

Where Are The Sinners?

by Robert F. Turner

Has anyone seen a plain, old-fashioned **sinner** lately? They are getting mighty hard to find.

If the prodigal son were living today (as if he were not), he wouldn't be a **sinner**. A juvenile delinquent perhaps, but his parents would be to blame for that. "There are no bad boys," you know. His wild oats are just youthful exuberance, a normal rebellion against an unjust society. He must be left free to "adjust positively."

There are no **liars** today. These fine people are simply extroverts with imaginative talents that should be properly channeled. They evince creative ability; their instability is a facet of their capacity for free uninhibited thought. They may become great poets, lawyers, or preachers.

The **drunkard** is not really a sinner. He has an inferiority complex and makes a mechanical adjustment (albeit a liquid one) to the problems of today. Beside that, he is sick. He beats his wife, starves his children, and is a scourge to society. So, he needs our sympathetic understanding.

Adultery may be a sin in far-off slums or farm-labor camps, but not among movie stars or popular public figures. And don't even mention the word when we get close to home. Here it is simply a case of biological readjustment. The sex pervert was denied "free discussion" at home; his parents were old-fashioned and believed in common decency. His sin – er, I mean his "mistake," is a fault of modern society.

But maybe the **murderer** is a sinner – just maybe! On the other hand, he may be the victim of some early traumatic experience. His mother was over-protective; he was greatly inhibited. He was never allowed to push his oats off of the high-chair tray, so now he pushes his wife off the Brooklyn Bridge. Poor fellow!

There may be an element of truth in all these descriptions; but one element, very necessary for correction, is lacking. We are overlooking the **moral** element. Successful treatment for all of these ills must include a proper dosage of "ought" – moral responsibility, to God and to man.

Our generation needs psychiatry, but we must learn that Freud is no substitute for Jesus Christ. We must recognize sin for what it is – viz., **sin**; and then we will understand better the "Great Physician" who takes away the sins of the world.

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