

Are Christians ever guilty before God?

The problem of Charismatic Antinomianism

Introduction

Antinomianism has always been with us and particularly raised its head during the Reformation (the term was coined by Luther) and afterwards with a few Puritans and Reformed Baptists. It became an issue that grew to serious proportions with the Holiness and Higher Life Movements and then again in the Pentecostal Movement. However, it is now widespread amongst Charismatics who misunderstand Biblical statements that we are not under law but under grace. Oddly, the worst offenders in this renaissance of Antinomianism are not Arminian groups but supposed Reformed Charismatics led by Terry Virgo of New Frontiers who teach a completely unscriptural view of grace and fail to appreciate vital doctrines.

The Terry Virgo position

In Christ God holds us guilty for absolutely nothing. Some people won't accept forgiveness, setting themselves above God. Terry Virgo, Twitter, 6.9.11.

The quote above is a classic case of misrepresenting Scripture and typical of the Antinomianism¹ that passes for liberty in the Christian life. It comes from a claimed 'apostle' who has spent decades preaching on Romans 6-8, teaching an extreme form of Charismatic Antinomianism. He has a reputation in Charismatic circles for preaching on grace but this message is not grace but licentiousness. The root problem is an exegetical failure; it is typical of those who focus upon one text at the expense of other controlling texts; it also fails to properly appreciate the meaning of the actual texts themselves.

Terry has in mind Paul's teaching on sanctification and identification in Rm 6–8 and particularly Rm 8:1, 'There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.' What it fails to get to grips with is that this situation applies to the new man, to the Christian putting on Christ and walking in the Spirit. Also, the Greek word for 'condemnation' applies to damnation and not the fatherly discipline of God. If we sin we will not be damned, if we are truly saved, but we stand condemned before God our Father and will be disciplined if we do not repent. If you are walking after the flesh, walking from the old nature, you are in a state of continual condemnation and repeated sins.

Although Terry mentions being 'in Christ', he uses this phrase here generally as being a Christian. This is made clear in his teaching on this matter in his sermons. He even once said, while preaching on Romans 6-7, that a person who is a Christian could kick an old lady across the street and would still not be guilty before God because Christ has freed us

¹ Antinomianism is based upon the Greek words [*anti nomos*] meaning 'against law'. It is used to describe those who teach that licentious behaviour is acceptable because believers are not under moral law any more. They are either unable to sin (perfectionism), downplay sin and its effects, or are guilt free if they sin. A lesser form would not openly accept licentious behaviour, but their teaching results in it. Terry is in this latter category.

from the guilt of sin.² This is arrant nonsense. Justification leads to righteous living; if there is no fruit of increased holiness, there was no justification in the first place.

In the early stages of his ministry Terry taught on Romans 6 in a mixed way. Some of his teaching on this was Biblical and encouraging but there were, even then, traces of Antinomianism. In 1980 he stated that sin does not take you out of Christ (when clearly sin is an expression of the old nature which is Adamic and not in Christ)³ and said, ‘*Even when we slip we are secure in Christ; therefore, we are still righteous*’.⁴ This is pure licentiousness – we are still righteous even when we sin. The doctrine of eternal security does not imply consistent practical holiness.

Terry continually emphasised that we must reckon ourselves dead to sin, when expounding Romans 6 but did not emphasise Paul’s statements such as verses 12-13, ‘**therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God**’. Paul used the doctrine of union with Christ in his death and resurrection to demand that we take better control of our lives and do not sin. He did not mean that we are free of guilt even when we sin. If he did he would later contradict himself when he proclaimed that certain Christians were guilty of sin (see later).

Are we freed from sin in this life? Romans 6 doctrine

In a recent blog⁵ Terry gives a short study of his argument from Romans 6 where he argues, without qualification, that we are free from sin because we have died with Christ. Again he fails to see that the old man has died (actually, has been made inoperative; see later) and the freedom from sin is in the new man. However, the old man is still with us, can still be exercised and still causes saints to sin. He fails to see that if his argument is true, if the Christian only has one nature – a holy, resurrection life, then where does sin come from? This is a serious problem. [We will explain this later in ‘theological considerations’ and show where Terry gets his wrong ideas from.]

When asked, ‘are you saying that you never sin?’ his false theology causes Terry to say, ‘*Sadly ... I do, but I sin as a saint with all the sadness and inappropriateness of it – not as a sinner with all the inevitability that that suggests.*’ This is astonishing! Terry creates a new breed of person not known in Scripture, a saint that sins, a sinner who is not a sinner that will be judged; a sinner without condemnation.

Saints are ‘holy ones’ and do not sin. In the new man they do not sin; they are called by God and predestined for eternal holiness. In heaven they will be eternally holy. However, on earth now believers also have an old nature which causes them to sin. This old nature will eventually be condemned and destroyed and the sentence of death given at the cross will be consummated when it is removed from the believer at the return of Christ. ‘**Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**’ (1 Thess 5:23). Until that time Christians are holy and freed from sin when they are in the new man; they are sinners and under

² This was preached in the early 80s in Clarendon Church, Hove, which I heard with my own ears but I do not have the audiotape. His typical teaching is found in the Downs Bible Week sermons, 1980, tape 1, where the early stages of his growing Antinomianism is beginning to appear.

³ It is true that our sins do not remove us from Christ’s hands and we will persevere. We persevere because God preserves us in Christ and will sanctify us completely at the end. This, however, does not alter the fact that God holds us responsible for our sins and expects us to deal with them. Terry confuses preservation with accountability.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ http://www.terryvirgo.org/Articles/227880/Terry_Virgo/Resources/Articles/Saints_not_sinners.aspx

condemnation when they are in the old man. The deliverance of Romans 6 is that Christians can live by faith in the cross and choose to put on the new man and be free from sin – but conversely they may fail and sin. This is exemplified in Romans 7 and explains why there is so much apostolic teaching and warnings about sin and why Christians are said to be guilty for sin.

