

**Did ever saint find this Friend forsake him? No, not one!
No, not one! Or sinner find that He would not take him?
No, not one! No, not one!**

I have never found him to forsake me. "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Mat 29:20); "For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb 13:5).

And he will never refuse a sinner, no matter what John Calvin says. "Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet 3:9); "As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Eze 33:11).

**Was ever a gift like the Savior given? No, not one! No,
not one! Will He refuse us a home in Heaven? No, not
one! No, not one!**

No greater gift was ever given than Jesus. Nor will he refuse those who serve him "in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life" (Luk 1:75).

**Jesus knows all about our struggles, He will guide till the
day is done; There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus,
No, not one! No, not one!**

He will never leave or forsake us. Truly there is no other friend like Jesus!

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Who Are Liars, Deceived, and in Darkness?

For the last couple of weeks I have been mediating on the first letter of John. I took some extra time this morning to read through the whole book and to meditate on the verses where John speaks of those who are liars, deceived, and in darkness.

The first letter of John is a very revealing part of the Word of God. John's purpose in writing the letter was so that we who "believe on the name of the Son of God... may know that ye have eternal life" (1Joh 5:13).

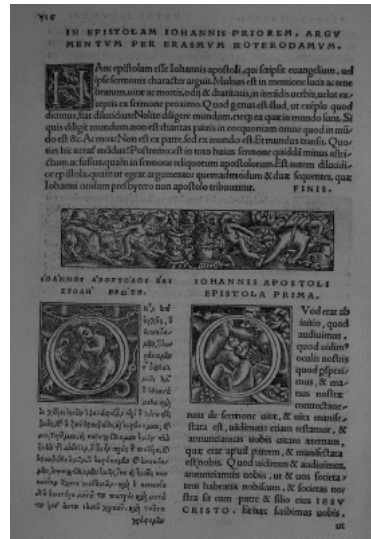
John has some very strong things to say in this book, which will show us who is truthful and who is a liar, who is walking in the light and who is walking in darkness, and who is enlightened and who is deceived.

I would ask that you prayerfully read this article and "examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2Cor 13:5).

John, one of the original twelve disciples of Christ, opens this letter by stating that which he had heard and seen, he declares unto those he addresses in his letter.

That John is addressing a mixed multitude is clear, as he addresses not only little children (1Joh 2:1,12,13,18,28, 2:1,12,13,18,28, 3:7,10,18, 4:4, 5:2,21), young men (1Joh 2:13,14), and fathers (1Joh 2:13,14) in the faith, but he states that one of his purposes is that some of whom he is addressing "may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1Joh 1:3).

Fellowship with the Father and the Son is gained through salvation. John states that "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1Joh 1:5), and right after this he makes one of his first in a series of very strong statements. In 1Joh 1:6, John states the following:



When, with the ransomed in glory, His face I at last shall see, 'Twill be my joy thro' the ages to sing of His love for me.

Well, it is my joy to sing of his love for me now. I can hardly take it in what it will be like in heaven. I enjoy singing very much, and it is a big part of my devotion to Jesus. I love the old fashioned hymns about the blood, about Jesus, and what it will be like to be in heaven.

Oh, how marvelous! Oh, how wonderful! And my song shall ever be; Oh how marvelous! Oh how wonderful! Is my Savior's love for me!

Pray for me that this song and the Savior's love shall ever be marvelous and wonderful to me. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1Cor 10:12).

No Not One

There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus, No, not one! No, not one! None else could heal all our soul's diseases, No, not one! No, not one!

Buddha can't, Hira Krishna can't, Mohammed can't, and the pope can't. Only Jesus can heal all our soul's diseases!

No friend like Him is so high and holy, No, not one! No, not one! And yet no friend is so meek and lowly, No, not one! No, not one!

No friend like him, so high and holy. "The Word was God" (Joh 1:1); "His name shall be called... The mighty God, The everlasting Father" (Isa 9:6); "Christ, who is the image of God" (2Cor 4:4); "Who is the image of the invisible God" (Col 1:15); "The express image of his person" (Heb 1:3).

