



Scriptures and Doctrine :: HOW does a Christian NOT sin?

HOW does a Christian NOT sin?, on: 2016/5/19 10:15

Brothers and sisters we have already had a thread that asked a question why does a Christian sin. I want to get practical . I want to get to the nitty-gritty. Thus I ask how does a Christian not sin?

Would appreciate your practical insights. Theologians please this is not your thread. This is a practical thread. Let us discuss ways how we can avoid sin. And please God.

Please let us stick to the scriptures. Let us keep the church fathers in the past. And the theologians in their seminaries.

Please practicality only.

Posted by Brother Blaine.

Re: HOW does a Christian NOT sin? - posted by Pnatty (), on: 2016/5/19 10:53

I am a toddler Christian. What I believe is that only Christ can do it, I can do nothing, just as He could do nothing were it not for the Father. When Christ isn't doing it, we are doing it and that is Sin and that is short of the perfection and that is not a work to be recognized and rewarded at Bhema. Surrender to Christ is it as he surrendered to His Father onto death, but also every moment he walked, so therefore he never sinned.

We are dead to sin but we sin, anyone can see it. But it is not accounted to us. Why look at it? You sinned because you looked away from Christ, reliance on Christ to live through you makes us quit committing sin. His Father could no more sin through Christ, then Christ could sin through us.

If this is all gobbeldy gook, well that's what toddlers speak.

Re: HOW does a Christian NOT sin? - posted by Sree (), on: 2016/5/19 10:55

I believe Christianity is practical (Livable). Even most of my posts in SI seek to be practical. I find it very difficult to live a life of imagination.

Regarding sin, I understand that there are 2 types of sin. One you know clearly is a Sin (Conscious Sin) and another is something you do not know yet, but it is still a sin you are committing (Unconscious sins).

One example I can think of unconscious sins in my life is, I was not at all conscious that many of my messages and sharing in Church were given with an intention to project (exalt) myself above other fellow brothers and sisters. I was doing this sin without being conscious of it. But now God has given me light on my own intentions, now I know I have to correct it. Only when we near God more and more his light will show us our unconscious sins. It is like seeing your hand under a microscope that can show how many germs are in it. With naked eyes you cannot see them. The more we near towards God in our walk, the more our eyes are enlightened to see our own sins. We can only near God by overcoming our already known sins. When we still live in Known Sins, there is no point in asking God to show the unconscious sins that we commit! I can quote scripture for each one of these but I want to keep it practical.

There are certain things I know are wrong or sin (Conscious Sins). For example getting angry with my wife. Now I have to cleanse myself of it. Every time anger comes into my heart, I repent and seek God's grace to cleanse my heart. I ask for God's love to be poured into my heart so that I can love my wife. This is the only way I can overcome anger which is a known sin to me.

Another example is lust in eyes. Every time a lust enters into my heart towards another woman, I run to Jesus, asking him to fill my heart with a desire for my wife alone. I cry to him that I want only my wife to be desire of my eyes. I tell him to give me contentment in this area. He gives me his grace. I also do my part which is to run away from an object of temptation (can be a woman dressed provocatively).

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If you observe in all the 3 cases I have put, they are all sins that are handled in the heart. So to me the battle ground has shifted from actions to heart. I NO Longer struggle with my actions as my heart itself is set clean. This is the secret I found to NOT Sin, which is to take the battle to your heart.

Re: HOW does a Christian NOT sin? - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/5/19 11:03

By loving Him:)

"If you love me you will keep my commandments"

It's actually very simple and quite practical....

Think about the time when you fell in love,... Nothing nor no one could turn you away from the person you loved, and you didn't "have" to do it but were compelled by the love in you to do it (good works).

So our Lord says "be zealous and repent and return to your first love and do the works you first did"

So maybe the question is why do we depart from our first love...?

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/5/19 12:36

Re: HOW does a Christian Not sin?

By dying - I mean literally physically dying.

Short of that, I still believe we must choose not to sin. I believe that the vast majority of sins occur because we choose to sin over choosing not to sin. I don't think we are tricked into sinning. We are most assuredly tempted but that is not sinning.

I still remember a quote I heard a long time ago that has always stuck with me: "sin fascinates- then assassinates."

Re: , on: 2016/5/19 17:24

By. Dying. Yes.

By loving Him. Yes.

When I was about 8-10 years old at a family reunion one of my aunts said to me: "obey your parents" I felt like a big burden came off of my back. "Is that it?" "It is much easier than trying to be good" Before I always tried to be good but always felt not good enough. Now I felt clean and free.

