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"Nis"

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“Nis”

“Nis” is “sin,” spelled backwards. Sin is a backwards kind of word: the opposite of ideals, progress, fulfillment, integrity, honesty, and all that is important to us. Life is a gift; life is not to be wasted, misspent, or destroyed by choices contrary to our status as beloved children of God.

We are not created for, and are not at our best when we are drawn into **selfishness**, **insensitivity**, and **negativity**. Yet we have been on the receiving end of such movements, and also, at times, on the giving end. Both forms hurt us. We might not use the three-letter word to describe the painful experiences we have had, but healing is required if we are to move beyond them.

We have all been hurt by the actions and words of others, whether they were intended or not. And, whether or not we were fully aware of the consequences of some of our choices, we can be sure that we too have added to the sum of suffering in our world. Whatever names we use for words and deeds arising from selfishness, insensitivity, and negativity, we do not display them for all to see as we might with pictures of graduations, weddings, birthdays and other celebrations of love or achievement.

Love is our highest calling and ultimate purpose; whatever we have received and whatever we have chosen that is opposed to love is, like the broken TV or toaster oven, “out of order.” We can live with a certain amount of disorder in our rooms, but we are not comfortable with being treated as less than fully human, and our hearts trouble us if we regard others as though they were not our equals in human dignity. Our hearts and minds fall into disrepair when we act contrary to the one affection which is intended to guide our lives: love.

The opposite of hurt is healing. For all the suffering we endure - from injustices, misunderstandings, and honest feelings of true guilt - we can be healed. We have a choice, regarding every hurt within us: we can hold on to thoughts of destruction and control, or we can bring our experiences to God and let our focus turn to healing. Some of us might take pleasure for a time dwelling on thoughts that keep anger and pain stirred up within us; we are also capable of a holy selfishness in which we seek God’s help to pass through the negative thoughts and feelings to a state of relative peacefulness. We, who have been created capable of suffering at the hands of others and from the consequences of our

own decisions, can bring our suffering and pain to God, who recreates us in his own Spirit.

The name we use for the mistakes, misdeeds, and negative interpretations and judgments that we and others commit, as well as the kind, just, and honest words and actions that we omit, is not as important as are the decisions we make when we reflect upon our experiences. We and our world have much to gain when we turn towards God for healing, and act as though "sin" really is a backwards kind of word.