The answer to the question, ‘are we freed from sin in this life?’ is, yes in Christ (in the new nature) but no in the old nature. Hence we must put on the new man in a life of repentance. The Christian has the power to choose not to sin but is never freed entirely from sin until the return of Christ when he is fully sanctified and has a new body.

Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter [dishonour], he will be a vessel for honour, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. 2 Tim 2:21

This is putting on the new man.

The teaching of Paul in Romans 6 is vital to explain to believers that the old nature is not patched up, is not improved, is not fixed but is put to death in principle when the believer died with Christ on the cross. The believer was also raised with Christ in resurrection. Thus the believer must believe this and make the death of the old man operational; this is living by faith. Romans 6 is crucial in understanding the basis of our sanctification; it is the doctrine of identification with Christ. However, Paul goes on to explain that, having understood identification we must put on Christ. One is only free from sin when he puts on the new man and walks in the Spirit. If he fails to do this and puts on the old man he is sinful and guilty. If you do not believe in the two natures of the Christian, you will never defeat sin at all but live in delusion. This is one of Terry’s problems. The new man is not automatically put on once for all at conversion, it is put on by choice day by day. Romans 7 shows what happens when it is not put on.

Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil its lusts. Rm 13:12-14

Put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. Eph 4:24

Put on the whole armour of God. Eph 6:11

Put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him. Col 3:10

Put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. But above all these things put on love. Col 3:12-14 [An explanation of what putting on Christ entails.]

Paul also explains that the old nature (which when put on makes the man flesh) and the new man (which is the spiritual life) are at war with each other,

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. Gal 5:16-17

For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Rm 8:6-8

The sentence of death pronounced in Romans 6 must be applied by the believer walking in the Spirit:

For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. Rm 8:13-14

The believer is only free from the external form of law when he is in the new man walking in the Spirit. In the flesh the believer is guilty,

The righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. Rm 8:4

The Passover illustration

In teaching freedom from sin and Romans 6, Terry often took his lead from the Passover as an illustration of the freedom that believers are now in (as he does in the aforementioned sermon⁶). His argument is that the blood on the lintel of the Israelites set them apart from the Egyptians and that this corresponds to the redemption in Christ, which is true. The Passover is a type of the atonement; all those bought by the blood of Christ are saved. However, he then states that although the Israelites continued to sin in the wilderness they were all free of guilt because they were under the blood of the lamb. This is not true.

Again Terry teaches heresy – i.e. there is no guilt even when Christians sin; they are guilt free because of the cross. He ignores the fact that Hebrews teaches us that this generation was not only guilty (which even the historical narrative tells us – idolatry began shortly after the Passover), and not only that many rebellious individuals (who had been under the blood) were condemned by God and consumed in judgment, but that the whole generation (excepting those who had died in righteousness like Moses, plus Caleb and Joshua) was condemned by God and did not enter his rest (life in Christ).

For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, *was it* not all who came out of Egypt, *led* by Moses? Now with whom was He angry forty years? *Was it* not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. Heb 3:16-19

Terry's argument falls to pieces. Apart from a few, all those who had been under the blood of the lamb on the lintel were the objects of God's anger, were sinners (and thus guilty), were in unbelief, and died in the wilderness not having entered God's rest of salvation. Terry fails to understand that only those who are really in Christ are saved by the blood of Christ and this is always manifested in that these people persevere in righteousness. Thus the writer exhorts Christians to learn from this and persevere.

Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard *it*. For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said: "So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest,' " although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. ... Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. Heb 4:1-3, 11

⁶ The 1980 Downs Bible Week sermon.

Those who are disobedient are guilty and if they do not repent and lead a worthy life will fall in the same way as those Israelites. Living by faith involves believing the Scriptures on justification (as Terry preaches) but it also involves demonstrating our true faith by walking worthy and living in continual repentance, 'faith without works is dead' (Jm 2:20). Paul constantly urged believers to 'walk worthy' showing that they may fail and walk unrighteously (Eph 4:1; Col 1:10; 1 Thess 2:12).

Terry centres the believer's chief problem on guilt, which he claimed is now removed forever for the Christian, believing this is the source of many issues causing lack of spiritual development. However, the apostles do not focus on this but centre upon sin as being the believer's problem, demanding that we do not commit it by realising our inheritance in Christ. The emphasis is upon walking worthy and taking responsibility in our life. Terry reverses this and makes the centre a mystical *Higher Life* view of discipleship – everything is done already; believe it and move on free of guilt. He makes no stress on the fight against sin or striving to be holy by putting off the old man, or running the race of faith or putting the body under control, or carrying the cross or denying oneself (e.g. Acts 24:16; 1 Cor 9:24-27; Phil 2:16; 1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 4:7).

No condemnation – only in Christ

Romans 8:1 does not mean that a Christian is never guilty, but that a Christian in the new nature is not guilty. This difference is brought out in John's first letter where he says that a Christian never sins (in the new man, 1 Jn 3:6, 9) but can never say that he is without sin (in the old man, 1 Jn 1:8). Only if we abide in Christ do we not sin; this is why Christ commanded that we do abide in him and thus bear fruit. The greatest daily responsibility for the believer is to abide in Christ, but many believers fail to do this repeatedly and walk in the flesh.

The problem with Antinomians like Terry is that they major on a certain aspect of Scripture and ignore many others which directly bear on, or qualify, this text. There are multiple examples, in doctrinal passages and historical narratives, where we are informed that Christians can be guilty. Indeed, this is the whole point of the need for confession of sin in John's letter (something minimised by modern Charismatics). The need for confession is existing guilt before God; the confession and subsequent repentance removes this guilt in practice. The overwhelming guilt for all our sins was taken by Christ at the cross, but God as Father expects us to acknowledge our failings and take action regarding our sins day by day. If we fail to deal with this he applies fatherly discipline to teach us (Heb 12). Indeed, the Lord himself taught us to pray daily for forgiveness of debts (sins). Why is this necessary if a Christian can never be guilty?

Furthermore, why are there so many warnings by the apostles not to sin; their exhortations even contain long lists of the workings of the flesh warning us to avoid them. The lists of the workings of the old nature are exactly the same as the sins of the world, idolatry, murder, gossip, backbiting, adultery, homosexuality and so on. Just as those in the world that commit such sins are guilty, so are those in the church guilty.

