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Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law

Sin (Pocket Oxford) "Transgression, esp. conscious, against divine law or principles of morality."

AL 1:41 "The word of Sin is Restriction. O man! Refuse not thy wife, if she will! O lover, if thou wilt, depart! There is no bond that can unite the divided but love: all else is a curse. Accurséd! Accurséd be it to the céons! Hell.

Pr 5:22 "The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast."

Jn 8:34 "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin."

Ac 8:23 "For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin."

Ro 7:23 "...but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members."

2Ti 2:26 "...and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will."

Ro 1:20 "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."

Mt 12:31 "And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven."

Seven Evils to be Repressed:

Idle Curiosity 1Sa 6:19 "But God struck down some of the men of Beth Shemeth, putting seventy of them to death because they had looked into the ark of the Lord."

Evil Speech Ps 39:1 "I said, 'I will watch my ways and keep my tongue from sin; I will put a muzzle on my mouth as long as the wicked are in my presence.'"

Greed Mt 6:19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal."

Unholy Ambition Mk 10:44 "...and whoever wants to be the first must be slave of all."

Evil Thoughts 2Co 10:5 "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

Evil Desires and Passions Col 3:5 "Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry."

Worldliness 1Jn 2:15 "Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

Seven Deadly (Mortal) Sins: Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy, Sloth

The key to the conception of sin is that it involves a transgression of some sort. The 'forces' against which one might transgress include religion, society, morality, ethics, civil law and self (conscience).

To the greatest extent sin is a matter of viewpoint. Identifying underlying, *a priori*, sins is rather more difficult.

Let us first look at what might be considered 'externally defined sins'. It may be supposed that many of the proscribed acts in religious, moral, ethical, social and civil law have some practical foundation. Whether that foundation has any validity or righteousness in itself may be questioned, but at some point an authority has deemed that certain actions are contrary to the good of their cause. In the best of cases the cause embraced the well-being of a significant portion of the affected society, in the worst, the cause was entirely self serving. That it has been possible for individuals and organizations to impose their will on the masses probably says more about the masses than it does about those in authority.

How we perform in light of 'laws' can be broken down into several levels.

At the most fundamental level, we tend to comply with laws out of fear of the consequences. While various religions place emphasis on consequences in the hereafter, it would be hard to deny that the stronger influence in most cultures is strictly temporal – social stigma, punishment under law, loss of property or status and so on.

This fear may, of course, be either rational or irrational – there may be some objective substantiation of the risk or there may not. The extent to which an

individual may act in spite of these fears may be seen as a measure of the individual's belief in the validity of the underlying law. An individual may transgress these laws on the basis of various levels of rationalization – need, superiority, contempt and so on. Underlying every fear-based decision to act or not is an assessment of the probability of getting caught out, followed by a determination of the relative worth of the short-term gain over the long-term consequences.

Contrasting with fear, although possibly inseparable from, is sense of virtue. There are those whose compliance with the various laws is based on their idea of what constitutes 'goodness'. The reason I suggest that virtue and fear may be closely related is simply that goodness and sinfulness are reasonable opposites – one acting virtuously may well be acting out of fear of the consequences of doing otherwise. There is little evidence to support the idea that people act out of sense of virtue for its own sake. The material motivation for acting of virtue is recognition resulting in improved social standing.

Ultimately our performance is measured against our own conscience. But what is this conscience? I believe that there are two components to the conscience. One is conditioned, the other innate. The preconditioned conscience is invariably dominant, as it is largely shared by the culture/society in which we live, thus has the force of objective consequences. The innate element may well never see the light of day, at least consciously. At our core each of us has a baseline set of morals and ethics – those things which we know, at the most fundamental level, to be right and wrong.

The extent to which the innate conscience may be changed by external pressures is debatable – I believe that its code is so basic that it is quite resistant to pressure. The preconditioned conscience, however, shifts with social pressure constantly – it may even include subsets, applied in different circumstances.

It is obvious how the preconditioned conscience responds to externally defined sin – fear, guilt, remorse, etcetera are all familiar to us. This is not surprising – the preconditioned conscience has been trained to react when we do not conform to the standards set for us by our church, our society or our nation. The difference between a sinner and saint, leaving aside pathological considerations, is the quality of preconditioning and the weight given to that preconditioning.

At every point of decision the individual will be subject to limitations – how informed they are, how able they are to process that information – knowledge and intelligence. It is reasonable to assume that the better informed and more intelligent the individual, the more rational the final decision will be. That is not to suggest that the decision will be 'better' in any objective sense, but the individual will be more thoroughly satisfied.

