian lifestyle guide book, 'Calling: Special Edition' (C.U. Elekwachi, 2020):

- **Outbursts of anger:** Anger that leads to intimidation, threat or harm to others that is without reason or cause i.e. a lack of behavioural discipline or a care for decency.
 - A woman not wearing a hijab does not mean that she should be assaulted with yogurt. The man chose to make an issue of the situation with the intent

to cause harm, most likely in a psychological manner (fear i.e. making her scared not to wear a hijab in public). However, if the women were allergic to yogurt, or if a significant amount got in their eyes then it could have caused more significant harm, so it is automatically a sinful choice.

- **Hatred:** The unjustified dislike of people that leads to unsavory actions. Hatred can come in many forms, and may be overt or subtle i.e. racism, classism, sexism or ageism (1 John 4:20).
 - The yogurt-villain clearly has an issue with women that is grounded in sexism. Only a man who hates or disrespects women would assault them like that, as it suggests the following: she deserves to be treated poorly until she learns who is superior.
- **Strife:** Causing trouble by one's words, behaviour or actions for selfish reasons.
 - The yogurt-villain would have upset the woman, and her presumed husband, as well the store owner, because he messed up the store, and ruined people's day for no justified reason.

Conclusively, the non-hijab wearing woman was lucky that the man did not beat them, or kill them, and more so, that other upstanding men were around to diffuse the situation. Being murdered over not wearing a hijab is not far-fetched, as women have been shot or killed for refusing to wear a hijab . Therefore, Islamic Christian converts are cautioned to be very careful in regards to modesty, which can be done by wearing the expected clothing, like the hijab, until circumstances allow safe societal change to occur. There are other methods of addressing such issues, which is important to understand because refusing to wear a head covering can harm the cause of female gender equality when it is approached in a certain way. For example, the refusal to not follow hijab wearing laws can convey this: I am willing to die just to not wear a head covering. The problem with this approach is that it reaffirms to men that women are inferior, and that is because hijab wearing is reduced to a battle for vanity, rather than what men don't understand as female self-expression, and the opposition of what some women feel is female oppression. Hence, it should be understood that Islamic women should not put their lives in danger to force change in appearance laws (and women's rights), and that is because as an approach for societal

change, the argument is likely to be rebuffed in the eyes of men based on female triviality or frivolousness; while still incurring potentially harsh punishments for breaking the law – whether death, disfigurement or emotional scarring.

MISTAKES (UNINTENTIONAL SIN)

A mistake can be described as, “to blunder in the choice of [actions] (Merriam-Webster, 2023b), which means that mistakes are anything done without intention; in ignorance; or genuinely struggling when trying to overcome certain sins, wherein the person is typically regretful about the situation. The truth remains that most people are not proud of themselves after getting emotional, and so, such incidences like unintentional outbursts of anger, which could be swearing at another driver who is reckless, is not counted as sin. As a result most emotional based sins are often mistakes, as it is done without the intent of harm or wrongdoing to another person, and is therefore, typically a reaction to a situation, wherein a lack of self-control becomes the root issue (this must be addressed to become Christian). In direct contrast, sins like bribery, theft, sexual immorality, slander and fraud are obviously done with purposeful intention, and so, they are counted as a transgression of the law (not a mistake). Hence, no one who actually understands “The Rules of Righteousness” or God’s commandments would continue to commit the above sins ,or try to justify them, and that is because it is consistent with rejecting the basic commandments. However, it still remains that judgement is complex when it comes to mistakes, for example, the truth remains this: although the yogurt-villain sinned, his sin would not condemn him to ‘spiritual death’ (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12) if it was a once off and random incident, of which he felt bad about afterwards. In such cases, the yogurt-villain would be unlikely to repeat the same mistake, and would be pardoned by the Lord, the Most High God. However, it would be condemnable sin, if the yogurt-villain was the victims’ stalker because it adds an element of harmful pre-meditation. Subsequently, there also exists another scenario where the yogurt-villain would not be guilty under the law.

AN EXAMPLE OF A MISTAKE (UNINTENTIONAL SIN)

The simple difference between transgression or condemnable sin, and a mistake is intention and context. To explain this concept, below a hypothetical yogurt attack scenario is presented to show when the man’s choice would be counted as a mistake:

- He calmly talked to the woman about why he thinks they should wear a hijab, and their response was highly disrespectful like swearing or slapping him. In such cases, his response may have been: a) shouting at her; b) slapping her; or c) throwing yogurt at her. Although, the last two actions are very poor choices, the man would be considered to have made a mistake because being sworn at or slapped is provocative, and therefore his response would have been counted as unplanned anger, rather than an outburst of anger. However, the truth of the scenario remains this: the man should mind his own business because the woman is not his wife, relative or friend, nor is he the police, so he should not be addressing her in the first place.