Dying and loving him and obeying.

Zsuzsanna

Re:, on: 2016/5/19 20:45

Oops. No post intended.

Re: - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/19 21:59

I think everyone has touched on some element of how to not sin. Just reading through the replies is edifying and encouraging to me!

As someone who is constantly screaming (internally) at pastors, "Yes, I understand what you're saying but HOW? What's the practical application of this in our lives?!" I can relate to what Blaine is actually asking. (If I'm wrong, Blaine, please correct me. Sometimes I can over-analyze posts!)

Dying to self and loving God are definitely the ANSWERS to not sinning. But Blaine is asking HOW do we do that? HOW do we not sin? HOW do we die to self? HOW can we love God? Knowledge alone isn't enough. It must be applied to WORK.

All I can do is give my own method.

There is a period of time that occurs before a sin is committed. A time when the conscience speaks out to advise us that

t we know better; that what just crossed our mind that our body wants to do/say is wrong, or a lie. It's self-centeredness, pride, the lack of self-control and ego that goads us with, "Just do/say it! You've already done/said something like this a million times before anyway! What's one more sin for God to forgive you for? It's a small one anyway! Just do/say it! You feel better! You'll show that other person they shouldn't mess with you or treat you that way!"

You know those dozen or so thoughts that go through your mind in a twinkling of an eye before you let loose on that sin? THAT'S the time before the sin that I'm talking about.

Whenever I'm tempted to sin, off all things or of all people, Ronald and Nancy Reagan ALWAYS come to mind before I sin. (It really IS remarkable how many thoughts can run through your mind in a twinkling of an eye to a few seconds.)

I ALWAYS hear Ronald Reagan saying, "Well, Nancy says to just say NO!"

There's so much truth and maturity in that. Just say no. Here's an example: I got to work with my friend who has a carpet cleaning van today. We were shampooing the carpet of a vacant apartment that was recently renovated. One of the guys working on the renovations came in. As he passed by me, said he had some work to do in the bathroom. I smelled alcohol on his breath. I wanted to turn to my friend and say, "Looks like someone had a liquid lunch today."

As God is my witness, this was my entire thought process in just a few seconds:

"What? That's so rude! I may like to be funny once in awhile but I'm not a mean person! Still it would be funny and not really hurt anyone and my friend would get a chuckle out of it. Yeah, but at this man's expense, unbeknownst to him? All he did was come in to do a job! Do you know WHY he drinks during the day? Do you know his struggles or what he may be currently going through? Show some compassion."

Then 1 Peter 4:6 came to mind, "And above all things have fervent love for one another, for ~~the~~ love will cover a multitude of sins."

(Thought process continuing...)

"Sins aren't covered by jokes and gossiping. Jesus not only covered all of my sins, He forgave them completely.

I'm going to practice self-control and discipline and NOT say that to my friend. I want Jesus to be proud of me."

So, that's my practical way of dealing with sin: Ronald and Nancy Reagan and the short, but powerful phrase: "Just say NO!" It's possible to just say no. We just don't like going through the self-denial (dying to self part) or loving God more than ourselves. Odd, I know. But it works for me.

There IS a time that passes before we CHOOSE to commit sin. And it IS long enough to reason out and choose holiness. It IS enough time to turn away from that sin. Will we be controlled by self-discipline and the love of God and others? Or are we not filled enough with the Word and spending abiding time with Jesus? Are we instead filled with our own desires and self-centered thinking? "I can't help it" is a self-centered cop-out. Or, in today's humanistic vernacular, "That's just how I'm wired." Or, "Sorry if you don't like it but I'm not changing who I am."

It IS a choice. Just say no and choose Jesus. Choose holiness.

Re: , on: 2016/5/19 22:54

I can totally understand this brother, thanks for the testimony. What sometimes happens to me is similar. When someone offends me often I can clearly see a choice in front of my eyes: take the offence or leave it.

It is also clearly presented to me that God does not want me to take the offence. The rest is my choice. There were times in my christian life when I did not see the situation this clear. I believe it was because I did not care, I did not pray, did not want to please God, did not even think of Him.

That time I always took offense.

Zsuzsanna

Re: , on: 2016/5/19 23:53

Keith Daniel said this in one of his sermons:

This book will keep you from sin, and sin will keep you from this book. SOAK YOURSELF IN THE BIBLE...