The conditionality of progressive sanctification

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Gal 5:16-18

It is vital to understand that the Christian has two natures. All the blessings of the inheritance of Christ are in the new man, but all the failings, weaknesses and sins of the Adamic life remain in the old man. The Christian has a daily choice which of these to walk

in. When you put on the old man your life becomes flesh and you manifest Adam not Christ. You will sin repeatedly and unless you confess this sin and repent properly, you will be guilty before God of that sin because you are then under law and stand condemned. If you are led by the Spirit you will be walking in the new man, abiding in Christ, and are not under external codes of law. You will manifest righteousness, walk worthy and be free of guilt and sin.

Thus the Christian can be in guilt or in righteousness depending upon his choice; therefore it is a lie to state that believers are always guilt free and righteous.

Now this is very important to emphasise. The regenerated believer is justified before God and considered not guilty in heaven. He will also have a heavenly hope that he will be finally brought to God in holiness without spot or blemish. However, all true believers also understand that while on earth they have a large capacity to sin and this sin needs to be dealt with practically and Biblically to regain peace of conscience and to satisfy their holy Father. Multiple Scriptures explain this, demanding that all known sin is confessed before God to cleanse the conscience in the heart. The believer then repents, that is, turns his mind from sin to following Christ, determining not to sin again. This is putting off the old man and putting on the new man; seeking to be like Christ and walking in the Spirit.

While their heavenly, spiritual nature is holy and thus believers are called 'saints', and while heaven is their destination, on earth today their focus is not that they are never guilty; their practical focus needs to be that they have a natural tendency to sin and must be constantly on guard to deal with this. In dealing with this they develop a strong dependence upon Christ and God's grace to keep them. Their daily focus is not, 'I am fine and never guilty', but, 'I am weak, sinful and need God's grace now'. Genuine believers are not those who are arrogant in their confidence that they are guilt free, but those who are totally dependent upon Christ for life, minute by minute.

Those people who do not deal with sins committed but live in licentiousness cannot be true Christians at all. Genuine believers deal with sin and grow in practical holiness. Antinomianism prepares the ground for professed Christians to fall away. The combination of easy-believism and mere psychological / emotional responses to the Gospel (as exemplified in the superficial and mystical Alpha Course), combined with practical Antinomianism taught in church, leads to Charismatic churches being largely filled with false believers. This results in the constant need for unbiblical counselling methods, demonic deliverance and emotional healing; whereas, in the past, true Gospel preaching brought liberty and peace that was lifelong and made strong disciples.

We will develop the doctrinal applications of this later in 'theological considerations'.

A failure to appreciate the scope of divine statements

God is outside time and his application of salvation to the elect believer is thorough and also outside time, from God's perspective. The believer is chosen to be in Christ from eternity and placed in Christ positionally, but not experientially, before time. The chosen are seen as in Christ, even though they have need for redemption, and until they are actually justified by the exercise of divine faith they are just like the world (Eph 2:1-2, 'just as the others'). When the elect person is justified and regenerated many things are said of him, including that he is sanctified. However, the divine and eternal position seen by God as complete, is yet an incomplete experience for the believer in time. Until the return of Christ several things have yet to occur to fully effect this salvation.

We will explain the position of sanctification and dying with Christ later. Here I will just give one example. Paul tells us that we are glorified now,

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Rm 8:29-30

'Glorified' is an aorist tense verb meaning that it was effected in the past but has a continued affect now. Thus Christians are glorified because an event occurred in the past to glorify them. It is correct to say that believers in Christ are glorified. But are we actually glorified? Dow we walk this earth in glory?

Now Matthew Henry explains that 'grace is glory begun' but this is not the full answer. Glory for the Christian includes being partakers of the glory of God, which Peter tells us we are called to but have not yet experienced it (1 Pt 5:10) telling us that we will experience it in the future (1 Pt 5:1, 4, 1:7) and that it is yet to be revealed (1 Pt 4:13). Yet the Spirit of glory rests upon us (1 Pt 4:14) and is evidenced in our joy (1 Pt 1:8).

From the divine perspective we are glorified, are sons, and express glory potentially in some forms; but from the actual experience of the believer glorification is a future event when our salvation is consummated. The believer will truly express divine glory when he is given a new, resurrection, spiritual body to be like Jesus.

And if children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. ... because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Rm 8:17-21

When Christ *who is* our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Col 3:4

The Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body. Phil 3:20-21

Many other aspects of God's plan are stated to be complete when they are not yet fully experienced by men. For instance believers are seated with Christ in heaven but their experience is that they are walking on earth in tribulation (Eph 2:6; Acts 14:22). For the Christian, the body is dead (Rm 8:10); but clearly our bodies are alive. Even the reprobate are in this position; divine wrath and condemnation abides on them yet they know nothing about it and continue to sin with impunity at this time (Jn 3:36).

Now in the same way believers are said to be freed from sin and to have died with Christ and to be a new creation. From the spiritual side of their lives this is true but from the earthly point of view it is not. Thus the believer lives by faith and as he believes he makes it operationally true. When he does not live by faith it is not true in his experience.

We will explain this difference between our heavenly standing and our earthly experience later. Another mistake Terry makes is to confuse these two states.

A selection of doctrinal statements proving that Christians can be in sin and guilt

There are very many Scriptures which show categorically that regenerated, justified believers can be in sin and be guilty during this life. Here are some:

I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. Rm 7:21

Evil results in guilt and evil is always present with us in the old man. If we express the old nature we will be guilty. The Christian experience is constantly a desire to do good but finding that evil dwells with us. This is one purpose of Romans 7, to comfort us that even the apostle Paul found being free from sin difficult and emphasising that we must make good not only our faith that we have died with Christ but also our repentant life - that we have put on the new man. Knowing we have died with Christ and believing it (which Terry teaches) is only half the solution – we must also put on Christ and not yield to sin. Terry has constantly failed to emphasise the need for Eph 4:22-24.⁷ Fifty per cent of the doctrine of sanctification is absent from Terry's teaching.

