

A List of Sins Witnessing Guide

Preface

You may have downloaded this document because the Witnessing Fundamentals Tutorial's section, What is Sin?, references it. It is entitled *a list of sins* and, indeed, it does contain an extensive list of sins. However, rather than just providing this list, we have expanded it to include detailed instructions on how to use it, making it a comprehensive Witnessing Guide on using the topic of sin. It is not intended to be a script to follow; there is just too much material here. Rather by studying the whole of it two things will result.

One, you will be enriched by your study of God's Word. This will strengthen and prepare, encourage and protect. By studying this guide, you will be able to see your sin more clearly and see your need for Christ's sacrifice more intensely. As this occurs, our recognition of the scope and magnitude of God's gift of free forgiveness and eternal life breaks on each of us in ever increasing waves. When we see our own sin it drives us ever deeper into Jesus' protective arms. May all of us know the true depth of Christ's love for us. Amen.

Second, you will use the principles presented in many different witnessing situations - even in relatively short witnesses. Or, you use different components of this topic in multiple witnesses of a longer-termed relationship. By studying the whole of the guide and using various parts in different witnesses, you can become proficient in using the topic of sin to witness God's Gospel message.

Foreword

At the end of this guide is a list of sins that has been compiled from a fairly cursory survey of the Bible. By no means is the list of sins exhaustive. Before studying the list of sins it is important to answer a few questions. "**Why** would a Christian want to use sin as a topic in his witness to a Mormon?" and "**How** does a Christian use a list of sins in her witness to a Mormon?" This Witnessing Guide provides answers to both these questions and then provides the list of sins.

We have given Bible quotations, rather than just references, in connection with each witnessing principle and each sin or group of sins. These quotations are from both the NIV and King James translations, presented in a side-by-side format. We hope this extra effort on our part will facilitate the study of God's Word on your part.

In witnessing to Mormons, it is critical that we show them God's messages using the King James translation. It is the only translation endorsed by the LDS church. For some Christians the best way to do this is to study a biblical reference in the NIV first, and then read the King James Version.

It would also not be wise to walk a Mormon through this document. It, and any prepared witnessing document, would be considered "anti-Mormon". Even though Mormon missionaries may present from prepared pamphlets, individual Mormons treat any prepared material with great distrust. The better approach is a personal witness. You can write your own notes from this document and present from that. What is important is that you witness your faith, and let your conviction, Christ living in you shine out to the person you are witnessing to.



Why use the Topic of Sin?

The short answer to this question is one word, “Conversion”. Conversion is the word used to describe a person coming to faith. This miracle is performed by the Holy Spirit through the power of God’s Word. Literally, conversion means “to turn around”. When a person comes to faith, the miracle of conversion *turns the person around*; from focus on himself to focus on God. Another common explanation of conversion is: a person *gives up on self* and embraces the Lord. A converted person recognizes his inability to save himself and turns to God for salvation. The key concept is faith, or trust. A converted person places faith (trust) in Jesus – But faith of what? Faith that Jesus is her **Savior**, that is; has paid the price of her **sins**. Because of Christ’s substitutionary sacrifice her new faith places her in heaven.

But in what does an unconverted person trust? An unbeliever’s trust is in himself. On Judgment Day, he will **stand alone** before God. An unbeliever must bear alone the weight, and most importantly the consequences, of his own **sins**.

Conversion then makes the *awareness of one’s sins* critical. A person’s awareness of his sins, especially the *magnitude of his sinfulness*, makes him aware of his absolute need for a Savior. Conversely, if a person is ignorant of her sins, if she believes she is a “good” person; there is little perceived need for salvation. Then the Good News of Christ’s salvation falls on deaf ears. In order for a person to ‘hear’ the Gospel message she must first hear about her need.

Paul gives us this principle in Romans: Through God’s commands we become conscious of our sins. Through this knowledge we realize we have fallen short of the glory of God. Through this knowledge we can ‘hear’ Christ’s offer of being justified freely, that is; declared righteous. When we are justified it is as if no sin had ever occurred. Jesus can make this offer because he has already paid the penalty for our sins, satisfying the demands of justice.

Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. ²¹ But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.
Romans 3:20-24 (NIV)

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin. ²¹ But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; ²² Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: ²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; ²⁴ Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.
Romans 3:20-24 (KJV)

It is critical for us to make Mormons aware of their sins. This is because LDS doctrine has gone to great lengths to minimize the concept of sin in the lives of its members:

- ➡ by watering down the definition of sin.
- ➡ by calling most sins trespasses, mistakes, oversights, etc.
- ➡ by focusing its members on a process of progression.
- ➡ by asserting that in most cases deliberate action is required to commit a sin.

Instead of Mormons seeing their sin, they are conditioned to see their worthiness. They place great stock in not having committed a particular sin. Mormons are conditioned to build themselves up by seeing the sins they do not commit. In a word, Mormonism conditions a person to focus on **self**, self worth, self progression, self reliance.



Mormonism’s Plan of Salvation is contingent on an individual’s progression in worthiness, that is, **self** righteousness. Mormons are conditioned to think that as they avoid sins, they are, in some way, building a positive bank account of their own righteousness. To aid them in this, the LDS church adds a myriad of commands and requirements to God’s Word. Some of these are held in higher regard than biblical commands. Many are easily kept because they deal only with an action and not with the attitude of the heart (e.g. don’t drink coffee). By providing commands a Mormon can keep, these additions actually help Mormons perceive themselves as worthy. For instance, both abandoning pornography and not drinking coffee results in a Mormon feeling that he or she has made a leap in self righteousness.

In this way Mormonism puts filters around Mormons. These filters work to distort the Gospel message, even to prevent its message from being ‘heard’. Not understanding God’s message has as damaging an effect as never hearing it. Jesus makes this point in his explanation to his disciples of the parable of the sower:

<p>When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. Matthew 13:19 (NIV)</p>	<p>When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. Matthew 13:19 (KJV)</p>
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This makes using God’s Word to help a Mormon see his sins, see the magnitude of his sinfulness, and see the eternal consequences of his sins, paramount. By breaking down the filters of Mormonism a Mormon’s mind can be cleared of obstacles so that God’s Word can be ‘heard’ (understood) and through its power the Holy Spirit can *turn him around* - so that he will see his absolute need for a Savior that has already paid the price of **all** his sins, so that he will give up on **self**, so that he will embrace **Christ!**

How is a List of Sins used?

Again, the answer to this question is found by examining the miracle of conversion. In order to see one’s need of a Savior one must clearly see one’s sin. When witnessing to a Mormon we want to use God’s Word to help our friend understand:

- ➡ God’s absolute demand for perfection.
- ➡ God’s universal definition of sin.
- ➡ The rebellious nature of sin.
- ➡ The consequence of sin.
- ➡ The severity of even one sin.
- ➡ The breadth of God’s commands.
- ➡ How prevalent sin is in a person’s life.
- ➡ The futility of the LDS plan of progression

Before we look at each of these points, it is important to discuss how to introduce the topic of sin. One way is through the topic of perfection: “Do you believe you must be perfect?” “What does perfection mean to you?” Obviously *perfection* and *not sinning* are related. You can shift a discussion from *perfection* to *not sinning* to “*what is sin?*”.

Another way is through the topic of forgiveness: “Do you believe you must work to be forgiven of your sins?”, “What do you consider sin?” Or, “I understand you believe you must abandon a sin to be forgiven of it, I’d like to look at what God says about sin to see if this is realistic.”

Another way is to introduce the topic directly: “I’d like to look at the topic of sin.” If this throws the person such that he balk, we can ask if he is afraid of his sins (they should) or we can share this passage.



Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹ But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.” John 3:20-21 (NIV)	For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov’d. ²¹ But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. John 3:20-21 (KJV)
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Introducing the topic of sin may require a little “holding their feet to the flames”.