It is my contention that much of the unhappiness in the world today results from a surfeit of externally defined sins and repression of the innate conscience.

I began this essay with a series of quotes. *Liber Al vel Legis* makes a single, categorical statement defining sin. Restriction = Sin. Great, there we have it. Why then is there cause to analyse the matter further? Because we have so muddied the waters of right and wrong, good and evil, so deformed the social structure, that without restriction we would have nothing better than anarchy. The declaration that the word of Sin is Restriction is of no more value to the average person than telling them that "Do what thou wilt is the whole of the Law. Love is the Law. Love under Will." We have become so removed from our innate conscience, which is integral to our True Will, that neither principle can be applied effectively.

Thus far I have addressed matters on which there are documented codes. In Western society the Christian code is the dominant influence on the preconditioned conscience, whether the individual has had overt involvement with the Christian church or not. I would suggest that, even in non-Christians, this code probably has more weight in the decision-making process than civil law. The Ten Commandments and the Seven Mortal Sins have enjoyed such presence as to become so deeply embedded that they are virtually indistinguishable from our own innate conscience.

Allow me to further define the innate conscience. Its consists of principles which require no further explanation, simple things that once exposed are entirely self-evident and require no qualification.

Most of the external laws are very specific – they either deal with isolated cases, or they apply only to certain sects. There is a reason for this – most people aren't equipped to apply a general rule to their personal circumstance. An immediate difficulty with generalised laws is definition of terms. The use of the word 'Love' in Luke's reading of the Law ([Lk 10:27](#)), " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind', and, 'Love your neighbour as yourself' " and the Thelemic Law, "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law. Love is the Law. Love under Will." – Graphically illustrates the point – without a deep sense of the meaning, the laws are worthless.

Even once it is understood that it is *Agape* that is implied rather than *Eros*, there is still the question of how to act in brotherly love. What is good for you may not be good for your brother, so a further factor must be introduced. Ideally this element will be found within the individual, in reality it is largely provided by those in authority. We are largely a race of followers – our standards are not our own. We do, however, seem to have an individual propensity for seeking loopholes, and the more precisely defined the law, the more pedantry applied to its evasion.

Stripping away preconditioning to identify the innate is a vital step in the restoration of health in our society. The process is incredibly difficult. As I have already said, many trivial, baseless and authority-serving principles have become so deeply entrenched as to be inseparable from our own will.

An intellectual review of influencing factors is a start. Many 'sins' can be eliminated on the first pass, while many others can be validated in principle. Only a hard-line Catholic need fear eternal damnation through divorce, and I doubt if anyone is still influenced by the Pythagorean code demanding abstention from beans, or that Mary Baker Eddy's obsession with the divinity of hygiene has much impact, but few will argue the case for theft, murder, rape, child molestation, fraud and so on.

But even these apparently cut and dried cases can only be accepted in principle, subject to examination in specific cases. The killing of an individual becomes 'murder' depending on who kills who and why. That which was formerly 'conjugal rights' now has the potential to become 'rape'. Even child molestation has to be looked at in light of the cultural background – is it the act that creates the victim or the society, is it right to impose Western/Judaeo-Christian values on other cultures?

There comes a time though where all the thought and meditation in the world will not substitute for the gut reaction that comes with action. The 'a priori sin seeker' must eventually begin to push the preconditioned boundaries. It is so much easier to say that one will or won't do a thing when there is no likelihood of actually being in the position to do it.

Those actions that have risks/consequences presently unacceptable are put aside for continued review. The exclusion of these actions from practice is not necessarily an endorsement of the laws against them, merely a practical consideration. There may be many things 'against the laws' that we would like to do, or at least approve of others doing, but will not, at this time, actually do.

A statement of basic principle may be established as a new 'minimum standard of conduct'. In my case, the principle is that I will take nothing that is not freely given. This is not to be confused with identification of innate values, it is just a safety-net – it is important not to consider this process a free-for-all exercise in lawlessness. This standard will be reviewed and amended as experience grows.

This leaves a wide range of experiences to be created. The extremities of social acceptability can be explored. Sexual, political, moral, ethical, social and spiritual laws can all be tested against the experience of violating them.

In my own experience there have been many occasions where I have felt guilt or remorse after the event, but on analysis it has been due not to my own aversion to the act, but to my concern over what others, particularly other participants, may think or feel about the event. Even when others involved have

fully agreed to their role it is difficult to trust that they understood what was expected of them and that they will be able to cope with their own reactions.