Re: - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/20 0:26

ZSUZSANNA SAID: by Tozsu on 2016/5/19 22:53:21

Keith Daniel said this in one of his sermons:

This book will keep you from sin, and sin will keep you from this book. SOAK YOURSELF IN THE BIBLE...

Golly that sure is true! I think that's my favorite quote from Keith Daniel.

Even though this may not initially sound like "practical application," it really is. When we saturate ourselves in the Word, the Holy Spirit uses it to do many works in us, changing us more into the likeness of Jesus. When that happens, our desire to sin decreases as the ability to not sin increases.

John 3:30, "He must increase, but I must decrease." (Just like you illustrated in your previous post, Zsuzsanna!)

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/5/20 7:32

I just wanted to clarify my post- when I answered the question "how can a person not sin" by saying we must die- I didn't mean dying to self- I meant dying like when your body gets put in the ground. That is the only sure way to not sin.

Of course we aren't supposed to be sinning while our hearts are beating. That's where dying to self and all that stuff comes in.

But I still really think that we sin because we are a bunch of wimps. We allow the devil to push us in the chest like a bully saying "what are you gonna do about it, punk?" and far too often we say "nothing I guess."

Re: TMK, on: 2016/5/20 9:10

YOU ARE DEAD!

The real issue is you may still see yourself as somehow separated from Christ. Yes you do believe that Christ lives inside you but you think you are independent of Him.

AS a result you try to apply Christ to your independent self by the means of grace.

THIS WILL NEVER WORK!

There is no such thing as an independent self. Before you embraced Christ you were servant and slave of sin and the devil but now you HAVE BEEN MADE a servant and slave of RIGHTEOUSNESS.

There is no 3rd option available.

So the old you that was servant and slave of sin was crucified and buried with Christ. When Christ arose from the dead - the new you was raised with HIM - with HIS LIFE.

Now the truth is that you are not separated from Christ. You just do not have Christ but Christ Himself is NOW you!!!!

You have died and Christ Himself is your life. This was an exchange of lives - not a change. Your old life was taken away in death and buried. Then Christ gave you His life in the place of your old life.

Before you were just a container of sin and the devil's life - now you are a container of Christ's life.

A container only contains the life of another it has NO life in it self or any ability to apply anything to itself.

Here is the real truth - you are not separated from Christ - you are a container of HIS LIFE.

Christ has united Himself to you - you are NOW one with HIM!

CHRIST HIMSELF IS NOW THE REAL YOU! IT IS HIS LIFE expressing it self in your body (container)

Gal 2:20. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Here is the key "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" YET NOT I - BUT CHRIST who is now me!

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/5/20 9:46

Tuc- I get your gist but you are taking it way too far.

Cause and Effect

There are many "cause and effect" passages in scripture. Here are several:

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Acts 2:21

"Come near to God and He will come near to you." James 4:8

"Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple." Lk. 14:33

"If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you." Lk. 17:6

"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you." Ps. 119:11

Similarly, Prov. 3:9-10 contains a cause and effect: Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

In all of these examples, what we do is the cause; what God does is the effect. Why did God "set things up" this way? A primary reason is that He wants to relate to us; He wants to partner with us in His enterprises. God can do anything He wants, but He chooses to use us. What a privilege, and what a responsibility! If we refuse to be the "cause," then we limit how God can "effect" His blessings on us. Not only that, but we limit our worth in God's Kingdom.

Re: We are earthen vessels - containers , on: 2016/5/20 10:00

2 Cor 4:6-7, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

1 John 4:16-17, "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world."

because as he is, so are we in this world.

Added this

Col. 3:3-4, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

When Christ, who is our life

Re: , on: 2016/5/20 11:23

John 15:10

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

Tuc, I agree with you, I would conclude that if we abide in Christ we will bear fruit. But what would be your practical advice: How to abide? I say that we abide by obedience, and here I agree with TMK.

Re: Tozso, on: 2016/5/20 11:39

Sister not trying to be funny. How do we abide in Christ by obedience?

One aspect may be that we abide or walk in faith in Jesus. For Paul mentions in Romans 1:5 the obedience that comes from faith.

Just a thought for reflection.

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2016/5/20 11:48

lol, maybe bearmaster could've added a caveat:

"with testimonies appended please!"

Re: , on: 2016/5/20 11:57

Quote:

-----by Tozsu on 2016/5/20 11:23:01

John 15:10

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

Tuc, I agree with you, I would conclude that if we abide in Christ we will bear fruit. But what would be your practical advice: How to abide? I say that we abide by obedience, and here I agree with TMK.