God’s absolute demand for perfection

Matthew 5:48 states God’s requirement for perfection:

Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect (NIV)	Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. (KJV)
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Not only are we commanded to **be** perfect, the measure of that perfection is God himself! Additional information on witnessing God’s demand for perfection is available in the Witnessing Fundamentals Tutorial on our Web site. See the article “Be Ye Perfect” in the chapter “Use of God’s Word”.

God’s universal definition of sin

The Apostle John provides a universal definition of sin:

Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. 1 John 3:4 (NIV)	Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. 1 John 3:4 (KJV)
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In short, any violation of any command of God is a sin.

The rebellious nature of sin

We want to show that sin is serious not only because of how often we sin, but also because of whom we sin against. Whenever we sin we are, in reality, sinning against God. King David, even though he committed adultery, confessed that he had sinned **against God**.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. ² Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. ³ For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. ⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. Psalm 51:1-4 (NIV)	Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. ² Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. ³ For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin <i>is</i> ever before me. ⁴ Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done <i>this</i> evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, <i>and</i> be clear when thou judgest. Psalm 51:1-4 (KJV)
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We can illustrate the magnitude of sin’s seriousness by showing its relative impact based against whom the sin is committed. This short story illustrates this: “Think of a young man who takes a swing at his brother. His brother might swing back, but that will probably be the extent of the consequences. Now think of that very same young man taking that very same swing at a police officer. Same swing, but the consequences are a whole lot more serious. Take it one step further. Imagine that young man taking that very same swing at the President of the United States. Same swing, but even more consequences. The seriousness of the action often is determined by whom the action affects.”



Now we can witness that sin is against God! That sin is *rebellion* against the majestic Lord! That's serious. Take your friend to what the Lord says:

Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker, to him who is but a potsherd among the potsherds on the ground. Does the clay say to the potter, 'What are you making?' Does your work say, 'He has no hands'? Isaiah 45:9 (NIV)	Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands? Isaiah 45:9 (KJV)
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When we do not follow the precepts (commands) of God, we sin against our Maker.

The consequence of sin

The consequence of sin is the opposite of God's gift of eternal life, namely eternal death.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23 (NIV)	For the wages of sin <i>is</i> death; but the gift of God <i>is</i> eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23 (KJV)
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In Mormonism, eternal death is not necessarily a horrendous thing. Mormon doctrine claims that any eternal destination other than the highest kingdom is an eternal death, but is better than life on earth. We need to "scare the hell out" of our Mormon friend by demonstrating the falseness of this claim.

But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death. Revelation 21:8 (NIV)	But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. Revelation 21:8 (KJV)
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The wages of sin, death, earns people a place in the lake of fire and brimstone!

The severity of even one sin

We need to help our friends shift their focus from looking at what sins they don't commit to seeing all the sins they do commit. We can show them that God views any rebellion as fatal. Breaking one command is as bad as breaking every command.

For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it James 2:10 (NIV)	For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one <i>point</i> , he is guilty of all. James 2:10 (KJV)
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Christ's requirement is to be as perfect as Heavenly Father. Only absolute perfection avoids the penalty of sin. All others are cursed.

All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law." Galatians 3:10 (NIV)	For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed <i>is</i> every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. Galatians 3:10 (KJV)
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And God will deal harshly with the cursed.



Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Matthew 25:41 (NIV)	Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Matthew 25:41 (KJV)
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The breadth of God's commands

Once we show the seriousness of sin, we can continue by providing evidence of sin's breadth and depth. First, we sin in our thoughts and in our words, as well as in our deeds.

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" ³⁷ Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22:36-40 (NIV)	Master, which is the great commandment in the law? ³⁷ Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. ³⁸ This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Matthew 22:36-40 (KJV)
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Man is directed to keep these greatest commandments, and all the others which 'hang' on them, in our hearts, our souls, and mind. ***In fact, when stating the greatest command; Jesus does not even discuss actions. The core of sin is in our hearts, not in our actions.*** Sinful actions may or may not follow sinful thoughts. We will look again at these "greatest commandments" in the list of sins.

