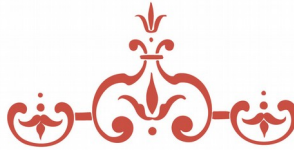


*Thrift-Store Theology*



# The Suicidal Sin

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# The Suicidal Sin

*Are you killing yourself?*

Before we get into the particulars I must ask you this very basic question: do you believe the Bible? Not do you believe IN the Bible but do you believe the Bible. Many say that they believe IN the Bible and mean that they believe that the Bible is the Word of God, that it is inerrant in it's original form, etc.; sort of like believing in the Church when you never go to Church. I mean that you read the Bible and take it at face value. Why go into all this theologizing when I started out talking about sin? Simple. If you don't believe the Bible, that sin is bad, then going any further will be a waste of your time and mine. But if you believe that sin is bad for you and you don't want that then read on so we can all benefit.

On Christmas day of 2002, a West Virginia man Andrew "Jack" Whittaker won a record \$314 million Powerball drawing. The first thing he said, after saying that "he was blessed", was that he would tithe ten percent to three churches. After taking a one time payment of \$170 million, after taxes that came down to \$113 million, the already self-made millionaire said he would give the full \$17 million to three Church of God pastors. "My first priority is helping West Virginia." He left the spending of it up to the pastors but he had said the money would be used to help people who just needed a little help like a car so they could drive to a better job. He said he would be expanding his business so he could hire back the 24 men he had to layoff before Christmas.

Isn't that an unusual story? All the papers picked it up and even the news anchors remarked about how generous the man was. Without taking anything away from Mr. Whittaker, I think he knew that it was the smartest thing he could do to give the Lord his tithe. I base this on one the first stories in the Bible. Let's read in chapter 4 of Genesis about Cain and Abel:

Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. But Abel brought fat portions of his flock.

The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it."

Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field. And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. (NIV)

The result for Cain was he could no longer work as a farmer, he was banished from his family and would be condemned to wander the earth. A simple little story but very pertinent to our topic. Yes it is the first instance of murder but it is also the first instance written about tithing. Did you catch it? Cain brought "some" of the fruits of the soil as is offering. Some here could mean anything that was leftover.

Are you giving God the leftovers? Is it any wonder He is not pleased?