

How to Overcome Sin

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- I. As long as we are in this world we are going to have to face temptation, sin, and discouragement and we are going to have to deal with it.
- A. First of all, we can (and we SHOULD) avoid these things as much as possible.
 - B. We can (and we SHOULD) spend our time and find our pleasures in things other than what the world provides.
 - C. We should dress right, run with the right people, etc.
 - D. But even though we can save ourselves a lot of trouble and danger by avoiding all we can, we are still going to be faced with them, and must know how to deal with them.
 - E. A lot of people make a great mistake in believing that by just semi-isolating ourselves from the world we can overcome sin, temptation, and discouragement.
 - F. We cannot overcome it by just saying no, and resolving to do better.
 - G. Most people deal with temptation and sin by simply acquiescing to it.
 - 1. They are taught that there is no other choice and no other possibility – we are all sinners and we are all going to sin every day in thought, word, and deed, and if anyone would dare to deny that fact they are a liar and a heretic.
 - 2. So this kind of thinking and teaching leads people to simply give up the idea of overcoming and they just continue being a habitual, practicing sinner.
 - 3. This is the very deceit that the Bible warns about so often and so clearly.

1 John 3:7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

1 John 3:8-10 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

- H. Secondly, we must learn to discern the difference between temptation and sin.
- 1. Most people seem to be confused about this and consider what is temptation to be sin.
 - 2. They start from the wrong premise that because I am tempted I must be sinful.
 - 3. Temptation (in this sense) is the enticement to sin; it is the alluring through the lusts of the flesh.
 - 4. Sin is the following through with the temptation and yielding our members (our body) to unlawful indulgences or acts.
 - 5. Some argue that the “thought of foolishness is sin.” (Proverbs 24:9); but that word actually means “plan” – in other words to plan and scheme to do foolishness is sin. – a passing thought of something silly or foolish is not sin, but might be temptation.

6. By broadening the definition of sin to include temptation we are all made practicing, habitual sinners unable to obtain any victory over sin or temptation.
7. This is not the message of the Gospel, nor of the entire Old and New Testaments – the message of redemption is that we can be delivered from not only the penalty of our sin, but the bondage of it.

Romans 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

Romans 6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

Romans 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

II. We WILL overcome temptation, sin, and discouragement, and we will overcome the same way we got saved — by grace through faith.

1 John 5:4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

Eph 6:16 "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

2 Cor 1:24 "... for by faith ye stand."

- A. Once again it is simply looking to Christ that gives us the power to overcome. We must go back to the Cross.

Never lose your simple trust in the Crucified, for only by the blood of the Lamb can you overcome sin and be made fit for the Lord's work. — Spurgeon

- B. Every victory over sin is by faith in Christ; – and victories come one at a time.
 1. Whenever our mind is diverted from Christ, we are acting in our own strength, and rejecting the help of Christ, by resolving and fighting against sin in our own strength.
- C. It is by faith in Christ that fleshly lusts and evil thoughts are kept under control and subdued.

III. Christ IN US is the hope of glory.

1 Timothy 1:12-14 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

- A. The fact that Christ dwells with us and in us brings with it an influence that empowers us to overcome these things. (THIS IS GRACE)

Titus 2:11-12 "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;"

- B. His indwelling us means He is EVER PRESENT with us.
 1. We don't leave Him to go out on our own.
 2. A man has to put his wife and his children out of his mind in order to be unfaithful to them – he has to get out of their presence, also.

3. The influence of Christ (GRACE OF GOD) cannot be shaken that easily – it is your nature after you are truly saved.

Matthew 28:20 ... lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

4. A REAL encounter with the Son of God makes such a mark on your being that you cannot go on and live as if it never happened.
5. The grace THAT BRINGS SALVATION stays with you after you are saved.

IV. This faith that enables us to overcome “worketh by love.”

Gal 5:6 "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."

- A. He sheds abroad His own love in our hearts, and thereby enkindles ours.
- B. Faith worked by love — that is how we keep the commandments of God.

John 14:23 "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words:"

V. Simply resolving to overcome does not get the job done.

- A. These are overcome when better things replace them.
 1. Getting rid of the problem and leaving a vacancy won't work for long.
- B. The starting point in overcoming sin MUST be faith in Christ.
- C. No one will ever overcome sin without a greater power than their own resolve.
 1. What blasphemy against the grace of God to think a man has the power to overcome sin on his own!
 2. Sin's roots are too deep in a person to be dug out by himself.
 3. Man cannot overcome sin of his own strength and power — THAT IS WHY GOD SENT A SAVIOUR!
- D. It's root – selfishness in the heart, which really constitutes sin, is not touched.
- E. Our desires are not controlled by resolutions — only the gratification of those desires are controlled by resolutions – the desire is still there.
- F. Our resolutions don't secure love, which is the only real obedience to the law.
- G. Faith that overcomes sin is not passive, but RESPONSIVE to the Spirit of God.

Rom 13:10 "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

VI. This part is left out of the Gospel these days.

- A. That is why our religion is mocked and scorned by the world.
- B. They feel they have power over us with their sin – and they do, as long as we fail to learn that we overcome by faith in Christ.
- C. All they have to do is wave it in front of us and we are done.
- D. The sinner is not seeing that the appetite, the affections and desires of a Christian are no longer set on the same things as his are.
- E. All the difference he sees is the Christian's claim to some imputed righteousness and future deliverance — with no evidence, and no great difference right here and now.
- F. Faith worketh by love – if you truly love the Lord you will be able to overcome by his grace, which is the influence of his presence upon you.
- G. And this will be seen and recognized by others.
- H. The only people who will believe a testimony of salvation that does not deliver from the dominion of sin are those who have experienced nothing more than that themselves.