

**Yahweh, the Almighty God of Israel, is with us**  
"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet,  
and shew my people their transgression,  
and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1

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## **Vital Biblical Topics**

### **Study Prayerfully & Study Carefully**

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# **Iniquity in the Christian Church**

## **1. Introduction**

The Christian church is in grave danger and the majority of the faithful are unaware of the fact. With many of its leaders abandoning the fundamentals of the faith, a diminishing membership and a chronic shortage of funds, the once vibrant Christian church is now in serious danger. In ancient days the church was the respected leader of the community. Alas! that has changed. Many church leaders have become an irrelevance. They are cannon fodder for radio and TV comedy and are an embarrassment to the faithful.

To be sure on the surface the church looks well; its ornate buildings are visited by thousands of admirers every day: its clergy parade in the most gorgeous robes and its services echo with the finest music. But this is merely outward show. It masks a creeping malady which is bringing death to multiplied millions of precious souls. That deadly malady is **iniquity**, an age-old spiritual disease, rarely diagnosed and always denied.

The aim of this article is to identify this malady and point to the only remedy available. I can assure the reader that failure to apply this Bible-backed cure will be catastrophic to say the least. The Saviour's assessment of the **Laodicean church**, the ancient icon of an apathetic church, is as follows:

Revelation 3: 14: *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;*

**15: I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.**

**16: So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.**

*17: 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:*

*18: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.*

**19: As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.**

**20: Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.**

**21: To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.**

*22: He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

These are serious words to every member of the Christian church. Let us all examine ourselves under the

microscope of holy writ.

## 2. Spiritual Fundamentals

Before we take a close look at the spiritual malady called ‘**iniquity**’ let us first list three fundamentals which believers ignore at their peril. They are:

- **Jehovah, the Almighty God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel does not change.**
  - His requirements are the **same today** as they were in the **days of Moses**. Behaviour defined as ‘**iniquity**’ in ancient days is still ‘**iniquity**’ today. He says in (Malachi 3: 6) “**For I am the LORD, I change not.**”
- **Worship not authorised by the Almighty is vain and futile.**
  - **It accomplishes nothing of any value.** “*This people draweth nigh unto me with their **mouth**, and **honoureth me** with their **lips**; but their **heart is far from me**. But in **vain** they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the **commandments of men.**” (Matthew 15: 8)*
- **Jehovah is about to root out pagan worship from His church.**
  - “**Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.**” (Matthew 15: 13)

Though a Being of immeasurable compassion, the Most High **WILL NOT** tolerate falsehood in His worship. He will sooner or later root it out. **Bear those three facts in mind.**

## 3. Iniquity

The dictionary defines the word ‘**iniquity**’ as ‘**great wickedness.**’ But what is wickedness? The scriptures define wickedness as sin, as the transgression of Yahweh's law.

1 John 3: 4: “**Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.**”

Unlike ordinary sin, which is often committed in ignorance or on the spur of the moment, iniquity is premeditated sin which is engaged in with full knowledge, **often with a measure of defiance - and even contempt**. In short, **iniquity is open and wilful defiance of the Almighty’s law**. Iniquity has terrifying results. Most people are unable to trace those results back to their underlying cause - iniquity! Listen to the Almighty's invitation to the wise men of past ages to trace the real cause of His people's problems. **Can you see the parallels in our day?**

Jeremiah 9: 12: “*Who is the wise man, that may understand this? and who is he to whom the mouth of the LORD hath spoken, that he may declare it, for what the land perisheth and is burned up like a wilderness, that none passeth through?*  
13: **And the LORD saith, Because they have forsaken my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein;**  
14: *But have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them.*  
15: **Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.**”

Jeremiah 16: 10: “*And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt shew this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? or **what is our iniquity?** or what is our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?*  
11: **Then shalt thou say unto them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law.**”

In other words, the root cause of ancient Israel's ills was **wilful disobedience of Yahweh's law**. The Christian

church is no better. **She is just as iniquitous - if not more so.**

## 4. Examples of Iniquity

In this article I will list a few of the blatant sins in the church which can be classified as iniquity: sins which multiplied millions of church-goers engage in every week of the year with impunity: sins which are the root cause of the church's present problems.