Amen. Tozsu.

Not a new concept:

Deu_30:20 That thou mayest LOVE THE LORD THY GOD, AND that thou mayest OBEY HIS VOICE, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

1st - God must be your Father in order for you to Love Jesus.

John 8:42 "Jesus said unto them, IF GOD WERE YOUR FATHER, YE WOULD LOVE ME..."

2nd - When you receive Christ, His love is "shed abroad in your heart". You are given a new heart, the heart and spirit of Jesus/Holy Spirit.

Rom 5:5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because THE LOVE OF GOD IS SHED ABROAD IN OUR HEARTS" by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

3rd - You are now able to please God (love and obey) because you are IN CHRIST and can now WALK IN THE SPIRIT. You have been given everything (Jesus) that pertains to "life and godliness". (2 Peter 1:3)

Rom_8:8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

4th - You now desire to please God (love Him) by obeying His voice. As long as you are in this world, living in the flesh, your love (heart) will be tested.

John 14:21 He that hath my commandments, AND KEEPETH THEM, HE IT IS THAT LOVETH ME, and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Jesus will manifest Himself to those who love Him.

John 14:21 "...and keepeth them...I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

The Spirit and the Word give us understanding for how to walk in love in all circumstances, (even on forums).

1Th 4:1 Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us HOW YE OUGHT TO WALK AND TO PLEASE GOD, so ye would abound more and more.

God will save those who obey (love) Him.

Heb 5:9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation UNTO ALL THEM THAT OBEY HIM;

God does not have any foster children. His children are HIS, born of His Spirit and they all love Him.

John 8:42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me:

Re: , on: 2016/5/20 12:00

Quote:

-----by bearmaster on 2016/5/20 11:39:04

Sister not trying to be funny. How do we abide in Christ by obedience?

One aspect may be that we abide or walk in faith in Jesus. For Paul mentions in Romans 1:5 the obedience that comes from faith.

Just a thought for reflection.

By obeying the Spirit and the Word to you, personally. How? By making a choice to walk in the Spirit and not the flesh.

Re: Yuehan , on: 2016/5/20 12:07

Ok bro. Here we go.....

Please share testimonies of how walking in the obedience that comes by faith will enable us to not sin against Jesus.

Hope I expreseed that right.

Breaux Bear.....:):):)

Re: , on: 2016/5/20 12:12

"Sister not trying to be funny. How do we abide in Christ by obedience?"

You answered it.

Our faith is our obedience. Look at the examples in Hebrews 11.

When his real relationship started with God, Paul was surrendered and ready to obey.

Acts 9:6

...Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? ...

Practically when we are ready to do his will, we do not want to do our own "self thing" that's when we get to know his will . And this should be continuous/daily like a relationship. It is more important to listen to him than "do a perfect job on our own".

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/5/20 12:54

Resisting Temptation: Whatâ€™s Faith Got to Do With It?

Letâ€™s face it: temptation is a common occurrence in our daily lives. No one is immune; even Jesus was tempted. What does faith have to do with resisting temptation? Everything!

What is temptation? Boiled down to basics, temptation is simply Satanâ€™s attempt to convince us that his way is better than Godâ€™s way. He does this by preying on our lack of belief. What lack of belief? Our lack of belief in a God that cares about our daily lives and who is grieved deeply when we succumb to temptation, but who will bless us when we resist.

When we succumb to temptation, we are essentially saying to ourselves: "God won't really mind that I do this. Maybe He won't even notice. At any rate, what I will gain from succumbing to temptation outweighs any potential gain from resisting." That's what Satan wants us to believe! James 1:14-15 says: "Each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death."

Why was Jesus able to resist temptation, every time? Because He had the faith to believe that the fruits of obeying the Father outweighed any seeming "benefit" from succumbing to the Enemy. But how did He have such faith? Because He was close to the Father, all of the time. You have probably noticed that when you are in a period of spiritual dryness, you are much more likely to yield to temptation. Conversely, then you are walking in the Spirit, close to God, you are able to resist temptation. You don't let it grab hold. In other words, you win! Believe it or not, we are able to live holy lives. But it takes diligence and discipline and faith.

