

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Could it take long for a Christian to realise that something is sin?

Could it take long for a Christian to realise that something is sin? - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2019/11/6 13:47

Dear brothers and sisters,

is it possible for born again person to sin, without recognising it, and then after certain amount of time (years in some cases) to realise that what he has done, was wrong? Or is this "doctrine of devils"?

I was talking with a pastor on this issue and he said, that a born again person does not live habitually in sin. I do agree. And he said that if one sins, the Holy Spirit convicts the person of that sin and then the man/woman repents.

My understanding: in order to repent of something, you have to realise that it is a sin. But sometimes it seems to me that it takes a long time till one understands that certain behaviour is wrong. Pride, being easily offended... If we talk doctrinally about these things, we all know what is wrong and right, but when it comes to real life - is it not so, that sometimes it takes years till one realises that he has lived in pride, even religious pride. That's just one example, but I think it is not the only one.

And how this does not contradict with 1 John 3:9

"Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin; for his seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

I do not seek an excuse to live in sin. God forbid! I am just a witness to something which I cannot quite explain to myself except with what I stated earlier. "In your Light we shall see Light". Whether you receive the understanding that something is wrong in God's eyes, depends on your walk and communion with Him, right?

Re: Could it take long for a Christian to realise that something is sin? - posted by passerby, on: 2019/11/6 20:55

Early warning and recognition may come early but total repentance with no turning back may be protracted in real life, which can be so frustrating to watch.

Re: Could it take long for a Christian to realise that something is sin? - posted by JFW (), on: 2019/11/7 7:34

Yes I believe so and don't the scriptures testify that this is so?

How long did it take the Lord to bring conviction to King David after his fall... wasn't it quite a while ?

How long had Peter been intimidated by those from Jerusalem before Paul rebuked him?

It also becomes somewhat nuanced with things/situations such as found in Romans 14.

Additionally there are numerous verses in the new covenant that instruct us to admonish, rebuke, turn, etc... other believers who erred and fell into sin- why would those verses be necessary otherwise?

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

How do we obtain mercy? And why is that necessary in order to find grace ?

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2019/11/12 15:37

A brand new Christian maybe convicted about many things, but he may not understand all of them to be sin.

New Christians don't even know what questions to ask or what repentance is needed for a great majority of inward sins.

most all get it...no drinkin, cussin or lustin. But there is a lot more than that.

Truth is we are living testimonies to the depth of sin in the human heart and how patient Jesus is with us to purge us from such sins.

There is no one that sinneth not. Just when we think we are in the clear, Jesus takes us to another level of dependence in him, and the only way to get there is through another death to self, a repentance repeated again and again until the end of our journey has brought us to our deaths.

Looking at it this way...you will live a whole life that is going to undergo the exposing operation of the Word and the necessary repentance that is requisite upon a true follower.

Some will immediately complain Brother Marvin is a compromiser with sin and is making light of repentance. As I said the newer believer sees clearly the big stuff in the road he needs to repent of. But in repenting of all of that, he is still terribly ignorant of the sin-root system in his mind and heart.

Here's the rub...It's when the Spirit of God reveals to us these little roots, these foxes that sprout up. But we do not in our own selves have the spiritual eyes to see clearly what is in our hearts and where to begin in repentance.

Forced repentance because of condemnation and guilt does not lead to liberty, it just enslaves the Christian to sin-introspection taking their eyes off Jesus.

Re: Brother Marvin - posted by JFW (), on: 2019/11/12 15:47

That is a very articulate and well seasoned thought on the subject that just so happens to be a shared oneöŸ™•öŸ•»

Re: Could it take long for a Christian to realise that something is sin? - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/13 22:03

I think it depends on the nature of the sin.

As Marvin shared, new believers immediately know certain outward things are obviously sins that must be repented of and renounced.

When it comes to certain obvious outward sins, I don't believe it can take long for a Christian to realize they are sins needed to be repented of and forsaken. For example, a habitual fornicator who lives with his girlfriend cannot go on habitually fornicating after he is converted. God's Spirit will immediately convict him of that sin and he will repent and renounce it. Could he struggle with it at first and have lapses here and there. Yes, but he will be miserable when it happens and he will sincerely repent and seek deliverance from that sin as he does his part to forsake that sin.

The same would go for a habitual adulterer who habitually cheats on his wife. If he is born again he will not continue in that lifestyle. And so on and so forth when it comes to certain blatant sins. Otherwise, all the many scriptures that warn about fornicators, adulterers, etc. not inheriting God's kingdom become null and void, which is impossible.

But then there are other sins that are not that blatantly obvious to believers at first, which some would call "unknown" sins. When it comes to those kinds of sins, one may struggle with them for years before gaining the victory over them, and one may never even gain the full victory over them this side of heaven.