But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because *he does not eat* from faith; for whatever *is not from faith* is sin. Rm 14:23

Anything that is not of faith is sin and sin results in guilt. When you wake up in the morning, every single thing that you do which does not result from faith is sin, causing guilt. This is why we constantly need to pray that God will forgive us our sins. Jesus knew what he was doing when he taught us to do this daily. Antinomians minimise sin and reduce it to levels that can be ignored. God's word does the opposite; it heightens sin and makes a man more sensitive to the smallest sins.

Under the Mosaic Law a man who gathered sticks to do a good thing was executed for sinfulness.⁸ Another man was killed by God directly for trying to prop up the ark of the covenant, which was a good intent.⁹ This shows the severity by which God judges sin. God considers that the ploughing of the reprobate is sin, even though to men this is a good work.¹⁰ How much worse are our sins of evil thoughts, words and deeds. Even looking for a few moments at a bad TV programme results in guilt and must be dealt with. Terry's teaching is a lie and results in dangerous ignorance of offences to God.

But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. 1 Cor 9:27

Paul took a hard line on himself to ensure that he was not hypocritical. 'Disqualified' means 'rejected' and was used of the rejection of false coins and impure metals. Paul is here speaking of being rejected from winning the prize of the race; he does not refer to

⁷ Terry has mentioned this and occasionally preached it but it holds a much lower place in his thinking than being guilt free. When he has mentioned the need for putting off the old man it causes confusion to those who believe Terry when he says that believers are not guilty ever. Terry often preached in contradictory terms. In the aforementioned 1980 message he repeatedly stressed that we are not guilty but included a long illustration about a woman he counselled who was guilty and needed to repent. This story is contradictory to the thrust of his message (though the story is a good example of the truth!).

⁸ Num 15:32-26

⁹ 2 Sam 6:3-8

¹⁰ Prov 21:4

losing his salvation but to losing his special reward for working so hard and not taking money from churches.¹¹ Hypocrisy would have meant guilt and rejection for Paul, so he worked hard to ensure he was not hypocritical.

Not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil. 1 Tim 3:6

Young leaders can fall into condemnation for their pride, the sin of the devil. Condemnation is applied to, and results from, guilt. This sin is inward.

But refuse *the* younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry, having condemnation because they have cast off their first faith. 1 Tim 5:11-12

Younger widows, who were being supported by the local church, fell into condemnation when they ceased doing good works and desired to marry again. This sin is external.

For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all. For He who said, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ also said, ‘Do not murder.’ Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. Jm 2:10-12

We are all to be judged by the law of liberty, the law of Christ, the moral law. If we break even one small part of this moral law, we are guilty. Christians are only not under law when they are in Christ; then they are ‘in-lawed’¹² in Christ and fulfil the law of Christ by the Spirit’s power. In the new man you are not under law. You do not fulfil righteousness by legally striving to obey a certain written code in the flesh but by faith and submission to the operation of the Holy Spirit within; as you walk in the Spirit you obey the eternal moral law. The law can only be obeyed by the power of the Spirit within. However, in the old man you are not only under law but are under sin and guilty. The old man stands condemned in Adam and grows in corruption until the end when it is removed from believers.

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he *is* a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. Jm 3:1-2

We all stumble in many things (or ‘make many mistakes’), says the brother of the Lord. Teachers who stumble will receive a greater judgment. Since no man is perfect, and we all make mistakes, we are all guilty from time to time.

Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! Jm 5:9

¹¹ 1 Cor 9:18. Note that rewards can be lost – Col 2:18; 2 Jn 1:8. Charismatic apostles seeking to have the same power and authority as Paul should begin by refusing to take any money or salaries from the Lord’s people.

¹² Literal Greek of ‘under law toward Christ’; 1 Cor 9:21.

Just grumbling against a brother results in condemnation and guilt. How many thousands of times does this happen even in one church in a year?

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 1 Jn 1:8

To say we have no guilt is to say that we have no sin, and here we are told that this is self-deception. It is no use saying that the blood of justification covers this guilt. The apostles never do this. The apostles treat sin as sin; it is a practical matter, which must be dealt with in a practical manner – by confession and repentance. Justification ensures that we have a legally righteous standing before God and thus can pray to him and commune with him. It does not obviate our need to deal with actual sins in this life.

The Israelite under the Passover blood is a type of justification; he believed in the power of the blood, once applied, and was justified along with all the elect people. The same Israelite in the wilderness bringing continual sacrificial blood-offerings to the priest is a type of progressive sanctification securing personal forgiveness. Both are necessary. Terry ignores the latter.

We could also mention all those former co-workers of Paul who, despite years of working in the Gospel with the great apostle, later apostatised and fell away. Indeed, some were excommunicated for blasphemy. These men were guilty before God. Another case regards a certain unnamed disciple:

It is actually reported *that there is* sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles -- that a man has his father's wife! And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. 1

Cor 5:1-5

This man was guilty of incest and, since he had not repented, (at that time, he did later) he remained in guilt and was expelled from the church. The church could not excommunicate an innocent man; the man was guilty.

Another example regards several Corinthians,

Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. 1

Cor 11:27-32

A Christian who does not respect the Lord's Supper is guilty before God. If this guilt is not repented of, he will suffer in his physical body. Paul says that many Corinthian believers had suffered in this way and some had died ('sleep' is figurative for death). This refers to believers who are not only guilty but were struck down to death by God for that unrepentant guilt.

A similar case involves public lying:

Peter said, 'Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back *part* of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.' Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. ... Peter answered her, 'Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?' She said, 'Yes, for so much.' Then Peter said to her, 'How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband *are* at the door, and they will carry you out.' Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. Acts 5:3-5, 8-10

There is no indication that Ananias and Sapphira were unbelievers; indeed they did sell their land and give a portion of it to the church. Unbelievers lie all the time and God does not judge them at the moment. No, this couple were believers but they publicly lied to the church (and thus to God). They were guilty of this sin and killed for it.

