

Getting over Sin

Practical Steps For a Daily Walk in Victory Over Sin

Many in the church today don't want to hear a message about sin. But we need to face this topic for one simple reason: God wants us to have victory over Sin but all too often we are not experiencing that victory.

I firmly believe that God not only desires us to live in freedom from bondage to sin, but also makes it possible for us to walk in this freedom. In John 8, Jesus makes the sobering point that “everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin” and then proclaims that “if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:35, 37 NASB). This passage raises two crucial questions for us:

- 1) What does it mean for Jesus to make his people free from sin?
- 2) How does Jesus make us free?

Answering the first question, the Bible shows us that freedom from sin does not mean that we will walk in absolute, continuous, sinless, perfection. Instead, it means that God has given us the power and the grace to overcome willful sin and to break free from bondage to sin.

An unbeliever is like a plane on a runway that can't take off because bondage to sin keeps him grounded to earth. But a believer is like a plane that is free to take off and fly. Just as a plane fulfills its purpose only when it is flying so the believer fulfills his destiny only when he lives in freedom from willful sin. Certainly we may encounter turbulence, head winds, and storms in our flight—including our inadvertent and occasional sins. Yet, by God's grace, we can learn to correct ourselves in midair, change our altitude, and soar on.

What about the second question? How does Jesus make us free from sin? For one thing, God has given us a new birth in Christ, making each of us into a new creation that, positionally speaking is no longer a sinner (John 3:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17). But we are also called to walk out this new identity in our everyday life in this world. On this practical level, Jesus offers us a variety of ways through which we can progressively become free from sin in His grace.

10 strategies for Victorious Living

Below are ten biblical strategies that can help us to fly high and long in the freedom that God has given us.

1. Meditate on the consequences of sin.

Meditating on the many horrible consequences of sin is sometimes just the wake up call we need to avoid falling prey to the deceptive allurements of sin. When we think about the effects of sin, we first need to realize that sin has a destructive effect on all our relationships. Most importantly, it harms our relationship with God. Sin can also destroy our relationships with people on earth, in our families, in the church, and with unbelievers.

In addition to destroying relationships, sin can derail us from our personal and corporate destinies. I have sometimes asked myself, “What potential thousands if not millions of souls would be negatively influenced if sin derailed me from my destiny? I have also wondered, “Is the church's corporate destiny for revival being delayed because of unrepented sin?”

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Sin leads to more sin and eventually takes us on the path to eternal death. You may recall the commercial slogan for Lay's potato chips that said: “You can't eat just one!” Unfortunately, sin can be a lot like those chips with one sin leading to more sins.

Sin not only leads to more sins; it leads to worse sins. We begin with sins that we justify as “minor,” and soon we find ourselves in great bondage. “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads

unto death” (Prov. 14:12 and 16:25; see Rom 6:23). Not getting involved in sin in the first place is the easiest way to walk in freedom from its enslaving power.

2. Receive a revelation of the cross of Jesus.

Mike Bickle says that knowing and receiving the superior pleasure of being loved by God causes the inferior pleasures of sin to lose their hold on us. The cross is a powerful manifestation of God’s extravagant love for us even when we were his enemies (Rom. 5:8). Because of the cross, we have God’s gracious gifts of forgiveness, cleansing, and transformation (1 John 1:9).

The cross shows us that God has already defeated Satan and sin for us. We have been crucified with Christ, leaving our sinful nature dead and our new self (the Christ within us) as master over sin (Gal. 2:20 and 5:24; Rom 6:1-14; Eph. 4:22-24).

3. Repent

Another obvious practical step in overcoming sin is to repent. To repent is to make a radical “about face,” a 180 degree turn in the opposite direction. Repentance is a repeated, quality decision to turn from sin, even if it is costing us something.

I recently heard a powerful illustration of such costly decision. Hiker Aaron Ralston got his arm caught under an 800 pound boulder. For three days he was trapped there, and he had run out of food and water. He chose to cut his arm off with a small pocketknife to survive. We too need to do whatever it takes to get free of the boulders of sin that can pin us down and destroy us.

4. Receive inner healing and deliverance.

Some of us want to repent, but there are wounds and injuries to our emotions that need to be healed before we can do a thorough job of repenting. Some believers have demonic strongholds from which they need to be delivered. Tested inner-healing ministries like John and Paula Sandord’s Elijah house and Chester and Betty Kystra’s Restoring the Foundations ministry provide invaluable resources for leaders and lay people alike who want to be free of strongholds.

5. Receive the Grace of God by Faith.

The Church today needs to realize afresh the truth John Wesley and the late holiness teachers proclaimed: God’s grace not only provides the forgiveness of sins that saves us, but also empowers us to live holy lives for Him. The grace of God is more than the unmerited favor of God bestowed upon us despite our sin; it is also the power of God that frees us from our sin. (Titus2:11-12).

6. Be filled and led by the Holy Spirit.

We cannot overcome sin by our own strength, but we can by the power of the Spirit. When we become Christians we are called to live by the Spirit rather than living by the flesh or the sinful nature. The Holy Spirit has superior power over the inferior power of sin. Sin ultimately has no chance in the face of the Spirit’s works of filling, leading, sanctifying, and fruit bearing (Rom. 8:1-16, Gal.5:16; and Eph. 5:18).

7. Surrender yourself daily to Jesus.

If Jesus is to be our Lord and Saviour in practice and not only in theory, we need to surrender to Him daily. This involves taking up our cross daily to follow Him (Luke 9:23). If we don’t consciously do this every day, we are easily influenced by our old sin nature, and we deny our true identity In Christ Jesus.

8. Spend intimate time with Jesus.

Besides surrendering to Jesus as our Lord, we have the privilege of spending intimate time with Him as our lover. Like the church in Ephesus of Revelation 2m we can lose our first love, the love that we had at the beginning of our Christian walk. Jesus’ solution to this problem is simple: “Do the things you did at the beginning of your love for Christ” (Revelation 2:5).

What did we do to grow in intimacy with Jesus at the beginning of our Christian life? We probably spent a lot of time in Bible meditation, prayer, fasting, worship, or simply waiting in His presence. These are the ways we can cultivate our present relationship with Jesus.

9. Be committed to a local church.

Many ways exist for us to be committed to a local church so that we have victory over sin. In the church we receive wise teaching and counsel, prayer support, accountability, friendship, and positive peer pressure. We need covenant commitment to a local church because each of us is not an island; we are members of the Body of Christ.

10. Be Discipled.

The sanctifying power of the local church reaches its apex in deep relationships of discipleship and accountability. By being disciple we can receive from a more mature believe wisdom and impartation that is tailor-made for us. We give up the right to live our lives according to our own selfish preferences and humbly to submit to the guidance of another who knows better than we how to walk in holiness.

In these ten ways of overcoming sin we see the manifold riches of the grace that God gives us to make us Holy. Receive and walk in this sanctifying grace today and enter into a higher level of the freedom we have in Jesus Christ.

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