

# 7 Deadly SINS

**Sloth** – spiritual or emotional apathy

**Pride** – the love of SELF over anything else

**Wrath** – excessive ANGER

**Gluttony** – the overindulgence of food, drink, or intoxicants

**Lust** – uncontrolled desire for physical intimacy

**Greed** – excessive desire for wealth or possessions

**Envy** - discontent in regard to another's advantages



Abandon every hope,  
you who enter here.

# Welcome to The Inferno...



Through me the way into the suffering city,  
Through me the way to eternal pain,  
Through me the way that runs among the lost...

# Dante: Biography

Dante Alighieri - poet born in Florence in 1265

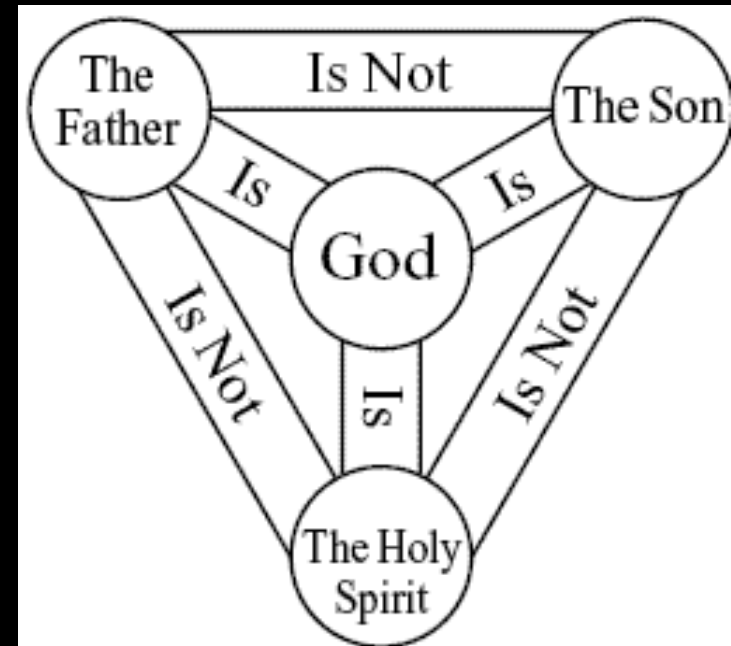
His early works were heavily influenced by a woman named Beatrice (“blessed” in Italian) who died in 1290. In these works he describes how Beatrice led him from a merely human love to something transcendental, almost divine.

This led Dante to create a new form of poetry...

# Dante: Divine Structure

A sign of **the divine** is evident everywhere in Dante's poem *The Divine Comedy*. A three-fold pattern embodies **the Trinity** within the very structure of the poem as does the verse form. (Think numerology..)

- *The Divine Comedy* is split into **three** canticles (parts)—the *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, & *Paradiso*
- Each part is split into **33** Cantos.
- *Inferno*, what we will be reading, has **nine** circles, each circle classified into **three** groups.



# Dante: Divine Structure Cont.

Dante created a verse known as *terza rima*. This means it rhymes in the original Italian according to the scheme **aba bcb cdc ded** and so on.

The lines thus form groups of **three** (known as **tercets**). Moreover, since each line has 11 syllables, the total number of syllables in each **tercet** is **33**, the same as the number of Cantos in each canticle.

When I had journeyed half our life's way,  
I found myself within a shadowed forest,  
for I had lost the path that does not stray.

Canto I.1-3

# Philosophy of the *Inferno*

Dante believed, along with general Medieval philosophy, that the natural inclination of every human being is **love** – a movement toward something outside the self.

Think about it. Do you agree?



# Philosophy of the *Inferno*

Dante believed that the natural and proper object of **love** is God, either directly or as mediated through the created world.

Sin occurs when **love** is immoderately directed to the wrong object, when the creature (including the self) is **loved** not *for* but *instead of* the Creator.



# Circles of Hell

In Hell, perverse love is represented in three forms.

1. Incontinence - not being able to control or restrain yourself

These sins are represented in the first six circles of hell:

Virtuous Heathens

Avaricious and Prodigal

Lustful

Wrathful

Gluttonous

Heretical

They are the least serious morally, but the worst to overcome psychologically.