Conclusively, people must be aware that Christian judgement is linked to human interactions which can appear complex, with who is right and wrong solely depending on context. However, when the factors influencing judgement are understood, it then becomes simple or easy to understand the grey moral areas related to “the Rules of Righteousness”. The concept of grey moral areas is the basis for personal circumstances, which conveys that correct morality changes depending on the situation, but it still remains that the course of action would still be in line with Christian moral reasoning.

ARTICLE PINPOINT 1

If people know they have anger issues, then it’s their responsibility to deal with them. This means that choosing to harm people out of anger, and then crying about anger management issues is no excuse from harming other people – and so, it does not automatically absolve people of sin when they have no remorse. There are plenty of people who have anger issues, but choose to manage them in constructive and unarmful ways, or people who are provoked by others, and still choose not to cause harm.

In terms of hatred, people should be mindful of provoking others based on negative racial stereotypes, as if such behaviour would lead God to condemn their soul to death (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12). The reason is because purposefully saying certain words or doing certain learned behaviours or actions is evidence that racists are not ignorant of their choices, so it is naturally condemnable sin. The fact remains that no one is born racist; people are taught to be racist; people learn to be racist; and people continue or pass on

racism, but no one who is inherently hateful is rewarded in Christianity. This means the racist people will naturally end up in hell, where Africans are likely the minority (Luke 16:19-30). For people with racist tendencies, they should use the examples provided in this article to help themselves overcome emotional, feeling or thought based sins, especially when they directly correlate with choice of actions. This can be done using the RER framework, wherein the solution can be to try doing nothing, or treating other people like you would your own race. The RER framework is also helpful for any sins like theft or lust, where solutions can be fasting and prayer in conjunction with online shopping only, having groceries or meals delivered until your confidence in not stealing is restored; unsubscribing from porn sites, blocking porn sites, and throwing away pornographic material. The above is suggested because removing access, alternative solutions, or putting up barriers to sin is one easy way of avoiding and overcoming them, which is helpful for people who lack discipline and impulse control.

- **NOTE:** Three RER frameworks that allow you to type in information is provided below. This means this article can serve as mini-digital faith journal.

ARTICLE PINPOINT 2

The basis for overcoming sins is admitting them, and so, because 'Calling: Special Edition' provides examples of sins, it is the basic tool needed for self-help repentance purposes, until more robust and necessary help can be provided (C.U. Elekwachi, 2020). Only people with no intention of Christian lifestyle change would call it too hard, too much work or impossible, as these are just excuses. So, people should at least try to overcome one sin, such as giving up harmful sorcery (taking one step in the way of Holiness, Isaiah 35). More so, it is with the acknowledgment of wrongdoing and taking steps to correct them, that forgiveness and grace is granted by the Lord, the Most High God. Therefore, whether you have committed sins intentionally or by mistake, just do your best to overcome them, as in such choices, people take a step closer to the salvation of their soul. Conclusively, it remains with the Lord, the Most High God to judge people's choices, especially in regards to whether 'spiritual death' was earned or not - as He is omnipresent and therefore knowing of every motive (Revelation 2:23, Romans 8:27, Hebrews 4:12). This means that real issues like kleptomania, negative spiritual influences (demonic influence or sorcery) and free will are all taken into account by God when he judges people. Therefore, where

mass population ‘spiritual death’ has occurred, it just means people’s choices were based on freewill...Hence, when people do not understand the basic commandments, let alone the grey moral areas that are related to personal circumstances, then they have no right to judge another person. How can you presume to judge when you cannot even walk the same path as the righteous, or enter God’s kingdom? Or were cast out? (Isaiah 35:8, Matthew 7:13, Psalm 118:19-20). Such people need to reflect on their lifestyle choices, and using the RER framework provided in this article is a good place to start.

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REFLECTION, EXTENSION AND RESOLUTION (RER) ACTIVITY

<p>REFLECTION A (What I thought)</p>	
<p>REFLECTION B (The truth about the sin according to the Bible)</p>	
<p>EXTENSION (Reasons why God says not to commit the specific sin. You can find Scriptures that support the reason(s), but it is not necessary i.e. based on common knowledge of right and wrong)</p>	
<p>RESOLUTION (The practical things that I can do to stop committing the sin)</p>	

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