

Our Common Struggle With Sin
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Introduction: A Christian must learn how to keep sin from ruling his life.

- A. If we are able to keep the sin of pride from ruling us then we can readily acknowledge this battle. **(1 Cor 10:12-13)**
 - 1. I have run across “experienced” Christians that speak of living for years without sinning. How can this be?
 - 2. Some have quit serving God because of these false concepts.
 - 3. Zacchaeus was shocked to learn that it was possible for him to serve God! Why? Others said that he could not! **(Lk 19:5-7)**
- B. How should we deal with our own personal struggle with sin?
 - 1. We can live in bondage or we can be free! **(Jn 8:32-36)**
 - 2. We can live an abundant life in Christ!

I. Let the knowledge of God humble you

- A. When I am beat down by a problem bigger than me I need help!
 - 1. It is good when we cry out in despair to God. **(Rom 7:24-25)**
 - 2. Pride is an ever present issue in this struggle.
- B. Gain strength in knowing that God knows you! **(Psa 139:1-6)**
 - 1. Our God knows us and yet still loves us!
 - 2. Look at how well God knows us. **(Mt 10:30-31)**
- C. Let God teach you about you! **(Heb 4:12-13)**
 - 1. There are “inconvenient truths” about myself that I need to hear.
 - 2. God has also blessed me with good friends who also often tell me what I do not want to hear.
 - 3. The end result is a humble and tender heart that is willing to be taught!
 - 4. Be careful, pride can even enter at this point. We can acknowledge these truths and be arrogant. (Ex. “I am a recovering Pharisee”)

II. Let the forgiveness of God strengthen you

- A. Forgiveness can only come from truth and light. **(1 Jn 1:7-10)**
 - 1. I must know what sin is and admit it.
 - 2. I must fight sin rather than in pride attempt to manage it.
 - 3. Satan will never be honest. He will call good, evil and evil, good. Please do not let pride turn you to darkness. **(Isa 5:20-21)**
- B. Let the forgiveness of God keep you looking to Him for help. **(Heb 12:1-3)**
 - 1. How many of you would take on a professional fighter without any help?
 - 2. Without God’s wisdom we will turn to “cycles of failure.”
- C. We must be born again to be freed from sin. **(Jn 3:3-5)**
 - 1. This new birth wipes away in forgiveness all past sins! **(Acts 2:38; 3:19)**
 - 2. How do we know this has occurred? It starts with the knowledge of the promises of God. It is not based on how we feel alone.

3. The new birth is painful. We must see our sins and turn from them. A brutal honesty is involved. **(Mt 5:3-4)**
- D. We must walk in the light and confess our sins. **(1 Jn 1:5-10; 3:9-10)**
 1. God is faithful so all we need to do is stand by faith on His promises.
 2. A person is not a hypocrite who repents and gets back up to fight sin.

III. Common but fatal mistakes men make in fighting sin.

- A. Many try to beat sin by willpower and guilt alone.
 1. Both willpower and guilt are tools that God uses. They are also instrument of slavery without God's wisdom.
 2. Have you ever been in a battle that you could never win, but kept fighting anyway? Many Christians have made this mistake.
- B. Learning from Paul's struggle before he became a Christian. **(Rom 7:14-20)**
 1. Here is a treadmill that will always bring failure.
 2. Sometimes our teaching may sound like this: "Try Harder!"
 3. In this cycle you will be beat-up, get up and try harder and then fall again and keep repeating the cycle. Eventually you will quit. You are a slave!
 4. Why keep doing the same thing over and over again?
- C. We need more than willpower. We need God's grace. **(Rom 8:1-3)**
 1. With God's grace we can heal and grow in our love for God!
(Rom 8:31-35)
 2. We must see God and battle sin through this relationship!

IV. God's people can provide wisdom and encouragement.

- A. Why do we try to take on this battle alone? **(James 5:16)**
 1. We need to go to spiritual people! **(Gal 6:1)**
 2. We have accepted the lie that all Christians are super-Christians and do not have "problems like I do."
- B. Spiritual people can give you wisdom to overcome. **(1 Cor 10:12-13)**
 1. We must cut off the supply lines of sin. **(Rom 8:12-13)**
 2. We must increase our love for God and our brethren.
 3. When you are isolated Satan will have his way with you.
- C. Let your assurance come from God's promises. **(Rom 8:15-17)**
 1. We are no longer in bondage! How is this possible?
 2. There are two witnesses that we hear: The Holy Spirit and our Spirit.
 3. We should have our guilt removed when we know God's promises!
 4. We may have to fight to overcome our fickle emotions with memorizing and repeating the promises of God

Conclusion: Do you have the peace that passes understanding? **(Phil 4:6-7)**

- A. Brethren we need to draw closer to each other and to God.
- B. There are others who are likely in bondage that we can help if the door is opened.