Re: - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2016/5/20 13:15

Here is God's great secret of holiness; not fighting sin, but being filled with God. It is the old principle of the expulsive power of a stronger force and a supreme affection. Just as water excludes air from that tumbler when it is filled with water; just as light excludes the darkness when the room is lighted, so the indwelling of the Holy Ghost excludes the presence and power of sin..... A. B. Simpson

Re: Todd, on: 2016/5/20 13:24

Whoa. Easy big fellow. I was putting out the obedience of faith in response to a previous post. To generate discussion on how not to sin. Thats all.

Whoo. Need to chill bro.:)

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/5/20 13:33

Well honestly it really seems to come down to what we feed on.... You are what you eat... "Unless you eat my flesh"...

1 John 2 talks about not loving the world which is to say not to feed on the world for all it (can produce in us) is lust... Which the enemy can then use to draw us away through temptation because we are filled with things that he has control of.

Which is how Jesus could resist him and say "he hath nothing in me"....

But we will consume what we love, what draws our affection... So the whole purpose of most of what Paul talks about is keeping Christ first. Firstly by declaring He is preeminate and then encouraging us to daily make Him so in our personal lives by "putting off the old man with his lusts, and putting on Christ"

However this will become a "work" as has been pointed out by Tuc unless we have received the "love of God" or "love of the truth"...

John 17 contains the last words our Lord spoke as a free man (civilly speaking) and I'd encourage you all to spend some time feeding there, it's nutrient rich!

And you'll find in the last verse the "key" as it were to this whole thing.... and that is that we have to receive the Father's love for His Son. There is a very practical reason Jesus prayed this and its effects are eternal.

26 "And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."

Notice Jesus asks that not only would He be in us,...but also the love of God for His Son would also be in us!

So if we've received this and keep Him first (by daily renewing our minds to the truth) then faith will come quite naturally much like when you first fell in love with your spouse,.. You couldn't help but to do them things that pleased them no matter the cost... But then the cares of the world got in the way and we became distracted. Tho we still did these "good works" they were now more out of habit, obligation, or expectation. You know what it's called when we do the works we once did out of a compulsion of love but now out of habit or obligation?..... Religion! Ha!

Stale,... no life in it~

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/5/20 13:51

One of the reasons this is so important is because this is true "fellowship" or communion with God. He communes or fellowships with us exclusively through the shared love for His Son.

We have our left over relics and rituals and that's all fine but don't mistake that for communion,... it's just an act.

There is nothing more intimate that can be experienced by a human than sharing in God's love for His Son,... That's why we are called brothers, that's why there is a spirit of adoption,... This is tabernacling which is what God the Father wants with us here and now~

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/5/20 13:58

So to answer brother Blaines OP question rather bluntly...

The way a Christian doesn't sin is by not focusing on not sinning! But focusing on Jesus, real life!

A Christian tryin not to sin is like a race car driver trying not to crash,... that's not racing!

Or a surfer trying not to fall off his board,... That's not surfing!

The only way to do either of these is to accept the inherent risk involved and allow your love of the sport itself to guide you...

And IF you crash or fall off,.. Don't freak out and pout, humble yourself and get back up and keep going- for if any man sins, we have an advocate before the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:)

God is love

God is a spirit

God is light

Re: , on: 2016/5/20 15:26

I like your analogy, JFW.

"There is no fear in the perfect love of God"

Re: Qotation by Jerry Bridges , on: 2016/5/20 17:25

I came across this quotation by Jerry Bridges out of his book The Pursuit Of Holiness. I think this quote will address some of what has been posted regarding obedience. Here is the quote...

... Too often, we are defeated by this or that sin. No, we are not defeated. We are simply disobedient. It might be good if we stop using the terms victory and defeat to describe our progress in holiness. Rather we should use terms obedience and disobedience. When I say I am defeated by some sin, I am unconsciously slipping out from under my responsibility. I am saying something outside of me has defeated me. But when I say I am disobedient, that places the responsibility for my sin squarely on me. We may in fact be defeated but the reason we are defeated is because we have chosen to disobey.

We need to brace ourselves up and to realize that we are responsible for thoughts, attitudes, and actions. We need to reckon on the fact that we died to sin's reign. That it no longer has any dominion over us. That God has united us with the risen Christ and all his power and has given us the Holy Spirit to work in us. Only as we accept our responsibility and appropriate God's provision will we have any progress in our pursuit of holiness...

Brothers and sisters it seems our late brother, Jerry Bridges, has hit the nail on the head. Do you agree with the above quote. If not, I would be curious as to why.

Posted for discussion.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/5/20 21:00

I agree 100% and that is what I have been trying to say but not as effectively.

