

## Is There Any Hope to Stop Sinning?

Contrary to many popular teachings, there is actual hope in the Bible that states that believers can have victory over sin in their lives. What has confused the matter is the definition that most people have when they use the term 'sin.' The ancient Hebrew communities used several criteria to determine the severity of the sin and the necessary sacrifice that would be required to atone for the sin. These criteria would include overt rebellion, trespasses, sinning ignorantly, and personal sin versus community sin.

Today the options are much simpler for we have two main categories of sin, of which the various actions of sin would be fall under. The first category would be sins of the flesh that are described in Galatians 5:19:21. These sins are totally conquerable for we have the power Jesus, the sinless one, living in our heart. His presence will help us to convert our old mindset that allowed these sins to dominate our lives to the mind set of Jesus that sought to obey every command of the Father, giving no room for personal sin.

It is important to remember that our salvation is more that merely saying a prayer for the forgiveness of our sins. Repenting of our sins requires a turning around and heading in the opposite direction. This means that we must stop pursuing earthly pleasures and we must seek the things of God's Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul assures us that if we will do this that we stopping committing the sins of the flesh, Romans 6:6 NLT: *We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin.* This is why Paul tells us to flee from immorality in the following examples:

1 Corinthians 6:18 NLT: *Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body.*

Ephesians 5:3 NLT: *Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God's people.*

Colossians 3:5 NLT: *So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world.*

Paul would have been a liar if we did not have the ability to stop sinning in these areas; so when you hear people say that we are still sinners, you should remember that we are new creatures in Christ. We have a new spirit that seeks to do the things of God. The problem comes in when we allow our minds to go back to the old ways. Spiritual disciplines such as prayer and worship are so important to build up our spirits to God.

The final battle of sin then comes from our will to perform the will of God in our lives. Here is the area that we can miss the mark (sin) after we no longer are living immoral lives. We are locked in a constant battle to do God's will and not our own will. Every time we allow our will to override the will of God, we then sin. Being perfect to the will of God is a life long battle, but in the end we can have victory as did Paul, 2 Timothy 4:7, 8 NLT: *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of His return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to His appearing.*