And yet no friend so meek and lowly. "Who went about doing good" (Act 10:38); "Have washed your feet" (Joh 13:14); "A friend of publicans and sinners" (Luk 7:34); "Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Mat 20:28).

There's not an hour that He is not near us, No, not one! No, not one! No night so dark but his love can cheer us, No, not one! No, not one!

What a comfort this is to know. "He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2Tim 1:12); "He is able to succor them that are tempted" (Heb 2:18); "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him" (Heb 7:25).

hideous that they almost make me shudder sometimes when Satan tries to cast them back into my face.

I truly can testify of my amazement of how Jesus could love me when I was a sinner, condemned, and very unclean.

For me it was in the garden He prayed: “not My will but Thine.” He had no tears for His own griefs, but sweat drops of blood for mine.

I love to meditate on the crucifixion of Christ. I love to look at the pictures in the book *The Passion: Photography from the Movie The Passion of the Christ* and weep and thank Jesus for what he went through just for me. I am part of “the joy that was set before him” for which He “endured the cross” (Heb 12:2). One of my favorite pictures is of Jesus being scourged (Mar 15:15) for “by whose stripes ye were healed” (1Pet 2:24).

Jesus bore this all for me, that the deep and horrific wounds of the sin inflicted on my soul could be healed and I could be made whole. No one in their right mind who meditates on the power of God and the suffering of Jesus can stand up for sin in a believer. What great darkness is it when poor souls plead for sin and disobedience as unavoidable before the resurrected Savior who has conquered sin, death, and the grave. Oh, glory be to the name that is above all names (Phi 2:9)! How could I but love a Savior such as He!

In pity, angels beheld Him and came from the world of light to comfort Him in the sorrows He bore for my soul that night. He took my sins and my sorrows, He made them His very own; He bore the burden to Calv’ry, and suffered and died alone.

Are you ever lonely? Jesus was forsaken of man and God (Mat 27:46) and suffered and died alone. Jesus understands like no one else can. With the weight of the sins of the world, all his disciples save John and a few women having forsaken him, “smitten of God, and afflicted” (Isa 53:4) he died for you and me. Oh, what a Savior!

I know what it means to be lonely. To be forsaken by 20-plus years of friends from the Church of God Restoration that I loved so dearly. To be cut off and cast out like a dead dog by ministers whom I held in high esteem. To be told by my dear wife that I am not saved.

Oh yes, it hurts sometimes, but I have a friend that knows like no one else how it feels. He comforts me and consoles me and helps me along, for He not only was alone, but He suffered and died alone.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

Here John clearly states if you claim to have fellowship with Christ and you walk in darkness you are lying. In other words, a person’s profession of having fellowship with Christ is false if they walk in darkness.

So right away our question should be, “what does it mean to walk in darkness?” John tells us that “he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness” (1Joh 2:11). To be in darkness or to walk in darkness is to commit sin. So in other words, if you have been giving into the temptation of hatred toward someone, and you profess to be in fellowship with Christ, John says you are a liar.

For the Christian, “the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth” (1Joh 2:8) in our soul. Real Bible salvation has delivered us not only from all darkness and hatred, in that “he that loveth his brother abideth in the light” (1Joh 2:10), but has delivered us from committing all sin (1Joh 5:18).

Sin is a willful transgression against a known commandment of God, not an error, fault, or mistake in opinion or action. Under the new covenant, a person must be tempted before they sin. You can view a list of articles on this subject under the Sin-free Living category.

Some make a plead for sin in their life by saying that this scripture means “walk in darkness continuously”. I have addressed Sinning and the Greek Present Tense in a separate article, which I strongly suggest that you read.

I would hold that the New Testament teaches there is no difference in a person’s standing in Christ whether they walk in darkness for one hour or for one month, in that they are not saved and the wrath of God abides on them no matter what they profess with their lips. However, the longer a person stays in sin, the more seared their heart will become, they will fall into greater depths of sin, and there will be a greater chance of never recovering from their lost estate.

The next scripture that discusses people being deceived is 1Joh 1:8. It is one of the most quoted scriptures to support a sinning Christian life.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

The first question that must be asked is, who does this scripture apply to? We have just been told that “if we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie” (1Joh 1:6) and in the following chapter that “he that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar” (2Joh 2:4).