At this point in my experimentation I have not identified any act that is intrinsically sinful or evil. In the initial filtering process I identified many things that I would not do at this point in time. Even so, I could not bring myself to see any of them as 'sins' in themselves.

Am I suggesting that there is no such thing as sin? Yes, I think that probably just about sums it up. Like good and evil, it is entirely subjective. Again like good and evil, its application tends to be manipulative and judgmental. I would observe that many acts designated 'crimes' or 'sins' seem incredibly pointless to me, but that is a judgment based solely on my current perspective.

Let us now go back to the quotes at the beginning and look for the common theme. Apart from the rather strange contribution from 1 Samuel, the biblical quotations all focus on the slavery of sin and the necessity for devotion to the Father. The couple of quotes focusing on property and worldliness emphasize the importance of spiritual values over temporal values.

Remembering that the Thelemite is a "Member of the Body of God", it is easy to see that an act in itself is not a sin, it is obsession with that act, slavery to it, to the exclusion of proper recognition of God, that is the problem. Unity with God, whatever that means to any particular sect, is precluded when the individual is consumed by desire, be it lust or greed for power or material gain.

Most religions address this by prohibition, requiring the faithful to prove worthiness by means of denial, repression and/or sublimation. The Thelemite has the opportunity, indeed the obligation, to be freed from obsession by exercising will in all endeavours, including practices repulsive to both self and society. To be effective these acts must be performed without judgment of the virtue of the act or the merit in enacting it.

Again, from my own experience, many of the 'fantasies' I have realized have been quite different to the original mental construct – they may have been materially perfect representations, but my reactions have been most unexpected. A great many

diosyncrasies and pet obsessions have been either eliminated or properly integrated by this tactic of full-on frontal assault. I can now do things that I never dreamt possible, and I now feel no compulsion to do many things that seemed incredibly important to me.

Crowley makes the comment that "Collision is the only crime in the cosmos". He bases this statement on the idea that it is most unusual for two stars to naturally assume orbits that lead to collision, therefore a collision is most likely to be the result of one star acting in a manner contrary to True Will.

It may be argued that the process of acting out all these 'sins' will lead to actions contrary to the True Will of the individual, or to 'collision' with others affected by these actions. This would be true if the exercise were not primarily intended to distinguish society's will from individual will, if the actions were not dedicated to Nuit (as the symbol of all possibilities), and if others affected were not in such a position as a result of their own free choice (whether the act itself be their True Will, or whether it be their True Will to support a brother on the path is immaterial).

Thelemic Law is not about mushy do-gooding love. It is about a genuine understanding of the nature of mankind and taking actions calculated to attain the perfection of all in God. It is absurd to think that one can know others better than oneself – one who holds this belief must know others only superficially and themselves not at all. The Thelemite may appear to be the epitome of the upright citizen or may be the very image of the devil himself, but he will know who he is and why he is wearing his chosen mask. At his core he will be himself, neither saint nor sinner, but a free man.

If there is such a thing as 'sin' it is failure to be true to oneself, conformity to standards not your own. In spite of the belligerence often expressed by them, it is unlikely that any criminal actually wants to be in the situation they are in. Much crime is the result of individuals trying to acquire the things that society has established as the marks of success, or rage at the fact that these things are beyond the grasp of so many. Society's supposed attempts to redress this inequity only compound the matter – always the effort is focused on symptoms (money) rather than the root cause (slavery of spirit). As long as wealth is a measure of success and power is proportionate to wealth there will be a class of individuals who fold under the pressure.

For the Thelemite it is not restriction from without that is the concern, but failure to correct false premises on which our lives are based. It is the self-imposed restrictions that bind us to the world of illusion and isolate us from our Angel. Outside influences can be avoided or eliminated. This is not always easy, but there are always choices. Where the outside factor cannot itself be altered, then we can change our attitude towards it

I have mentioned the individual limitations of knowledge and intelligence. Sadly deficiency in these areas (or, maybe worse, too much knowledge and not enough intelligence) can lead to all sorts of delusion. Such delusion is bad enough for the 'average person' just trying to get through the day, but in the Thelemite it is a critical flaw - arrogance, superiority, pettiness and meanness of spirit are pitfalls one can easily fall into. We often err, but a sign of progress is correction – and avoiding the same pit!

My critics will observe that it is easy for me to sit, surrounded by people I love and things that please me, and muse on the ills of the world. My journey,

however, has placed much of this at dire risk, and it is with a deep awareness of my tenuous grasp of the material world and the illusory nature of its pleasures that I live.

- **Adamas 161**

Love is the Law. Love under Will