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Sin: against Whom or against What?

Omta, F.F.

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Sin as spiritual self-denial

Are humans inclined by nature to evil as such? To say yes to that sounds quite far from the assertion that 'most people are good'. But even when every one is good, then it is shame if that is not readily apparent. That is why we need a good concept of sin, even though such a concept should address people's strength instead of their weakness.

The offence of sin is not directed primarily at a transcendent Supreme Being, but against what is most powerful and most essential in oneself. This brings us to a non-theistic concept of sin as spiritual self-denial. The new sinner does not 'curse' at heaven but at his internal self. He/she is not a bad person who sins in spectacular ways but someone who suffers from spiritual laziness, indifference ... or a lack of courage. That also produces new forms of holiness such as risking your skin to save your soul. Whistleblowers become bearers of moral leadership.

Fokko Frederik Omta (1956) was born in the Noordoostpolder on a farm. After passing his Gymnasium exam in Emmeloord, he studied theology at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam. Upon graduating (1984) he served as a minister in Sexbierum, Sloodorp, and Krabbendam. Since 2008 he has been associated with the Fenixkerk (PKN) in Nieuwe Niedorp and teaches religion at the elementary school. He is married and has three sons.



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