Guilt is so serious for Christians that it sometimes results in death. Proclaiming that there is no guilt will not stop God dealing with it. Unrepentant, habitual sin is a very serious matter. God cannot be trifled with; which is why the beginning of wisdom is fearing God. Sinning without care is not fearing God. I knew a man who committed a significant sin habitually in mind, and occasionally in action, and refused to acknowledge it as such. After several exhortations and admonishments, I warned him that if he did not repent God would deal with him very seriously. His other Christian friends did not consider that his prevailing issues were sin and did not support my admonishment. A few weeks after this he was diagnosed with cancer and he died a year later in his early 50s.

Until we all reach the glory we cannot say that supposed Christians who died in unrepentant sin or who apostatised were saved or lost because we cannot judge their hearts. It is possible that a man may lose all his rewards, and scrape through to heaven (1 Cor 3:15) but it is also true that very many Charismatics will be rejected by the Lord despite their claimed signs and wonders (Matt 7:21-23).

A historical narrative

David's sin

This is the classic case. David was the man after God's heart and the king of God's choice. He was given a covenantal promise that the Messiah would be a king of his line. There is no doubt that David stands as an illustration of a Christian man and also a type of Christ himself. Despite this, David sinned grievously, and God tells him by a prophet that he is guilty. There follows divine judgment on that sin, which was very serious indeed; including the death of his son.

David's take on this is expressed in Psalm 51,

A Psalm of David when Nathan the prophet went to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin *is* always before me.

4 Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done *this* evil in Your sight -- That You may be found just when You speak, *And* blameless when You judge. ...

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Make me hear joy and gladness, *That* the bones You have broken may rejoice.

9 Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me *by Your* generous Spirit.

... 14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, The God of my salvation, *And* my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. ...

17 The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart -- These, O God, You will not despise.

David declares that he was guilty before God of bloodshed (murder) but his confession of sin restores his place before God. What was needed was a broken spirit, a contrite heart, in other words, mourning for sin. David was justified since he was part of the people of God and exercised faith in the Lord, especially in the yearly Day of Atonement sacrifice. However, his fall into sin left him guilty, requiring a prophet to force his confession and repentance.

The need for 'a broken and a contrite heart' is rarely preached in Charismatic circles because the central teaching is Antinomian. Believers must grieve for their sins; that is why one of the beatitudes (illustrations of the Christian life) is mourning (Matt 5:4). Mourning for sin is the outward expression of an inner conviction of sin. The Spirit gives such conviction to true believers in order to stimulate their confession and repentance. Where there is no mourning for sin there is no freedom from guilt. Life in Christ increases sensitivity to sin and a proclivity for grieving when it is committed. Terry's teaching denies all this. There is no need for mourning for sin if a person is always freed from guilt.

Theological considerations

A common theological mistake, made by Terry, is to confuse the two states of a Christian and to confuse the tenses of salvation. What is applicable to one is not applicable to the other.

The states of a Christian

Heavenly standing

The Christian has a heavenly, spiritual, existence and an earthly one. The heavenly standing of a Christian is one of justification; he is legally declared to be free from the guilt of sin and to be clothed in the imputed righteousness of Christ. We are seated in heaven in Christ. In heaven the Christian is guiltless.

Earthly state

However, in our earthly state the situation is very different. On this earth we sin all the time; indeed our old nature is said to grow in corruption (Eph 4:22-24). We cannot be said to be holy, but at times we are holy as we put on Christ and walk in his Spirit. Holiness is a goal, never to be fully achieved in this life (due to the existence of the old nature), but Christians are not actually holy in themselves.

In our heavenly standing we are never guilty but in our earthly state we are constantly guilty.

The tenses of salvation

There are clear tenses in salvation; confusion on this matter leads to serious problems. The past tense affects the believer's spirit; the present tense affects the believer's soul and the future tense affects the believer's body.

The future tense – a holy body

The consummation of the Christian's salvation only occurs at the end when his old nature is materially destroyed, when his sanctification is completed and when he is given a new spiritual body like Christ. This is the future tense of salvation. Perfectionists claim to have aspects of this future tense of salvation now, such as being without sin. But this is impossible while the old nature is present. Perfectionism is a heresy.¹³

The past tense – the new nature in the human spirit

You were washed, but you were sanctified. 1 Cor 6:11

The past tense of salvation is that which is complete already. This is the new creation in the believer which is given in regeneration, i.e. the new heart and the new spirit, or the new man.

The new man within the Christian's spirit, is holy and is in the likeness of Christ (Eph 4:24; Col 3:10). This is the result of *definitive sanctification*. As well as being justified by faith, which means that the Christian is declared legally righteous in heaven due to Christ's imputed righteousness, he is also washed from sins (1 Cor 6:11, past tense) and is made holy in his new nature. The finality of holiness refers to the new man which 'was sanctified' in the past tense. This is called 'definitive¹⁴ sanctification'.

The present tense – soul salvation

Those who are being sanctified. Heb 2:11

Several Scriptures refer to the salvation of the soul, which results from our actions.¹⁵ This cannot be salvation in general, which is received by faith; there are no meritorious works in justification. Thus these texts must refer to the salvation that is progressively going on now, i.e. progressive sanctification.

Most of the references to sanctification apply to progressive sanctification. This is a process of increasing practical holiness as a result of our walking in faith. It involves mortification, or dying to the old man, and putting on the new man.

¹³ Many groups taught various forms of perfectionism, particularly Wesleyan Methodists, who taught 'entire sanctification', or sinless perfection – a person can have a crisis faith experience which results in the obliteration of the inward disposition to sin and live a life of love. The Holiness Movement and early Pentecostalism were heavily influenced by Methodism and absorbed perfectionist principles, which were passed on to the Charismatic Movement. Oberlin theology (Charles Finney) also taught sinless perfection. Higher Life (Deeper Life) teaching is a modified form of Holiness ideas involving an adapted doctrine of perfectionism. Perfectionists usually adjust the notion of sin, righteousness, law and justice to enable man to comply more easily. Pelagians teach that man, by his own will without grace, can keep the law of God, denying human depravity. Romanists teach that Christ adjusts the law's standards to our capacity and that grace is given through the church's sacraments and works – grace is by works. Finney also teaches that God's law is adjusted to man's ability. All these claim that man can obey the law as man and yet some also claim that man can make mistakes (which are not classed as sin).

