

# THE SEVEN

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SIN

# Has the 'notion of sin' been lost? Cathy Lynn Grossman, USA TODAY

## Is sin dead?

When Keller, author of *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*, speaks about "sin" to his audiences, which are 70% single and younger than 40, "I use it with lots and lots of explanation, because the word is essentially obsolete. They do get the idea of branding, of taking a word or term and filling it with your own content, so I have to rebrand the word 'sin,'" Keller says.

**Seven**

**History**

**Theology**

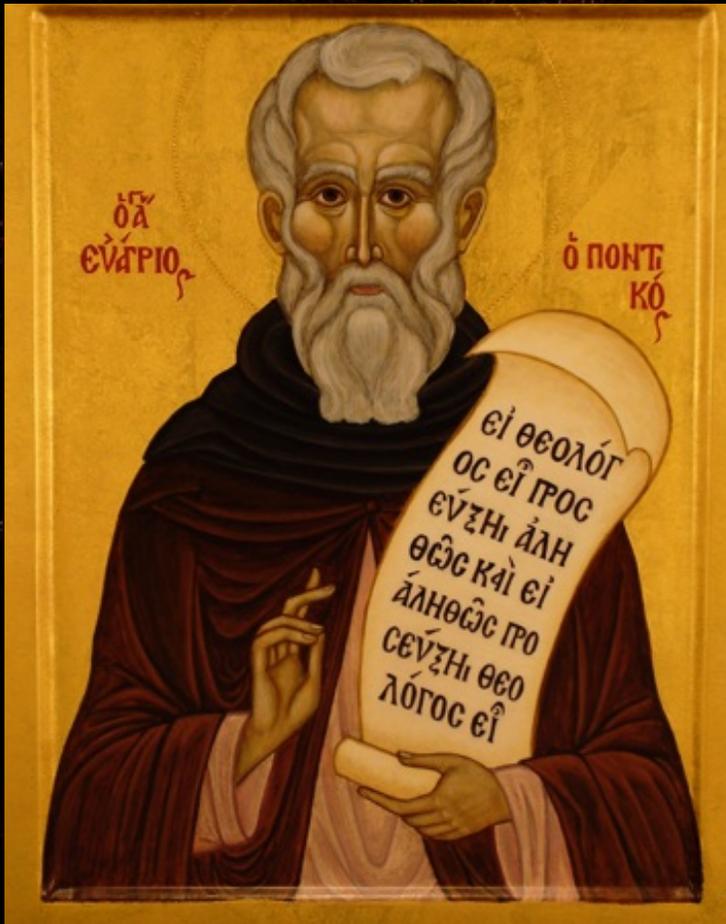
**Deadly**

**Sins**

**Anthropology**

# History

He developed a comprehensive list in AD 375 of eight evil thoughts, or eight terrible temptations, from which all sinful behaviour springs. This list was intended to serve a diagnostic purpose: to help readers identify the process of temptation, their own strengths and weaknesses, and the remedies available for overcoming temptation.



**Evagrius Ponticus  
(346-399)**

# History



**Pope Gregory  
(540-604)**

In the late 6th century, Pope Gregory the Great reduced the list to seven items, folding vainglory into pride, acedia into sadness, and adding envy. His ranking of the Sins' seriousness was based on the degree from which they offended against love.

# History

Gregory was well educated and excelled in all his studies. He also became an expert in law. He excelled so much he became the Prefect of Rome, just as his father had been. **Gregory was only 33 years old.**

He ordered his clergy to go out into the streets to find and care for the poor in person. Any clergy who were unwilling to go into the streets and help the poor were replaced.

# History

When a famine struck Rome in the 590s, Pope Gregory ordered the Church to use its assets to feed the poor. At that time, the Church controlled nearly two thousand square miles of land, overseen by the clergy and used to generate income. **Now, instead of selling the produce of the land, Pope Gregory ordered it shipped to Rome and given away for free. In this way, he saved thousands of people from certain death.** Pope Gregory himself refused to eat until his monks returned from their work of handing out food. He also made certain to dine with a dozen poor people at each meal.

# History

**Both Evagrius and Gregory were concerned with the hidden desires that would keep people from acting and living as Christ intended**

# Different Kind of Death

but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it **you will certainly die.** **Genesis 2:17**

**Physical  
Death**

**Spiritual  
Death**

# Different Kind of Death

I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who **kill the body and after that can do no more.** Luke 12:4

But I will show you **whom you should fear:** Fear him who, after your body has been killed, **has authority to throw you into hell.** Yes, I tell you, fear him vs 5

# Different Kind of Death

What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet **forfeit their soul**? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? **Matthew 16:26**

God “will **repay** each person according to what they have done.” **Romans 2:6**

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. **For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory** that far outweighs them all. **2 Corinthians 4:16-17**

Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face **judgment**, **Hebrews 9:27**

# Different Kind of Death

**If you approach Christianity as physical you are trying to be a good person and modifying your behaviour. If you approach it as spiritual then you look to spiritual crisis moments. Faith must be both or it is robbed of its truth.**

# Different Kind of Death

malaise

Lethargic

indifferent

Spiritually  
insensitive

Detached

**Spiritual Zombie**

Dispassionate

Apathetic

crisis  
oriented

uninformed

Passive

# The “S” Word

## Four Premises

If you externalize sin then no one (including yourself) is responsible

So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, **evil is right there with me** (living in me). **Romans 7:21**

Men are willing to admit that they are sinners, but not that they are sinning.

**Ivan Panin**

# The “S” Word

## Four Premises

Western Christianity has become  
about sin management

Jesus looked at him and loved him. “**One thing you lack,**” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth. **Mark 10:21-22**

# The “S” Word

## Four Premises

We make sin whatever offends us and turn a blind eye to what we are comfortable with (culturally accepted)

What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! **For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore the more important aspects of the law—justice, mercy, and faith. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things. Matthew 23:23**

# The “S” Word

## Four Premises

Every sin takes a who and  
makes them a what

So God created human beings in **his own  
image**. In the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them **Genesis 1:27**

**The seven deadly sins were meant  
to be a spiritual diagnostic tool to  
understand our hidden nature**

So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord,  
that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do,  
in the **futility of their thinking**. **Ephesians 4:17**

You were taught, with regard to your former  
way of life, to put off your old self, which is  
being **corrupted** by its deceitful desires **vs 22**

How do  
you know?