Re: - posted by TrueWitness, on: 2016/5/21 0:18

To directly answer the question in the original post, here are my thoughts:

1) IDENTITY IN CHRIST

It is critical for the Christian to understand his new nature in Christ. When you became born again you were translated from the kingdom of darkness and brought into God's kingdom of light in Christ. This occurred in your SPIRIT. Before salvation you were in fallen Adam and your spirit was dead to God. It wasn't extinct or annihilated, but your spirit had no relationship with God. At salvation you became identified with Christ both in His death and his resurrection. When the Bible says that your "old man" died with Christ, this is the old sin nature that was your old dead-to-God spirit that you inherited from fallen Adam. Your new born spirit man was born of the Holy Spirit and always loves God and wants to please Him. The nature of the new spirit is love, purity and holiness.

Christians no longer have a sin nature but they do have minds that have not been renewed (reprogrammed by the spirit). Your old programming that you learned before salvation taught you to live a life independently from God and rely on your own resources. This is what the Bible calls "the flesh" in Romans 7 and Romans 8. It is not the old "sin nature"; that would be too strong of a term for it. It is living from the self-life apart from Christ. You can think of the flesh as the "ghost" of your old sin nature that was left behind in your mind. Galatians 5 lists the works of the flesh. There is also something called "religious flesh" which can look good on the outside but is abhorrent to God. The apostle Paul when he was Saul the Pharisee is a good example of religious flesh. Many Christians display religious flesh because they don't live in union with or dependence on Christ. They do good works to try and impress God and give Him a reason to like them. They don't understand grace and are forever trying to attain right relationship and fellowship with Him by works.

Without a clear understanding of the nature of your spirit and your flesh, your fight against sin will not be effective. When tempted you need to understand that it is the flesh that is tempted to sin. Think of the flesh as the old "false self" and the spirit as the new "true self". We do not deny the existence of the flesh. Even after salvation you can recall old memories of sinful activity that was pleasurable. God does not erase your mind at salvation. And just like Pavlov's

dog, we also respond to fleshly stimuli and respond with sinful desire. It is important to believe and confess both your being dead to sin and also your resurrection and union with Christ in your spirit. So many people don't consider the difference between their spirit and their flesh and so when tempted they just assume that's just who they are. They look at everything at the deed level without considering the source. They also think God only cares about things at the deed level and therefore things like attitude and motive are unimportant.

When you are tempted you need to be bold and tell yourself (not necessarily out loud) that this temptation is trying to stir up the old dead self (programming) and you have been delivered from that domain and lifestyle. If you don't stand firm on the truth of this fact the devil will succeed in stumbling you since your unbelief will allow or give permission to go the next step and sin. I find it helpful to say "I've been there, done that and it's a mirage and illusion that appeals only to my flesh. I never found the satisfaction that the temptation alluded to by giving in to it."

God gives grace to the humble. When tempted in an area that you fail repeatedly it is good to RELAX and tell God in prayer something to the effect: Lord, I have failed in this area many times and I know that the only way of overcoming is to lay hold of your power which resides in me by the Holy Spirit. I confess my inability apart from You and so I now look to you and trust and rely on your Spirit within me to put to death the deeds of the flesh. For the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus sets me free from the law of sin and death. Thank You.

2) THE MIND

You become like and do the things you set your attention on. If you are battling overeating it is not a good idea to look at or be around tempting foods. Often times we are tempted by thoughts that arise in our minds without a visual component. What is weird is that if you try to forcefully try to not think about something it will be even more stubborn in leaving. This is because you gave it power in your mind by over-reacting to it. If you think the thought is all powerful, it will be. It is best to have an "Oh That's" attitude toward it. Sort of like how you would respond to a pesky little mosquito. The Lord told me to not reminisce or get sentimental about the sinful practices and lifestyles I engaged in before getting saved. You still have flesh that can get "heart sick" for that old stuff but if you entertain or have dalliances with that kind of thinking you will sink for sure.