Second, not only do we sin by breaking God's commands (sins of commission), we also sin when we don't do the positive things God commands us to do (sins of omission).

Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins. James 4:17 (NIV)	Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. James 4:17 (KJV)
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Third, we can and do sin unintentionally.

One and the same law applies to everyone who sins unintentionally, whether he is a native-born Israelite or an alien. Numbers 15:29 (NIV)	Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them. Numbers 15:29 (KJV)
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Fourth, we are not even aware of every sin we commit.

Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults. Psalms 19:12 (NIV)	Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults Psalms 19:12 (KJV)
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How prevalent sin is in a person's life

We can use Paul as an example of the prevalence of sin in a person's life. Paul offers his own personal confession of the prevalence of sin in his life. He references both sins of commission and omission. He makes it clear that because of his flesh (sinful nature) he will continue to sin. He says sin lives (dwelleth) in him!



I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. Romans 7:18-20 (NIV)	For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but <i>how</i> to perform that which is good I find not. ¹⁹ For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. ²⁰ Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. Romans 7:18-20 (KJV)
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The futility of the LDS plan of progression

God offers many expressions of the futility of attempting to gain eternal life through obedience to his laws. We will want to share these with our Mormon friend. God states this futility outright, calling such people “cursed” (see Galatians 3:10 above). He demonstrates it by giving laws we can never continuously keep (see Matthew 22:36-40 above). He makes a single transgression the same as breaking all his commands (see James 2:10 above). In addition he tells us that he gave us commands so that sin can *increase!*

The law was added so that the trespass might increase. Romans 5:20 (NIV)	Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. Romans 5:20 (KJV)
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He tells us no one has ever been sinless or will ever stopped sinning.

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God Romans 3:23 (NIV)	For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God Romans 3:23 (KJV)
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If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 1 John 1:8 (NIV)	If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 1 John 1:8 (KJV)
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There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins. Ecclesiastes 7:20 (NIV)	For <i>there is</i> not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not. Ecclesiastes 7:20 (KJV)
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He tells us that even our good works are corrupted by our sin, calling them “as filthy rags”.

All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags Isaiah 64:6 (NIV)	But we are all as an unclean <i>thing</i> , and all our righteousnesses <i>are</i> as filthy rags Isaiah 64:6 (KJV)
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A List of Sins

This list of sins can be used to demonstrate to Mormons the wide variety of sin, how prevalent it is in their own lives, and help to illuminate the futility of attempting to gain eternal life through obedience to the law. As we walk through the various sins, we want to reinforce the four principles concerning sin’s breadth and depth covered above:

- ➡ We can sin in our thoughts and words as well as deeds.
- ➡ We sin when we don’t do what we are commanded (sins of omission).
- ➡ We can sin unintentionally.
- ➡ We can sin without realizing it.

The first Bible quotations in this list consist of various commands given by Jesus at the Sermon on the Mount. The sins referenced here are tangible things that people should easily see in their own lives. When



presenting different sins it is probably a good idea to start with tangible things and work towards less defined things like God's "greatest commandments".

Anger, resentment, ridicule same as murder

<p>You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.'²² But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell. Matthew 5:21-22 (NIV)</p>	<p>Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:²² But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Matthew 5:21-22 (KJV)</p>
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We sin not only when we murder, but when we are unjustly angry. Even if this anger takes no action, it is still a sin against God. If we feel a flash of anger at a team mate because he took the shot instead of passing us the ball, we sin. If we resent our spouse, if only for a moment, because he left his dirty dish on the counter instead of putting it in the dishwasher, we sin. When we yell angrily, and out of patience at our children, we sin. When we are angry at a coworker because she honestly forgot a meeting, we sin. Sinful action need not occur; these sins are present whenever such thoughts are in our hearts!