¹⁴ 'Definitive' means conclusive, final, decisive, unconditional, unqualified, absolute, definite. Definitive sanctification is different to progressive sanctification. Some theologians and systematic theologies fail to explain this difference. The need for this distinction is demanded by the Scriptures which teach that we were sanctified, we are being sanctified and we will be fully sanctified at the end – hence the tenses of salvation.

¹⁵ E.g. 1 Pt 1:8-9, 22; Jm 1:21.

Dying to the old man involves self-denial, taking up Christ's cross and dealing effectively with sin. Putting on the new man involves being renewed in spiritual knowledge,¹⁶ living by faith, walking in the Spirit, putting on Christ,¹⁷ and abiding in Christ. Putting on the spiritual armour of Ephesians 6 is putting on Christ for a specific situation.

Now if you do not put on Christ, do not put on the new man, you will express the old man and sin. In this state you will be guilty of sin and will need to mourn for this, confess it and repent (change your thinking on this behaviour) just to get back to square one. Christians in the old man are guilty.

The problem with all forms of perfectionism and *Higher Life* teaching (which lies behind Terry's Antinomianism) is that bad behaviour is downgraded. By this I mean that sin is downplayed and redefined so that Christians can commit sins and think nothing of them. It is a trivialising of sin. God, on the other hand, has a very strong view of sin and the tiniest mistake is enough to damn a man forever. He who breaks one part of the law is guilty of the whole law (Jm 2:10). Growth in grace, growing more like Christ, will involve a growing sensitivity to sin, not a trivialising of it.

Thus Paul, in his frequent discussions of sin, and lists of expressions of the old nature, includes quite ordinary character failings and likens them to much bigger sins. Gossiping,¹⁸ conceit,¹⁹ backbiting,²⁰ being a busybody,²¹ (all common in church life) partiality,²² jealousy²³ and such like are not only condemned, but on occasion, are equated with murder.²⁴ Sins, which are small fry in the world, such as pride,²⁵ lying,²⁶ cheating,²⁷ slander (which is also common in church life),²⁸ defrauding the taxman²⁹ etc., are also treated with outright condemnation.

Thus any believer who manifests one of these sins, even a small sin, is under guilt according to God's word and needs to repent. Gossiping puts you into guilt, plain and simple.

One naturism

Another issue, which is involved, results from Terry's unqualified acceptance of the teaching of D Martyn Lloyd-Jones. Now MLJ is very useful on a number of topics and an esteemed man of God and a great Welsh preacher, but on some issues he was just plain

¹⁶ Eph 4:22-24

¹⁷ Rm 13:14

¹⁸ 1 Tim 5:13

¹⁹ 2 Cor 12:20

²⁰ 2 Cor 12:20

²¹ 1 Pt 4:15

²² Jm 2:9

²³ Rm 1:29 (covetousness).

²⁴ Several sins are mentioned in the same context as murder, such as coveting and adultery, more than once. In Rm 1:29 Paul lists several sins in one sentence with murder in the centre. These sins include, whispering (disparaging), covetousness, malice, envy, contention, being crafty, proud, and disobedience to parents. In Gal 5:19-21, Paul lists: contentions, jealousies, outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, dissensions, envy, drunkenness, and partying with murder. In God's eyes, drunkenness, partying and ignoring your mom are as bad as murder.

²⁵ Rm 1:29

²⁶ Eph 4:25

²⁷ 1 Cor 6:8

²⁸ Jm 4:11

²⁹ Titus 1:11; 1 Pt 5:2 (dishonest gain).

wrong. One such matter was his doctrine of the baptism with the Holy Spirit, which resulted chiefly from his reading of Thomas Goodwin regarding the sealing of the Spirit, and is completely unrelated to the doctrine of the baptism in the Spirit preached by Terry.³⁰ But another error of MLJ relates to his erroneous views on Romans 6 and 7. While teaching some good points in this series, there are issues which are clearly wrong, and even he admits that he had found some verses really hard to understand for decades.

In Romans 7 MLJ is wrong in identifying the man in view as a non-Christian. This is ruled out by Paul's statement that while in the flesh and under the law he was legally blameless before God (Phil 3:6). In Romans 7 Paul says that in the flesh and under law he is unrighteous. But this is not the main point. The key issue is that MLJ did not understand, and was opposed to, the concept of two natures in the Christian. He believed that our unity with Christ resulted in the eradication of the old man, misunderstanding the actual Greek meaning of the word *katargeo* in Rm 6:6, which is, 'to make unemployed' or 'deactivated' (translated as 'done away with' in the NKJV & NIV, and as 'destroyed' in the AV). In any case there is no such thing as complete eradication or annihilation in the Biblical use of the word 'destroyed'. It means to separate (usually from God), not vaporisation. For instance, when sinners are destroyed after the Day of Judgment, they are not annihilated but experience constant, eternal punishment and separation from God.

Thus, like Terry, MLJ considered that the state of the Christian was one nature only in which all the blessings of God were already fully evidenced and must be received by faith in God's word; the old nature has evaporated.³¹ This gave him a problem with eruptions of sin. His solution was to put sin in the body, using the text, 'body of sin'.³² This contradicted hundreds of Scriptures, which place sin in the human heart (something MLJ believed was transformed forever by regeneration). It also ignored the many Scriptures telling us to apply the death of Christ to ourselves and those which speak clearly of two natures (e.g. Eph 4:22-24; Col 3:5; Rm 8:13, 13:14; 1 Pt 2:11), something not necessary if everything has already been done and we are dead and raised in Christ in one nature only. Sadly, MLJ was very confused on the subject of sanctification, just as Terry is.