### Idolatry

The dictionary defines the word **'idol'** as the image of a god: and **'idolatry'** as the worship of idols. In the second of the **ten commandments** this matter of making and worshipping images is forbidden in these words:

Exodus 20: *"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:*

*5: **Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;***

*6: **And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.**"*

This commandment is being blatantly broken today. **Millions of church-goers bow down to idols every week.** They kiss images and statues of the virgin Mary and various other saints, and honour relics and man-made objects of worship in churches around the world. The publishers of some Bible translations have even **deleted this commandment from the Bible**, so that their readers will not know they are guilty of idolatry. Go into the great churches of Europe and Canada, and look about you and you will see **idols, pictures, statues, images and trappings** too numerous to mention. All these graven images, paintings, icons, representations, crucifixes and idols of things in heaven above and the earth below are a violation of the Almighty's law. **They are modern forms of idolatry - pure and simple: and those who justify their use in Christian worship are guilty of iniquity.**

### Illicit Sex

**Illegal sexual activity is another area where iniquity is taking over the churches.** Never a week passes but news of some church minister, pastor or priest caught committing illegal sex hits the headlines. Instead of being removed from office, these clerics are simply moved on another parish, where they continue their sexual sins amidst another flock. **Adultery, Fornication and Homosexuality** are rife in the Christian church and is being silently condoned. Millions of priests are forbidden to marry: yet another man-made restriction which contradicts Bible teaching. The Bible says:

Hebrews 13: 4: *"Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."*

1 Corinthians 7: 9: *"But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn."*

### Sabbath Breaking

Perhaps the most blatant of all sins committed in the Christian church is the breaking of the fourth commandment, which requires mankind to observe **Yahweh's seventh day Sabbath - Saturday!** The ten commandments are a transcript of the Almighty's character. They tell us how the Almighty wants us to live. They define righteousness and sin. They form the constitution of the mighty universe. They were given for all mankind, not just the nation of Israel. The Bible tells us over and over again that Yahweh's law is eternal, perfect, holy, just and true. **Yeshua the Messiah** (Jesus Christ) stated in his famous Sermon on the Mount that the present universe would pass away before a single letter of his Father's law could be changed.

Matthew 5: 17: *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.*

*18: **For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.***

*19: **Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."***

And yet, wonder of wonders, puny men - posing as the **Vicars of Christ!** - have foolishly attempted to change the Sabbath commandment which the Saviour clearly stated would outlast the present universe. They have instituted a bogus Sabbath - **Sunday** - and with self-deluding confidence continue to teach that it is in order to ignore the **True Sabbath** of the Almighty God! Pause awhile dear reader and try to imagine the enormity of this sin! Do you suppose that the Almighty God will remain silent for long? For the reader's benefit let me quote the Sabbath commandment:

Exodus 20: 8: *“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*

*9: Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:*

*10: **But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God:** in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:*

*11: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the **seventh day:** wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”*

**Let me remind the reader that the seventh day of the week is Saturday - not Sunday.**

Yet believe it or not, multiplied millions of Christians are breaking the Almighty's Sabbath commandment **every week!** many without even knowing it. But now that you know, bear in mind that Yahweh wrote the **ten commandments** with His own finger on tablets of stone: an act which signifies their eternal importance.

### **Pagan Festivals in Disguise**

Another iniquitous practice the Almighty is going to weed out of Christian worship is the celebration of **man-made religious festivals:** Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Easter, The Feast of the Nativity of St John, Whitsun, Hallowe'en, Lady Day, The Feast of the Assumption etc. All these religious festivals have absolutely no scriptural authority whatsoever. **They are pagan festivals in disguise. A visit to your local reference library will confirm this astonishing claim.**

Matthew 15: 13: *“But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.”*

## **5. Isn't the Law Obsolete?**

Many reading this article will ask: **“But hasn't the law been fulfilled and done away with by Jesus Christ?”** The answer is: **NO, it has not! One doesn't do away with a law by fulfilling it.** The word ‘fulfil’ means to accomplish, to carry out, to obey. A prophecy may become obsolete once it is fulfilled: but not a law: and most certainly not one of the **Ten Commandments.** The seventh day Sabbath was instituted at the creation of the world for all mankind. (Genesis 2: 2-3) **It is an eternal covenant between the Creator and His followers and it will be observed throughout eternity by the redeemed host.** (Exodus 31: 13-15, Isaiah 66: 22-23) Obedience doesn't do away with any command. If anything it **establishes it.** Ask any **solicitor** if you have any doubts about these fundamental facts about law.