John is not going to tell us as Christians “if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” and in the next breath tell us “he that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him”.

This apparent contradiction is easily solved. If those who are not in “fellowship with us”-which means they are not in fellowship “with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ”-claim to be free from sin, they are deceived. The only way that a person can be freed from sin is through Christ and the power of His blood to cleanse from sin.

This goes right along with 1Joh 1:10 which says:

If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

I have not met very many people that lay claim to this or verse eight, but they kind of go hand in hand. If a person who is not saved claims to have no sin, they more than likely will be claiming to have never sinned.

The fact is that we like David were all “shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psa 51:5), and our state before salvation was that our “heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked” (Jer 17:9). In showing the Jews that both they and the Gentiles were all under sin, Paul in his letter to the Romans quotes the following from the Old Testament scriptures.

“There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes” (Rom 3:10-18).

In fact, we were so morally bankrupt that we did not even have the ability to seek after God, unless the Father first drew us and enabled our wills. “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: (Joh 6:22). Let us eternally praise Jesus Christ for the “true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (Joh 1:9) and that “the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men” (Tit 2:11).

The next scripture that John gives us concerning those who are liars and do not have the truth, is 1Joh 2:4:

If we have not this love, we are nothing (1Cor 3:2) and everything we do profits us nothing (1Cor 13:3).

My Love for Jesus

Besides prayer and reading of the Word of God, their seems to be no better way to start your day than with “hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph 5:19).

As I was singing these two spiritual songs this morning (*My Saviors Love* and *No Not One*), I smiled when I noticed that they were both about Jesus. These are my two favorite hymns, and I love to sing them at the top of my voice. Off and on for the last year or so I start my morning by singing these hymns.

Detractors have tried to make a case to me and to others that the free from sin message has an over-emphasis on sin and an under-emphasis on Jesus. The reason I smiled this morning is that I found myself singing these two beautiful hymns, not about holiness and the free from sin message, but about Jesus my Savior, who is the author and finisher of my faith.

It was just another confirmation that I am on the right track.

Here are some of the verses from these two hymns, and comments on why these hymns mean so much to me.

My Savior’s Love

I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene, and wonder how he would love me a sinner, condemned unclean.

I do not want to glory in my past sins in any way, shape, or form, but this verse rings so true to my heart. I was a very depraved young man before Jesus rescued me. Some of the wicked things I have done, I have dared only to tell Jesus. The memory of my past sins are so



Thou Shalt Love the Lord Thy God

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. — Mar 12:30, 31



No other commandments greater than these. To love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and your neighbor as thyself. What a high standard! What a call to selfless living; to love others as yourself!

The greatest commandments are not dress like I dress, believe like I believe, speak in modern tongues, get baptized in Jesus' name, keep Saturday as a holy day and stop eating pork, accept some sect as the one true visible church, or what ever doctrine professing Christians hobby-horse these days.

The greatest thing is love: the loving of God, the loving of his son Jesus, the loving of doing "those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1Joh 3:22). The loving of our neighbor as ourselves, and the loving especially of "them who are of the household of faith" (Gal 6:10).

The standard of Christian love is given to us in Paul's first letter to the Corinthian church, chapter 13 — the love chapter.

1Co 13:4-8 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth.

He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

I am thankful that just a few verses after 1Joh 1:8, this verse is added. This is a very difficult scripture for those to deal with who desire to maintain that it is normal for a person to continue to sin after they are saved.

This scripture is similar in strength to the verses in the Gospel of John that state "he that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me" (Joh 14:21), and "he that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings" (Joh 14:24).

Those who profess to be Christians and willfully disobey known commandments of the Lord, hear the Word of God. You are a liar, the truth is not in you, and no matter what your lips may say, you do not love the Lord.

The next scripture I would like to look at is 1Jn 2:21:

I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

Here, John tells the Christians whom he was addressing that they were not ignorant of the things he was writing to them about. Not only were they able to discern the truth, but they were able to judge the false teachers and discern their false teachings and perceive the difference between the truth and a lie.