Lust same as adultery

<p>You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.'²⁸ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Matthew 5:27-28 (NIV)</p>	<p>Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:²⁸ But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. Matthew 5:27-28 (KJV)</p>
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We sin not only when we commit adultery, but when we lust. Even if this feeling takes no outward form, and we keep it to ourselves, it is still a sin against God. If we feel that tingling in the loins when we see a young person at the beach, we sin. When we fantasize about a sexy movie star, or a sports figure, we sin.

Getting even

<p>You have heard that it was said, "Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth."³⁹ But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. Matthew 5:38-39 (NIV)</p>	<p>Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:³⁹ But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. Matthew 5:38-39 (KJV)</p>
<p>Do not say, "I'll do to him as he has done to me; I'll pay that man back for what he did." Proverbs 24:29 (NIV)</p>	<p>Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work. Proverbs 24:29 (KJV)</p>

We sin when we retaliate, even if the injury done us was wrong (evil). When someone insults us and we fire an insult back, or even if we say nothing, but later get even by telling others bad things about the person, we sin. When we are cut off in traffic and think a private "I hope you get yours", we sin.



Love your enemy

<p>You have heard that it was said, "Love your neighbor and hate your enemy." ⁴⁴ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you Matthew 5:43-44 (NIV)</p>	<p>Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. ⁴⁴ But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; Matthew 5:43-44 (KJV)</p>
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We sin when we do not love our neighbor. As seen in the parable of the Good Samaritan, all men are our neighbors. We sin when we do not love our enemy. These commands are not referring to the emotion of love, but to the action of love.

<p>Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸ Love never fails. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a (NIV)</p>	<p>Charity suffereth long, <i>and</i> is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, ⁵ Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; ⁶ Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; ⁷ Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. ⁸ Charity never faileth 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a (KJV)</p>
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Love never fails (charity in the King James Version); therefore, we sin every time we fail to perform a loving act for our neighbor or our enemy (i. e. any of the actions referred to by these passages!). We are also to pray for our enemies, when we don't; we sin. When we don't sincerely want the best for our enemies we are sinning. Jesus prayed to his Father to forgive those who had put him on the cross. When we do less for our enemies, we sin.

Making yourself look good

<p>Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. Matthew 6:1 (NIV)</p>	<p>Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Matthew 6:1 (KJV)</p>
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We sin when we perform a "good" work for the purpose of inflating ourselves. Such a work is not seen as "good" by God, but hypocritical. A good work is not defined so much by the action as by the heart!

<p>You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: ⁸ "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. ⁹ They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men." Matthew 15:7-9 (NIV)</p>	<p>Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, ⁸ This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with <i>their</i> lips; but their heart is far from me. ⁹ But in vain they do worship me, teaching <i>for</i> doctrines the commandments of men. Matthew 15:7-9 (KJV)</p>
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Paying a tithe to keep a temple recommend makes the tithe a sin. Accepting a calling because refusing it would make you look bad, turns the fulfillment of the calling into sin. We may be able to fool others, sometimes even ourselves; but God can see into our hearts.



Keeping treasures for ourselves

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. Matthew 6:19 (NIV)	Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. Matthew 6:19 (KJV)
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We sin when, regardless of how much we may give to God, if there is something we own that we would be unwilling to part with. This might include position, job, income, recreation, money, leisure, time, comfort, hobby, investments, or house. If any of these worldly things become more important or gets in the way of serving God with our time, talents, and treasures; we sin. Every time we fail to use our treasures to glorify God, we sin. God does not want us to be friends of the world (that is, love our worldly life), when we are; we sin. When we are so comfortable that we don't want to serve the Lord, give to the Lord, or be with the Lord, we are sinning.

The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. John 12:25 (NIV)	He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. John 12:25 (KJV)
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Worry

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Matthew 6:25 (NIV)	Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Matthew 6:25 (KJV)
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We sin when we worry. When we worry about our finances, we sin. When we worry about our popularity, we sin. When we worry about our appearance, we sin. When we worry about our health, we sin. When we worry about whether our home will impress our visitors, we sin. When we worry about whether we are good enough, we sin. When we worry about whether we will gain eternal life, we sin. God wants us to cast all our cares on him. He wants us to trust in him and his promises.

Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall. Psalms 55:22 (NIV)	Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. Psalms 55:22 (KJV)
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Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7 (NIV)	Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. 1 Peter 5:7 (KJV)
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When we worry about our sin, worry about whether we're forgiven, we sin.

Judging

Do not judge, or you too will be judged. Matthew 7:1 (NIV)	Judge not, that ye be not judged. Matthew 7:1 (KJV)
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This passage is often misunderstood. A person is not 'judging' when he or she tells another about God's decrees. Say a person has a friend who is living with another person as 'man and wife' outside of marriage; it is a loving act to say "What you are doing is a sin against God and will affect your relationship with him". In this situation the focus is on the act, the message is that it is against God's decrees and has consequences. Pointing out those consequences is not 'judging' in the context of this passage.



God's command here deals with judging, or making assumptions about, another person's intentions or motives. In this case the focus is on the person, on the contents of the person's heart. Only God can judge another person's heart. When we think or say "She did that just so she would look good" or "He did that on purpose, he thinks he is better than me", we sin. If we think "It won't do any good to talk this out with her, she won't listen... or she'll just throw it back in my face later", we sin. When we feel superior to another person because "he's so sinful", we sin. When we attempt to see the sin in the heart of another person, we only pass judgment on ourselves; because that sin is in our own heart as well.

<p>You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. Romans 2:1 (NIV)</p>	<p>Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. Romans 2:1 (KJV)</p>
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The Greatest Commandments

<p>"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" ³⁷ Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22:36-40 (NIV)</p>	<p>Master, which is the great commandment in the law? ³⁷ Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. ³⁸ This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Matthew 22:36-40 (KJV)</p>
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The greatest command is to love God; completely, continuously, with every part of our heart, soul, and mind. When we fall short of this complete dedication, we sin. When we are distracted by this world and what is in it, we sin. When we take God for granted, we sin.

How many ways can we break the commandment "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind"? Anytime we question his plan for us. Anytime we are not content with what he has given us. Anytime we are angry about what 'life has dealt us'. Anytime we fail to give God the glory, the credit. Anytime we want control over our lives instead of searching out what God has prepared for us. Anytime we 'rely on our own understanding' instead of turning to God's Word for our answers. Anytime when we are out in the world and we don't stand up for God. Anytime we hide our faith. Anytime we don't test the words of men by searching scriptures. Anytime we allow our feelings to sway us in a direction different from God's revealed word. Ultimately, anytime we sin we rebel against God and break this command as well.

When we cut a person off in traffic; rather than letting him in, we sin. When we fail to offer help to an ill neighbor, we sin. When we shun the people living around us, not wanting to be bothered by them, we sin. When we consider the command to "love our neighbor as ourselves" we must consider our sins of omission. The command is not "When you interact with your neighbor treat him with love". The whole world is our neighbor. This command is broken many times by omission for every time by commission.



Stealing, false witness, honor parents

Jesus replied, "Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, ¹⁹ honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself."
Matthew 19:18-19 (NIV)

He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, ¹⁹Honour thy father and *thy* mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. **Matthew 19:18-19 (KJV)**

Several commands are repeated from above. Additions are "do not steal", "bear false witness", and "honor your parents". When we get 'creative' with our tax report, or bring the office's supplies home to use, shave a little time off the clock by leaving early or taking long breaks, or don't tell the clerk about an error in our favor, we commit the sin of stealing. We can steal not just money and valuables, but also time, privileges, and honor.

When we talk a person down behind his back, when by our silence we fail to stick up for someone being 'bad talked', when we'd rather feel justified in our bitterness towards a person than admit our own complicity, we bear false witness and sin. When we pay a person false complements, exaggerate qualifications, or hide faults, resulting in a false representation of a person, we also commit this sin.