Interim conclusion

Terry is simply confused about several important theological issues. He confuses the past tense of salvation with the present tense of it. He confuses our heavenly standing with our earthly experience. He confuses definitive sanctification with progressive sanctification. In some ways he even commits John Wesley's mistake of confusing justification with

³⁰ The Charismatic doctrine of the baptism in the Spirit is hopelessly confused. In my book, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* (see website) I identify ten versions of this; I understand that other writers have identified 17 versions. Almost all Charismatic, Holiness, Higher Life and Pentecostal writers on the subject take different views on what it is, how it is gained, what the results are and the theology of it. People like Terry support John Wesley, who thought it to be one thing, but also supported Larry Christenson, who taught that it was something else. He also supported John Wimber, who taught it was a different thing, but also supported Bryn Jones who taught it was yet something else. The list goes on. It is nonsense! All of these forms contradict what Paul says it is in 1 Cor 12:13.

³¹ *'The old man ... is non-existent, he is no longer there. If you are a Christian, the man you were in Adam has gone out of existence; he has no reality at all.'* *Exposition of Romans 6, The New Man*, Banner of Truth (1975), p65.

³² By this Paul is generally referring to the expression of sin by the person. The source of sin is not the body, which is a neutral vessel. Sin arises in the heart (Matt 12:34-35, 15:18-19), which then dominates the soul, which then directs the body to sin. Some bipartite men place sin in the body since they recognise that the soul is a vessel for personality but deny the separate function of the human soul from the spirit and have no clue where the heart is. Since they can't put sin in the spirit/soul, the only place left is the body.

sanctification, even though he occasionally tries to separate them.³³ Finally, he fails to emphasise the necessity of putting off the old man and putting on the new, which may be due to accepting the error of ‘one-naturism’. This compounding of errors leads to outright heresy. Following his teaching leads to antinomian behaviour.

The question of fatherly discipline

Finally, if Christians are never guilty then why does our heavenly Father chastise us for the guilt of our unrepentant sins?

Hebrews 12 follows a classic definition of faith and a list of illustrations of faith in the heroes of the OT. Yet rather than apply that by confirming that Christians are never guilty if they have faith, it affirms that they require discipline for sins committed.

Hebrews 11:39-40 shows that we have attained to a level of grace which those heroes did not know, then Hebrews 12:1 immediately demands that we should lay aside all sins.³⁴ In fact he does not say that we are never guilty, but that sin very easily ensnares us. He then says that we should run and not be weary, likening dealing with sin as an athletic exercise. He even says in verse 4, ‘You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin’. We must exercise ourselves in dealing with sin and must resist.

We don’t avoid sin by pretending that we are never guilty, that everything has been given us on a plate, but by applying the cross and resisting sin; striving against sin. Terry denies that there is any need to strive by following mystical *Higher Life* ideas;³⁵ but here striving against sin is plainly stated. The word ‘striving’ means to carry on a contest or struggle against, contend, a struggling against evil. For Terry there is no struggle against sin because Christians are dead to it and are never guilty; but for the apostle there is a constant struggle and striving against sin. Paul illustrates this struggle in Romans 7.

This active resistance to sin is also evidenced in other apostolic texts, such as: fleeing sin (1 Cor 6:18, 10:14; 1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 2:22) or resisting Satan’s temptations (Jm 4:7; 1 Pt 5:8; Eph 4:27, 6:12).

The chastisement of our Father is a very serious matter. Several words are used for this discipline, including a Greek word that means ‘whipping’ or ‘scourging’. Sometimes God’s dealings with Christians who sin are very serious (as we noted earlier, some are killed). The purpose of the chastening is to bring about righteousness through discipline,

Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Heb 12:11

After this exhortation regarding fatherly discipline, the writer states that righteousness must be pursued actively and that without holiness we will not see the Lord.

Pursue peace with all *people*, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord. Heb 12:12

Now none of this teaching squares with what Terry says. Christians are clearly guilty when they sin and this sometimes requires significant judgment by God to restore.

³³ For instance, by teaching that progressive sanctification is achieved by faith, or just ignoring progressive sanctification altogether.

³⁴ Remember that the chapter divisions are not inspired. The ‘therefore’ of Heb 12:1 shows that it directly follows the illustrations of chapter 11.

³⁵ Which teach that sin is defeated by faith only. You believe in Romans 6 and then are freed from sin. It is a form of perfectionism, which is heresy.

[Aside: the judgment of God in a Christian must not be second-guessed by others. God sometimes uses sickness and bad circumstances when chastising a sinful believer but there are often times when God also uses these things in a righteous man in order to bring higher revelation or secure an important testimony. Job is the classic case of this. Thus we must warn against other people making wrong judgments on suffering people.]

Conclusion

Terry's statements are serious and are plain heresy. It is the heresy of Antinomianism. Terry's problem stems from two serious foundational mistakes: the first is that he twists Scripture and ignores all the contextual passages that bear upon the issue. His exegesis is flawed. The second is that he has no grasp of the theological doctrines involved. Terry seems to have little understanding of foundational Biblical doctrines such as, sin, sanctification, growing in grace, walking in the Spirit, abiding in Christ, and perseverance.

Is it true that '*God holds us guilty for absolutely nothing*', according to Terry? Absolutely not! We have shown Scriptures which categorically state that certain Christians were guilty and have explained both the Bible references and the theology explaining that Christians are always guilty in their old nature and that sin cannot be trivialised. Has Terry not read these verses?

This teaching always leads to licentiousness in followers of it, and those of us that know Terry's New Frontiers church situations well have personal experience of such licentious behaviour and justification of sin amongst members.³⁶ The root of the problem, as always, is to get the doctrinal teaching right in the first instance. When truth is twisted, as here, it is no longer truth but deceit and deceit always brings bondage.