We also need to be discerning Christians who have the unction and anointing of the Spirit of God on our life so that we can discern the truth (1Joh 2:20). We need to love the Word of God and to spend much time in it.

John, speaking of his day, tells us that even back then there were "many antichrists" (1Joh 2:18). And in chapter 2 verse 22, he tells us who these antichrists are.

Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

Note 5:41pm : I will try to finish this article up Saturday morning.

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

1Jn 4:20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

1Jn 5:10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

Free from Sin Positionally or Experimentally

Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness... But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. — Rom 6:18, 22

In chapter six of Romans, Paul deals with the sin question and makes two statements about Christians being made free from sin: “then made free from sin” (Rom 6:18) and “being made free from sin” (Rom 6:22). In both cases the Greek verb $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\rho\sigma\alpha\iota$ (eleuther $\acute{\alpha}$ thentes) that is translated “then make free” and “being made free” is in the Aorist tense. The simply explanation of the Aorist tense is that it is a past tense.

The Resurgence Greek Project shows the parsing of $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\rho\sigma\alpha\iota$ (eleuther $\acute{\alpha}$ thentes) in Rom 6:18 and $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\rho\sigma\alpha\iota$ (eleuther $\acute{\alpha}$ thentes) in Rom 6:22 in detail, and you can see that both Greek words are in the Aorist tense.

When you present these scriptures to those who maintain that sin in the life of a Christians is unavoidable, they will reply that we are only made free from sin positionally, but not experimentally. So in other words, they hold that God counts Christians positionally free from sin while they continue to sin intermittently.

This idea leads us to a question: What did Paul mean when he said that Christians were, past tense, free from sin? Is he here stating that the normal experience of the new birth is that we are given power over temptation so that we are free from sin experimentally, or is he meaning we are free from sin positionally?



The denial of the power of God and the possibility to be kept from sinning affects what the conscience will and will not allow. If a person’s personal level of ethics is lowered to the place where sin is allowed, this will affect the impulsive and retribution functions of the consciences.

Those that give into this unbiblical teaching and fall into the rut of sinning and repenting will sear they conscience (1Tim 4:2), and if not recovered from their error will completely defile their conscience (Tit 1:15) to the point where their sinning no longer bothers them.

Paul was no sinner (present tense) saved by grace. He reminded the Thessalonians that they were “witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe” (1The 2:20). He testified that the “law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom 8:2). It told the Corinthians that he had “in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God... By pureness” (2Cor 6:4, 6).

Paul also had the wonderful testimony was that he had “always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men” (Act 24:16), and that he had a “pure conscience” (2Tim 1:13).

It is not possible to have a “pure conscience” when you are sinning and repenting. To those that would dare to claim that we can keep a pure conscience if we repent of our sins right away, Paul tells us that we “**have always** a conscience void of offense” (Act 24:16).

Let us reject all pleas for sinning. Do not be fooled; the reason people plead for sin is because that is their experience, and they know nothing better. Sinning will sear your conscience, and if you persist in your sinning by refusing the power in the blood of Christ (1Cor 10:13), your conscience will become defiled and you will be given over to a “strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (2The 2:11, 12).

R.R. Byrum in his Christian Theology (p300-305) calls these three functions of the conscience discrimination, impulsive, and retribution.

Discrimination – this function of the conscience determines whether certain moral actions and reactions are right or wrong based on the person’s personal standard of ethics.

Impulsive – this function of the conscience feels a sense of duty to do what it has determined as right and to refrain from that which it has determined as wrong.

Retribution – this function of the conscience feels a sense of approval or remorse depending on whether the course judged by as right was followed or not.

It is very important that the conscience be educated by the Word of God so that a person’s personal standard of ethics matches what the Word of God teaches.

Most people today are taught that after conversion it is not possible to keep the Word of God. They are taught that we are sinners (present tense) saved by grace and that it is not possible to live a life of obedience, but that willful transgressions of the known law of God are part of the Christian life as long as we are in this sinful body.

This has a negative effect on a person’s personal standard of ethics where they are taught that the Word of God teaches we are all sinners and will continue to sin. Romans chapter 7 is taught as the normal Christian life, where Paul explained his conduct under the law of Moses before he was converted.