I think one example of this kind of sin is gluttony. Many believers go on being gluttonous throughout their whole Christian walk and die without ever overcoming that sin. Deep down they may know it's a sin but may refuse to see it as something

g worth worrying that much about for whatever reason.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/14 16:03

Sometimes the example of David is brought up when discussing this topic. It is argued that David went on for a long time without fully realizing his sin until being confronted by Nathan. However, I think David's example is not a good one to bring up because he lived under the Old Covenant when the Holy Spirit was not yet poured out in full measure as He's been poured out under the New Covenant. Under the Old Covenant God showed much more tolerance and patience than today. Back then men had multiple wives and God still used them mightily and approved of them. One would not be able to practice polygamy today and be approved of God. Just a thought.

Re: - posted by CofG (), on: 2019/11/16 6:21

At the risk of oversimplification, repentance for sin is not as important as a hatred for it. That is what has to be cultivated and developed. Jesus refused to sin because He hated it like His Father.

Re: Hatred for sin - posted by cup (), on: 2019/11/16 18:22

When Paul hated his sin it did stop him from doing the things he hated.

Jesus Christ became sin.

Rom 6:6-7. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin."

We are now free from sin.

Rom 6:22 "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

Re: Could it take long for a Christian to realise that something is sin? - posted by Sree (), on: 2019/11/18 18:58

There are 2 kinds of sins. Conscious and unconscious sins. Conscious sins are those in which I know something is a sin but I still indulge in it. Bible is so clear that we do not need to be under the control of conscious sins. But as we repent from conscious sins, God will forgive our unconscious sins. We are all way behind Jesus. Every time we fall short of Jesus we are committing sin. But we can only repent of the sins we are aware of.

God is light and as we cleanse ourselves of conscious sins and draw closer to him, God will reveal unconscious sins by bringing light upon them. Our whole life we need to keep purifying ourselves in the hope of becoming like Jesus (1 John 3:3).

1 John 3:7 contradicts with 1 John 1:7 anyways. Only possible explanation to resolve the conflict is, 1 John 1:7 is about unconscious sins. That is why John says if we say we are without sin then we make him a liar.

Re: - posted by TakeUpTheCross, on: 2019/11/18 21:45

Thank you all for your replies! I appreciate them! I've not been able to answer earlier but will write later today by God's grace.

Re: Dear brother - posted by JFW (), on: 2019/11/19 9:39

Been praying about this question and what the Lord keeps bringing me back to is the "refinement process"

Not sure how familiar you are with the process by which silver is refined (made pure) but it makes for an interesting parallel to how the Lord handles His children:)

After carefully and attentively heating the silver so as not to scorch and burn it but bring it to the necessary place, a place (temperature) whereby the silver can be purified, it looks beautiful from the outside but the silversmith knows what lies underneath,... so he adds an alkali and immediately we see that which was hidden begin to appear- the dross! All the impurities which were lying underneath now become visible and float to the top drawn by the alkali so that the silversmith can scrape it off, after which he cools down the silver only to begin the whole process over and over again each time very patiently and attentively working the circumstances to his desired end. It can be a long process but He will know that the silver is pure when, finally He can see His reflection in it ☺

Many times in my walk with the Lord, He has brought me to a place of close fellowship only to then expose me to the â€œrefinersâ€• which test the faith He deposited in me. After which He then adds the alkali,... a unforeseen circumstance (substance) which almost in magnetic fashion, draws from deep within me something gross, ugly and unholy. He then comforts me as He scrapes it away, or to put it another way... He convinces me to give up control over a situation and instead follow and obey Him. Itâ€™s painful, humiliating, uncomfortable and messy. It is also something we have to choose to cooperate with Him in, otherwise we will never be made truly what He wanted,...

Hope that helps! ðŸ™•ðŸŒ•»

Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2019/11/19 10:50

I wonder why no one finds these 2 verses contrasting.

1 John 1 -8 :- If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 2 -1 :- 2 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.

How is it that if I say I have no sin then I am a liar and at the same time I am asked not to sin!

There is only 1 logical explanation.

In 1 John 1-8, John is talking about unconscious sins. Sins in us that we are not yet aware of. So even if we have a clear conscience before God based on what we know is sin, we still CANNOT say that we are without SIN. It is because we can only cleanse what we know is sin inside us. We cannot cleanse what we cannot see! But God can see everything plainly.

So as said in 1 John 1:9, when we confess the Sins that we are aware of committing, God is faithful to forgive ALL our sins. Which is both Conscious and unconscious sins. that is why it is important to have a clear conscience before God all the time by confessing anything that bothers our Conscience, else God will NOT cleanse all our sins and we WILL BE FOUND SINNERS.

In 1 John 2:1, John is saying we should not do any conscious sins.

As said before, when we keep cleansing our self, God will give more light in our life to see unconscious sins.

In my life, I have found light on so many sins in me that I was not aware of. Especially in my attitude towards things which I do, like my service towards God that I do. My attitude towards my wife in home, even though I have spoken no unholy word!

Brother Zac Poonen, tells that, the proof of God's love in his life is, God sheds light on sins that Zac is unaware of existing in him.