This situation is serious. Terry's teaching on grace is the bedrock of his reputation. It is the one thing that separates him out from other Charismatic 'apostles' since he has never been able to minister 'performance healing' in the way that others have. In reality Terry's role is an archbishop over a denomination; something he started in ministry to combat. If we add to this theological confusion on grace (which results in the lack of proper discipling of his members) the myriad other Charismatic errors,³⁷ then the situation of people in his

³⁶ To itemise current examples of this would embarrass people that I know and I will desist. However, I will give just three examples from the past. A youth leader in Terry's flagship church once told me, in passing, that he defrauded his tax returns and felt no qualms about it. This is the sort of trivialising of sin that I describe in this paper. I could multiply more serious examples of sin, even amongst the highest levels of leadership. Another example is of a leader during the Toronto Experience who was on the platform when a very old lady was brought up with her leg encased in plaster seeking healing. He prayed for her but nothing happened, at which point he severely berated the old lady for her lack of faith and dismissed her. The woman left the stage, helped by relatives, sobbing her eyes out. This is an example of a sin that has been multiplied. The final case regards the senior pastor of an important NF church. A member had sought counsel from him due to sadness caused by the break up of her marriage (she was the innocent spouse). She was a sensitive, creative person and vulnerable. The leader made all sorts of demands, insisting on serving the church in this and that way. His methods were hard and severe to the point of cruelty. The lady strived to fulfil his demands until she fell to pieces, at which point the leader castigated her for her failures and drove her from the church. She ended up needing medical attention and spent years in isolated depression. This is great wickedness.

³⁷ It would take another paper to evaluate all of these properly, they include: church structure errors (creating a large organisation instead of a small family based on community; meeting in a large building instead of a home; creating separate unbiblical meetings; etc.). Meeting errors (lack of centrality of the Lord's Supper conducted in a Biblical manner; Charismatic errors; worship as entertainment; worship as inducement to passivity and mysticism; indecent and exotic behaviour leading to occult practices etc.). Leadership structure errors (hierarchical & pyramidal structure; authoritarianism; unbiblical leadership jobs; failure of accountability and mutual submission; etc.). Wrong directives (constant focus on money;

churches is desperate. It is for these reasons that we see so much: abuse,³⁸ error, personal weakness, neglect of wider family members, support of wolves,³⁹ support of historic heresies, malpractice and aberrations in his churches. These are the result of Antinomian teaching.

For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh. Gal 5:13

A summary of Terry's error in connection with Antinomianism

1. *Confusing the preservation of the saints with divine accountability for sin.* God preserves believers to the end but does not ignore their sins and takes action when sin is not repented. Eternal security does not imply consistent practical holiness. Terry says that believers are still righteous even when they sin because they are safe in Christ. The implication that Christians can live licentiously is evidenced in the statements and behaviour of his members, even members as young as 13.
2. *Terry ignores the fact of divine displeasure against sins committed and the fatherly discipline that follows it.*
3. *Terry confuses the past tense of salvation with the present tense of it.*
4. *Terry confuses our heavenly standing with our earthly experience.*
5. *Terry confuses definitive sanctification with progressive sanctification.*
6. *Terry confuses justification with sanctification* (even though he occasionally tries to separate them); such as the implication that sanctification is just based on faith in Romans 6 and that striving and struggling is not involved in securing holiness. This

submission to men and his apostleship instead of Christ; unbiblical salaries; focus on mission strategies at the expense of establishing community and *koinonia*; etc.). See my paper, '*Charismatic Catastrophe*' for a general critique of such movements.

³⁸ It behoves me to comment on such a claim. The historic hordes of people claiming abuse from New Frontiers leaders has become so widespread that it has prompted a statement on the Wikipedia entry for New Frontiers. Several people have written up cases of these abuses in various papers and at least one writer intended to write a book on abuse in NF churches as he was assailed with so many cases of desperate hurt people. Many of these hurt people never get any publicity and other pastors have to spend huge amounts of time trying to help fix the damaged people. I personally have had cases of abused people from NF churches from all over the country, but especially locally to his flagship church in Brighton, now led by his son Joel. It is interesting that although NF claims to be Reformed (though it does not subscribe to any historic Calvinist standards and its statements of faith are paltry) other streams of Arminian Charismatic denominations (which have greater theological errors) have fewer cases of spiritual abuse. This shows that there is a greater level of authoritarian control in NF churches. I have known people become clinically ill and require medication as a result of their maltreatment by NF pastors.

It is noteworthy that of the 300-400 people who were Terry's foundational congregation in the days of Clarendon Church Hove, many of whom were very able, leadership quality men, barely a handful still remains. Some men left to form their own ministry or start their own churches, others worked in existent churches at leadership level. There has to be a very significant failure of leadership to lose such large numbers of effective workers. In the late 80s, the church secretary told me that 160 good people left in just over a year. Terry callously called these people, who had helped build the church, 'autumn leaves'. I should mention that I left this church in the late 80s, due to its growing errors, extremely demoralised and was further damaged by the behaviour of NF members subsequently – including public slander and social rejection - which led directly to a family trauma. I have not written about this since that time until now. In God's grace this was the beginning of a fresh and powerful revelation of theological truth, a deeper reliance upon God's sovereignty and the birth of my own ministry in the early 90s.

³⁹ One recent example was Terry's public support of Todd Bentley, despite his clear manifestations of being a heretic and charlatan. Understanding Ministries condemned Bentley at the height of the Lakeland Revival on the basis of his ministerial roots, his current associations, his conduct in ministry, but chiefly through his teaching. Later we all learned that Bentley was having an adulterous affair during the Lakeland Revival with a member of his staff. Terry's support was not removed or apologised for. Terry undoubtedly led people to listen to Bentley, which would have done them spiritual damage. This is a catastrophic failure of pastoring.

derives from *Higher Life* influences. Terry takes principles relating to justification and applies them to progressive sanctification.

7. *Terry appears to accept the MLJ error of 'one-naturism'*. However, he confusingly sometimes mentions the need to put off the old nature despite accepting MLJ's error that it isn't there.
8. *Terry fails to adequately preach on the necessity of putting off the old man and putting on the new man*. When he does it contradicts his earlier teaching that there is no guilt for the Christian, thus causing more confusion.
9. *Terry is an Antinomian*.

[For more information on the matters under discussion see my papers, '*Are Christians ever condemned?*', '*The problem of sin*', '*The believer's relationship to the law*', '*Charismatic Catastrophe*' and '*Higher Life Teaching*'.]

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