

HOW TO OVERCOME SIN

1 John 3:1-11

Introduction: There's not a human being, other than Jesus Christ, who has not and does not sin, that is be unlike God wants one to be, break God's laws, etc. However, as Christians, God expects and demands that they live differently and stay away, out of sin. Christians should want to live as God wants, follow Jesus' example but sin is an innate, natural way of life for everyone, so just how can sin be overcome?

1. The Bible commands, demands, expects some kind of holiness, some kind of perfection and without it, no person can ever see or be near God.
2. Believers want to see God and to know Him, personally, but how?
 - The holiness needed cannot be reached or attained by human effort.
 - *Isaiah 64:6* - reminds that all our righteousness is as filthy rags.
3. Jesus promised to live within us, bringing His perfect love and pure holiness.
 - Believers know that God is love.
 - Believers know that love for Jesus casts out fear.
 - Believers know that Jesus removes sin from their lives.
4. Christians have know these facts for centuries and they are easy to talk about and such things are natural, but the question believers/Christians struggle with is: "How can I, a struggling sinner, saved by grace, get Jesus' perfect love?"
5. How is God involved? What does God do?
 - God gives openly and greatly to sinners instant victory over all their sins.
 - God can give instant, immediate delivery from "little" sins as well as "big" sins.
 - How does God do it? Is the most important question a believer/Christian can ask.
 - Most believers/Christians have tried over and over again and again to win over sin but have failed.
 - The great majority of believers/Christians are able to reach a certain level of Christian experience and then gradually slip back into a lower level of life. Why? What happens?
 - How many of US find ourselves in this same situation? We can identify with getting to a level of living like God wants, then for some reason we slip back down, back into sin.
6. The most popular way of believers/Christians in combating sin is to FIGHT temptations.
 - We have accepted Jesus Christ, yet sinful desires, passions still remain and sadly, sometimes we actually go back to old sins.
 - We want victory over our temptations, so we struggle and struggle to overcome them.
 - This idea appeals to us, to FIGHT our temptations and God does help us fight but there are times when we just lose our will power and fall back into sin.
 - Although the idea seems right, we know that it doesn't always work.
 - Fight, yes, but also we are to "flee," from temptations and exercise "faith." We are to stand fast, resisting the devil IN FAITH, not our own strength.

7. Sin is overcome ONLY by the indwelling of Jesus Christ.
 - "...*I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me...*" said Paul.
 - "...*Ye are of God and have overcome them...*" wrote John.
 - "...*Because greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world...*"
 - The "secret" of winning over sin is the indwelling of Jesus Christ.
 - Victory over sin is TRUSTING, not trying. *1 John 5:4*
 - Can anyone add a single inch to his/her height by straining or struggling?

8. How is spiritual growth secured, achieved?
 - Air, food and exercise insure physical life.
 - The Holy Spirit, God's Word and witnessing insure one's spiritual life.
 - One grows in Grace, but there is no growing INTO grace.
 - Sin hinders spiritual growth and struggling does not help spiritual growth.
 - Sin has roots in the human heart, it is called the Old Sin Nature and in a way we spend our time "cutting off it's branches" when what we need to be doing is destroying it's roots.

9. Jesus Christ can conquer the sin in our lives.
 - From minute to minute, from hour to hour, day to day, year to year, etc. Jesus can conquer sin.
 - After all is said and done, the believer, the Christian can do nothing with his/her sins, he/she cannot win over them. Jesus Christ is the only ONE who can conquer sin in our life. Therefore, we must turn our sins over to Him.

CONCLUSION:

1. As a believer, a Christian, Jesus Christ dwells in your heart and will keep you saved for all eternity.
2. Jesus Christ can give us instant victory over our sins IF we trust HIM to do so.