Incontinence is symbolically represented by a **she-wolf**.

# Circles of Hell

## 2. Violence- against yourself or others

These sins are represented in the seventh circle of hell and separated into three rings:

- violence against others
- violence against yourself
- violence against God

Violence is symbolically represented by a **lion**.

# Circles of Hell

## 3. Fraudulence – any type of deceit or trickery

These sins are represented in the eighth and ninth circles of hell:

seducers	thieves
flatterers	impersonators
diviners	traitors
hypocrites	(in the 9 <sup>th</sup> circle).

Dante considers them to be the **worst moral sins** one can commit.

Fraudulence is symbolically represented by a **leopard**.

# Contrapasso

From the Latin *contra* and *patior* – meaning to "suffer the opposite"

Souls in the Inferno suffer according to their sin. In other words, by a process either resembling or contrasting the sin itself.

According to *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature*, contrapasso "functions not merely as a form of **divine revenge**, but rather as the **fulfillment of a destiny** freely chosen by each soul during his or her life."

# Divertimento fatti su Dante

(Dante Fun Facts)

- “Divine Comedy” refers to the ancient definition of *Comedy* – the **divine union of God and man in Heaven**
- Dante chose to write it in his native tongue – **Italian** – instead of the sacred language of **Latin**. In fact, it was so popular that Dante’s Tuscan dialect became what we know today as modern Italian
- Dante was able to weave together knowledge from several sacred texts – including the myth, literature, Christian doctrine, astrology, physics, mathematics, literature, numerology, etc. **This is called a *summa*, or summation of knowledge and experience**
- Dante hoped his text would serve as a guide for the modern reader, to **enhance his understanding of his purpose in life** and prepare him for the afterlife. It also provided a way to “punish” local figureheads in a hell created for their “sins” 😊



# The 9<sup>th</sup> Circle of Hell

## Four Rings (4 types of traitors)

Dante comes to a frozen lake – so thick he thinks it is glass. Sinners are frozen at 4 different levels...

1 – **Traitors to their kin (family)** – frozen up to their chins. All they can do is chatter their teeth. Dante compares them to frogs submerged in water.

2 – **Traitors to their country or party** – Dante tries to get Bocca to tell him his name. Bocca refuses and Dante proceeds to tear out his hair making him scream in pain. Basically, Dante loses it.

\* Dante comes across a truly gruesome sight: two sinners submerged close together, so close that one's head rears over the other's, actually chewing it. Dante, with a touch of black humor, describes the upper head as the lower one's hat, and its chewing as that of a person eating his daily bread. And now the story of Count Ugolino...









# The 9<sup>th</sup> Circle of Hell Cont...

3 – **Traitors to their guests**– people who had their guests over for dinner...and then had them assassinated. Dante realizes that many of these men are still alive. A soul tells him that this place (Ptolomea) is special – it allows demons to go to earth and snatch your body, replacing your soul and sending it here.

4 – **Traitors to their benefactors** - sinners are completely submerged in ice here. In the dark of this part of the cave, Dante comments on how windy it is. Virgil announces that this wind comes from Dis – Lucifer – Satan - himself. (No ONE name does him justice...) He has three horrible heads, a pair of wings (hence the wind) and is so huge that Dante says he himself is closer to the size of a giant than Lucifer. This is BIG big.





Satan is crying from each of his six eyes and his tears fall into each of his three mouths – where he is chewing a bloody pulp. In each of the mouths he holds the greatest sinners of all human history – according to Dante.

1. Judas – betrayer of Jesus Christ
2. Brutus – betrayer of Julius Caesar
3. Cassius – leads Brutus to betray Julius Caesar

Satan constantly chews them, tearing but never killing them.

## Reason for the punishment:

Fraud, more than any other crime, acts contrary to God's greatest gift to mankind—love.

Fraud against a benefactor constitutes the worst fraud of all, according to Dante, for it violates a love that is purely voluntary, a love that most resembles God's love for us. Correspondingly, one who betrays one's benefactor comes closest to betraying God directly.

# *Inferno*

## Review for Test:

Seven Deadly Sins

Introductory Powerpoint

Imagery Chart

Review Text – either from the book or a class copy  
from Mrs. Johnson