3) LOVE FOR THE LORD

Finally, the Christian life is above all else about relationship. Jesus obtained our good standing with God so I'm not talking about earning or attaining right standing with God. As you progress in your walk with the Lord your love for the Lord should increase. I am very humbled when I think about God's goodness to me: how He has forgiven me of all sin, how He has been SO patient and forbearing with me after I got saved, how He has provided my every need and protected me all along the way. And by the grace of God I have been delivered from idolatry and several addictions. I'm not perfect but with those big things out of the way it's like there is so much more room in my heart for the Lord to fill and possess! I don't pray out of duty anymore and sometimes I pray for a short time and sometimes it's a long time. I don't look at the clock. I pray from the heart what's real to me. And now that the Lord's love is taking a firmer hold on me, I want to obey and please Him. Previously, I would often be motivated by fear, guilt or duty. Not always but sometimes. It always made me feel separated and further from God. There is a place for warning people about reaping what you sow and the destructiveness of sin, etc. But calamity from sowing wild oats or the destructiveness of sin are baked into the sin system just like falling down is built into the gravity system if you fail to take heed to stay balanced. Anyway, Jesus said that no one can serve two masters, he will love one and despise the other. I don't want to put too much of a guilt trip on someone who has a besetting sin because I feel it might cause them to hide from God. Instead I would hope that they would just have an honest prayer with God asking that God would give a greater and deeper revelation of His great love for them. Meditate on these two verses:

It is the mercy of the Lord that leads to repentance.

We love Him because He first loved us.

Blessings from my heart,

-Daniel

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/5/21 6:25

Brother Blaine,

It's very nice to see the grace of God at work in a man and His hand is quite clearly upon you:)

Not too long ago this (post) might've been submitted in a pointed, combative fashion... But for a while now there is an earnestness, a sincerity to your disposition that seeks the truth and is a blessing as it really helps to further fellowship rather than draw lines and defend:)

So just wanted to give thanks to the Lord for the work He is doing in you and to you as well for yielding to His loving hand as He grows us up in Christ:)

Re: truemwitness - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/5/21 6:49

Brother Daniel,

These are very well articulated thoughts and practices!
very similar to my understanding/relationship and I am blessed and encouraged by your sharing them!

Yes and amen! to how you present the "problem" of our flesh-
Recently a friend pointed out that when Christ was tempted in the wilderness that, tho it was the devil whom tempted Him, it was nonetheless His own flesh that He was speaking too, keeping it in subjection to the spirit. I mean after 40 days of not eating you know He had to be hungry! So the devil appealed to that "good desire" to eat but did so in a way so as to subject our Lord to His flesh if He gave in... so He tells His own flesh to (quiet down) that it is written that man shall not live by bread alone...
And that everytime it was an attempt for Him to exalt His flesh above His spirit...

I had never thought of it in this way before, but it seems consistent with and parallels what Paul says about beating his own body into submission lest he become castaway...
-

Re: JFW, on: 2016/5/21 7:44

Brother thank you for your encouraging word. As somebody once said. Please be patient with me. God is not done with me yet. Again thank you for your encouragement. :-)

Brother Blaine

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/5/21 9:21

Daniel wrote:

"When tempted in an area that you fail repeatedly it is good to RELAX and tell God in prayer something to the effect: Lord, I have failed in this area many times and I know that the only way of overcoming is to lay hold of your power which resides in me by the Holy Spirit. I confess my inability apart from You and so I now look to you and trust and rely on your Spirit within me to put to death the deeds of the flesh. For the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus sets me free from the law of sin and death. Thank You."

I suspect there are folks who have prayed something similar 10,000 times yet still sin in that area. Why might that be? I certainly have no issue with that prayer- I think it is appropriate. What I might take issue with is the "relax" part. Jesus said to cut off body parts that cause us to stumble. Now, I do think he was using a rhetorical device to make a point- and that point is that sometimes violent and severe action may be necessary.

Dr. Michael Brown has an excellent sermon called "Are You Backsliding?" (at least I think that is the sermon I am thinking of). Anyways in there he talks about getting serious about not sinning and has some great pointers.

If it was simply a matter of prayer, why not just pray" Lord, I don't like sinning. You don't like sinning. Please help me to never sin again. Amen." I mean, that would clearly seem to be God's will, right?

Re: , on: 2016/5/21 9:47

If that happens (ie prayer is not answered) we can try to meet the condition in John 15:7.

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

Devote ourself to God, pray, read the word, separate ourselves from the world, repent and not be discouraged when we fall, but keep trying, this process takes us to the place where we die to ourselves (relax) then we pray that prayer again referring also to John 15:7.