Re: - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2019/11/19 18:47

Thank you all for the input. I was about to fall sleep and was reminded of the forum :) so here we go.

Marvin, Fletcher, Oracio and Sreeram - you sum it up very well. I do not want to repeat what you said, but will just discuss few points.

1. Unconscious / unknown sin: yes, I mean exactly that. We all know that to steal, kill or commit adultery is a sin and we do not need special revelation to know that. And there is this general assumption that, whenever I sin the Holy Spirit immediately will show me where I have fallen and I have to repent, then the Lord can restore me.

And I do believe that HE DOES that, and everyone of us has experienced it. But somehow the thought comes into my mind that the Holy Spirit does not show us all our depravity and sins at once. So when we first repented, we could not

list ALL of our sins. And even when we become mature, there are still areas in our life's that have to be changed by God. But it does not happen all at once, does it?

Not that we willfully walk in sin - NO, NO! - but just that we do not have the knowledge or revelation that "you are wretched, poor, blind and naked". And to what extent this process of refining or sanctification is going on in our soul depends on our personal relationship with the Lord. Because how will we see His light, if we do not want to hear His Word or have fellowship with Him...

2. Yes, perhaps David is not the best example for that. But could we find an example for that in the New Testament apart from 1 John?

3.

Quote:
----- Forced repentance because of condemnation and guilt does not lead to liberty, it just enslaves the Christian to sin-introspection taking their eyes off Jesus.

And constant introspection can make you miserable. Cause we cannot know ourselves fully by looking on the inside. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9)

This was for tonight. Perhaps tomorrow I will have more insight on the topic.

P.S. Bro Fletcher, your illustration helps a lot, thank you!

Yours in Christ,
Esther

Re: ohh - posted by JFW (), on: 2019/11/20 6:00

Dear Sister,
Please forgive me, how clumsy and presumptuous I must be :/
And what a blessing rests on your name! Just the thought of it inspires hope and confidence in God's faithfulness:)))
Again I do apologize ðŸ™•ðŸ•»

Re: - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2019/11/20 16:35

That's a little bit off topic but... brother Fletcher, I do not know what are you apologizing for ðŸ™•. I have not been offended anyway by whatever you think was inappropriate. Is it because I said "Thank you!"? I meant what I said :)

I do not understand the second part of your post either, but perhaps it's better so. To God be the glory, great things He has done!

Blessings!

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2019/11/20 21:57

No matter, I had referred to you as "brother" in an earlier reply which after you signed your name (Esther) I realized I had been presumptuous but now we have it straight :)

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2019/11/21 17:17

Fletcher and Esther: Thanks for the kind remarks.

Repentance and sins and their purging from our lives are not the result of divine cookie-cutter workings. I know in my past, I thought that's really what God did. He trimmed off anything that didn't please him...or, I sought God to trim it out of a desire for holiness in my life.

I found out, cookie-cutter removals are not so common and the teachings I received that lead me to believe in such divine transformation was errant.

I found out Chastening as in Heb 12 was a divine reality, not an analogy. I found out difficulties and hardships were part and parcel a regular mode of bringing to the surface internal sins/attitudes/self-dependencies that stay well hidden in calmer days.

I found out interactions with others lead to a great deal of heating the silver with the addition of the alkali. Working with others you don't know, theologies that don't blend well in others minds, practices that suit you fine irritate others to no end. All of these help to 'expose' your sins.

The idea that you should be at "step 6" in your personal sanctification litmus test is so bogus it's best to discard it as soon as someone implies you need to check yourself to make sure your sanctification level is up to par.

It's important to understand those rebukes for blatant sins and obvious transgressions must be heeded, they must be taken seriously. But it's equally important to note, those ugly wart-sins which call for immediate removal...and should be removed, once they have been repented of and a genuine hatred towards them is worked in the heart have only just taken the first few baby steps in God's program to continually purge us from inward sins and equally grotesque wickedness that in our minds are wonderfully packaged in approved cultural character traits we applaud.

A simple analogy...The young man repents of having a 'strange' woman in his bed and so rejoices in the work of God. But God sees clearly that young man has many women still bedded in his heart that also must vacate his life.

Those women do not leave so easily. Those women are by his own weaknesses are invited back because he has not developed a hatred for those women too.

So too, attitudes and actions towards others and the pride he has in how he handles them, his quick put-downs, his arrogant judgmentalism, snide remarks are also a deep part of his old self...that self he hangs on to because the Christian-self is still very foreign to him.

This and a multitude of other analogies all depicting the inward conditions of my heart and others too are not subject to some immature sanctification plan others seek to attach to your Christian life.

It has been said many times by excellent men and women of God. Sanctification comes as a result of fellowshiping with other Christians and with continued habitual prayer and fellowship with God. The intentional practice of scripture applied in faith to every kind of circumstance through out the Christians life will not only work righteousness it will work death to the carnal mind.

New Christians are only slightly introduced to this by Sunday preaching, their real introduction to it is demonstrated by those who practice the life of faith.