"Honor your father and mother" is more than just a command for children to obey their parents until they become adults. When we fail to respect our parents, we sin. When we distance ourselves from our parents, 'not listening', we sin. When we hold resentments, we sin. If they have hurt us through their sinful actions and we fail to approach them with our pain and address the situation openly and in love, we sin. When we fail to forgive our parents, or hold them to unrealistic ideals, we sin. When we place ourselves above our parents, we sin.

Lying

Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.
²⁹ Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. **Ephesians 4:25, 29 (NIV)**

Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.
 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. **Ephesians 4:25, 29 (KJV)**

When we say something that is untrue, we sin. Even when we don't actually say something, but by our silence create a false impression, we sin. Or, when we fail to state the truth when it is needed, we sin. When we tear someone down, rather than build that person up, we sin. When we hold back the truth because we fear it might make us unpopular or the other person "will take it the wrong way", we sin. Our society has sayings like "white lies don't hurt" and attitudes such as false humility, and 'brown nosing'. These things are in fact lies, and sins.

A lying tongue hates those it hurts, and a flattering mouth works ruin.
Proverbs 26:28 (NIV)

A lying tongue hateth *those that are* afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin.
Proverbs 26:28 (KJV)



Love, honor, fervent, joyful, patient, prayerful, hospitable, empathetic, humble, forgiving, peaceful, generous, good

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. ¹¹Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. ¹²Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. ¹³Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. ¹⁶Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

¹⁷Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. ¹⁸If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰On the contrary:

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."

²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. **Romans 12:9-21 (NIV)**

Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. ¹⁰Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; ¹¹Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; ¹²Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; ¹³Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality ¹⁴Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. ¹⁵Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. ¹⁶Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. ¹⁷Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. ¹⁸If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. ¹⁹Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. ²⁰Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. ²¹Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:9-21 (KJV)

A long list. When we consider ourselves better than another, we sin. Failing to return evil with love is sinful. When we shun people "of a lower class", we sin. Again, actions alone do not satisfy these commands. Feeding our enemy while not wishing him well is still a sin.

Immorality, greed, obscenity

But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. ⁴Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. ⁵For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God..

Ephesians 5:3-5 (NIV)

But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; ⁴Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. ⁵For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Ephesians 5:3-5 (KJV)

When we are not content with the things God has given us, and desire more, we sin. When we share a coarse joke, we sin. Any kind of impure or unclean thought, word, or deed is a sin.



Don'ts – anger, rage, malice, slander, filthy language, lying

But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices. **Colossians 3:8-9 (NIV)**

But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. ⁹Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; **Colossians 3:8-9 (KJV)**

Colossians 3:8-9 (KJV): Don'ts. Most of these have been covered already; but Paul makes the clear point that avoiding sins of commission is not 'good enough'. He follows these don'ts with a list of Do's.

Do's – compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forbearance, forgiveness, love

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. **Colossians 3:12-14 (NIV)**

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye. ¹⁴And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness. **Colossians 3:12-14 (KJV)**

When we don't show kindness, we sin. Patience is said to be a virtue, but the absence of patience is a sin. When we withhold unconditional forgiveness from someone, we sin. This includes ourselves. That is, when we fail to forgive ourselves, we sin. These do's are centered in the heart. No act is truly compassionate if compassion is not its motivation.

Conclusion

Our goal is to help Mormons see their need for Christ not as their example and creditor, but as the provider of eternal life with Heavenly Father. They must give up on their own efforts to earn forgiveness, to become perfect, to progress in worthiness. Through witnessing the topic of sin we are giving them *hopelessness* so that they can gain *sure hope*!

Becoming aware of one's sin is not a painless process. As this topic is presented, there may be any of several responses. There may be anger, self-righteousness, or sorrow. Some things that can help you to respond are

- Be willing to freely confess your own sinfulness.
- Be ready to show you are not afraid of sin
- Be ready to witness that God sees you as perfect now, because of your faith.

May God bless your witness of him.