Detecting the voice of the devil, on: 2016/5/21 10:06

Charles Spurgeon on detecting the voice of the devil:

"Now I will give the poor sinner a means of detecting Satan, so he may know whether his convictions are from the Holy Spirit, or merely the bellowing of hell in his ears. In the first place, you may always be sure that that which comes from the devil will make you look at yourselves and not at Christ. The Holy Spirit's work is to turn our eyes from ourselves to Jesus Christ, but the enemy's work is the very opposite. Nine out of ten of the insinuations of the devil have to do with ourselvesâ€" "You do not repent enough" that is self. "You have got such a wavering hold of Christ" that is self. Thus the devil begins picking holes in us; whereas the Holy Spirit takes self entirely away, and tells us that we are "nothing at all, - but that Jesus Christ is all in all."

"Nothing is to be trusted to but the finished work of Jesus Christ upon Calvary's bloody tree! No feelings, no emotion, no believing, no conversion, even, must ever be put into the place of that one eternal Rock of refugeâ€"the blood and merit of Jesus Christ! Fly there, poor Soul! Whatever you are, or are not, fly there! Cast your guilty self on Christ and rest there, for there alone can you find salvation! Learn this lesson - not to trust Christ because you repent, but trust Christ to make you repentâ€"not to come to Christ because you have a broken heart, but to come to Him that He may give you a broken heart - not to come to Him because you are fit to come, but to come to Him because you are unfit to come! Your fitness is your unfitness. Your qualification is your lack of qualification. You are to be nothing, in fact, and to come to Christ as nothing - and when you so come, then will repentance come!"

Eph. 1:17-20, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,"

So your part is just to believe in HIM, You can do this NOW!!!

Remember, therefore, it is not your hold of Christ that saves you - it is Christ; it is not your joy in Christ that saves youâ€"it is Christ; it is not even faith in Christ, though that be the instrumentâ€"it is Christ's blood and merits; therefore, look not so much to your hand with which you are grasping Christ, as to Christ; look not to your hope, but to Jesus, the source of your hope; look not to your faith, but to Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith. We shall never find happiness by looking at our prayers, our doings, or our feelings; it is what Jesus is, not what we are, that gives rest to the soul."

Re: , on: 2016/5/21 10:19

Double post deleted.

Re: - posted by TrueWitness, on: 2016/5/21 11:22

Todd, I'm sorry if you understood my advice to relax to mean we should be indifferent or apathetic to sin. That was not my point. Also, the prayer I offered as an example was not meant to be just a beggy, "hail mary", hopin' and a wishin' prayer. The last half of that prayer was a statement of faith in the power of Christ in us by the Holy Spirit. In both cases the idea is to get the focus on Christ within us to be our resource for living and overcoming the trials and temptations we face every day.

As I have stated in other posts, there is a divine balance in the Christian walk between our being responsible and taking action and our dependence and reliance on Christ to live through us. It is easy to over-emphasize either part too much. I

, in my early walk, took the attitude of "I got this Lord, I can handle this sin problem, you can rely on me." I experienced the Roman 7 outcome and was quite dismayed. Trying to whip up more resolve did not help things. And just as Paul moved out of Romans 7 reliance on self and into Romans 8 reliance on the Spirit, I too experienced the same breakthrough. There are many sinful temptations I don't struggle with I suppose because Christ's character in me handles it without my thinking too much about it. But besetting sins which have a history of "hooking" me are ones that I most definitely do need to be humble and put my focus on the Holy Spirit in me to overcome. As Paul said God told him, "My power is made perfect in weakness."

I hope this helps clarify things.

-Daniel

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/5/21 11:39

Daniel-

I did not mean to sound critical of your post. I agree with all that you said and appreciate it. Just trying to work the "balance" out in my own mind.

This morning when thinking about this a thought popped into my head:

Is it possible Jesus went into the wilderness to fast because he was experiencing temptation?

Re: Tmk, on: 2016/5/21 13:42

By the way - what city do you live in?

Re: Words From Stricken, Smitten and Afflicted., on: 2016/5/21 13:50

From Verse 3.....

Ye who think of sin but lightly nor suppose the evil great,
Here may view it's nature rightly, hear it's guilt may estimate.
Mark the sacrifice appointed, see who bears the awful load,
Tis the Word the Lord Anointed,
Son of Man and Son of God.

If I choose to sin. Then I am not reflecting on the above reality of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ for me. I listened to this hymn this morning and found myself in tears. Truly if we have an idea of what God did on the cross for us. Then why would we want to go back to the cesspool of sin?

Brothers and sisters I hope you get a chance to listen to the beautiful hymn that's posted on the thread Fernando Ortega singing Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted.

Brother Blaine