The Saviour fulfilled every one of the ten commandments: which means he obeyed them all. Dare we suggest that in doing so he did away with the other nine as well as the seventh day Sabbath command? The very idea is absurd and a **sad reflection on how deceived many Christian leaders are.** The Bible tells us that the human heart (**mind**) is carnal and desperately wicked. **Beware you do not deceive yourself.**

Jeremiah 17: 9: *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”*

Romans 8: 7: *“Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”*

## **6. Take Heed**

The Bible tells us that the Almighty is going to break His silence and punish the world for the flagrant violation of His law and the rejection of His mercy. When He does that the world is going to witness scenes of great distress.

Isaiah 13: 11: *“And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.”*

Isaiah 26: 21: *“For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.”*

## Repent before it is too late!

The time has come for you to repent and to give up violating the Almighty's commandments. It may well be that in days gone by you knew little or nothing of the serious sins (**iniquity**) mentioned in this article. But now you know. You can no longer plead ignorance. **Idolatry, sexual sin and Sabbath-breaking** are all serious sins in the eyes of the Almighty God. Doubtless they are popular and multiplied millions of Christians engage in them every week. **But they are still iniquitous and far more serious than any believer can remotely imagine.** Failure to give them up, **especially** when one is aware of their nature will be catastrophic.

## 7. What Now?

What should you do, now that you know about these things? The answer is simple. If you find that you have been - albeit inadvertently - caught up in these sins, then **you must repent and forsake them.** The Most High is a Being of great love and compassion. **He is more willing to forgive sin than we humans are to confess them.** He has absolutely no desire whatsoever that His children perish in the plagues of wrath which are about to fall on mankind.

2 Peter 3: 9: *“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”*

Yahweh is willing to forgive. He is anxious to forgive. He is waiting to forgive. **But He will not forgive your sins unless you confess and forsake them.** I repeat: you must confess and forsake your sins. (Your confession, incidentally, must be made to God - in private - not to a fellow human being). Faith, repentance, confession and forgiveness and obedience are all stages in the process of salvation. They are explained in our **Bible Course.**

My advice to you is to break off your sins before it is eternally too late. Sin is a pleasurable but dangerous pastime which has awesome consequences - too terrible to imagine, let alone describe. You must forsake sin if you want to live - eternally. It can be done. It is being done, by millions of folk all over the world who are having their eyes opened to truth. Never a day passes but someone somewhere becomes aware that they have been breaking the holy commandments of God on a regular basis. The Spirit of the Most High is opening the eyes of people all over the globe. Tens of thousands are now giving up **idolatry, sexual sin and Sabbath-violation.** **Are you willing to be one of them? Do you have the courage to stand up for truth in an age when millions are more scared of their fellows than the opinion of God?** It could well be that you have the courage it takes to stand up for truth. I do not know: but I hope so. **Yahweh the Almighty God of Israel** offers mercy to all through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ - **Yeshua the Messiah.** Accept His offer today. You will find articles in our **Gospel Library** explaining the process of salvation. **Study them.**

Very briefly your course of action should be as follows:

- **Accept salvation through faith in Jesus. (Isaiah 1:)**
  - Verse: 18: *“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”*
- **Do this now. (Mark 1:)**
  - Verse: 15: *“And saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.’”* ( Corinthians 6: 2: *“For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”*
- **A personal decision. (Psalm 51:)**
  - Verse: 2: *“Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.”*

- **Obey Yahweh's commandments. (Matthew 19:)**

- Verse: 17: *"And he (Jesus) said unto him, 'Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, **keep the commandments.**"*

These are the steps you must take ere it is too late. I will end with a prayer that the Spirit of the Most High will be with you as you consider the challenging message brought to you in this article. Bear in mind that your first step is to put your **faith in Jesus Christ, Yeshua the Messiah**. That is the foundation truth of the Christian message. Your next step is to **demonstrate your faith by obeying the commandments** of God: for where there is no **obedience there is no faith**.

**May the Almighty bless you as you seek to do His will.**

**AMEN!**

**In the Son's Name - For the Father's glory.**

*Elder: Max W. Mader*

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