Sin-you-must teachers claim that this is the best we can do as Christians. They teach that the Christian is “carnal, sold under sin” (Rom 7:14), that “the evil which I would not, that I do” (Rom 7:19), that we are in “captivity to the law of sin” (Rom 7:23), and our testimony is that we are a “wretched man” (Rom 7:24).

They teach that Paul’s testimony as a Christian was that he was a “sinner, of whom I am chief” (1Tim 1:15). In their zeal to approve sin, they forget to look at the context and see that Paul was referring to before he was converted when he “was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious” (1Tim 1:13).

They even go as far as to claim that if a Christian is to testify that we “have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1Joh 1:8), while John clearly maintained that it was those that “saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (Joh 2:4). It is those who did not have fellowship with the Father and Son (1Joh 1:3) that John was describing as deceived if they said without Christ they “have no sin”.

In dealing with this question, I am using the standard Wesleyan definition of sin, which is “an actual, voluntary transgression of the law; of the revealed, written law of God” (John Wesley: The Great Privilege of Those That Are Born of God).

The Bible is also very clear that Christians can live below the standard of what God requires, and that there is a way back if they fail the grace of God (1Joh 2:1) and go back to the vomit and excrement of sin (2Pet 2:22).

While the Greek tense of the verbs in both these scriptures is past tense, we do not want to go just by Greek grammar.

In between these two declarations that at salvation we were made (Greek Aorist past tense) “free from sin” (verse 18 and 22), Paul brings out a very clear concept. When we were “servants of sin”, we were “free from righteousness” (Rom 6:20); and now that we are “servants of righteousness”, we are “free from sin” (Rom 6:18).

Jesus tells us that “whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin” (Joh 8:34), and Paul said “for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage” (2Pet 2:19).

If you commit sin, you are its servant and if you are overcome by sin, you are in bondage to sin. The concept that you can commit sin and not be a servant to it, or that you can be overcome by sin and not be in bondage to it, is a concept the New Testament flatly rejects.

When you commit sin and become its servant, you are in bondage to sin and hence Paul states you are free from righteousness. You do not have to practice sin to be in bondage and to be its servant; all you have to do is yield yourself to sin. Paul states clearly “that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness” (Rom 6:16).

The Christian is free from sin experimentally and holds to God who “is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1Cor 10:13).

Professing Christians plead that “free from sin” is positionally because they have not experienced “free from sin” experimentally. True Christians plead that “free from sin” is experimentally, as they have found God faithful to save and keep them from sinning.

Pelagianism

I have never been accused of holding the doctrine of Pelagianism, but here is what it is.

“Pelagianism is a theological theory named after Pelagius (ad. 354 - ad. 420/440). It is the belief that original sin did not taint human nature and that mortal will is still capable of choosing good or evil without Divine aid.

Thus, Adam’s sin was ‘to set a bad example’ for his progeny, but his actions did not have the other consequences imputed to Original Sin. Pelagianism views the role of Jesus as ‘setting a good example’ for the rest of humanity (thus counteracting Adam’s bad example).



In short, humanity has full control, and thus full responsibility, for its own salvation in addition to full responsibility for every sin (the latter insisted upon by both proponents and opponents of Pelagianism).

According to Pelagian doctrine, because humanity does not require God’s grace for salvation (beyond the creation of will), [1] Jesus’ execution is devoid of the redemptive quality ascribed to it by orthodox Christian theology.”

-wikipedia: Pelagianism

Semi-Pelagianism

I had some one tell me this week that they had heard I was teaching Sinless Perfectionism and Semi-Pelagianism. Most people do not know what either of these terms mean, other than it is not a good thing.

The glossary in Finney’s Systematic Theology defines Sinless Perfectionism as “SINLESS PERFECTION: [also called PERFECTIONISM] a theological view that holds that a believer can ‘arrive’ at a state in which (1.) his walk



Free from Sin Teaching.

The only holiness that I have is that which is imputed and imparted by Christ. I have none of my own.

As far as the young men from the Church of God Restoration (COGR): While I do not want to be seen standing up for the COGR group as I have serious disagreements with them in a number of areas, there clearly are some examples of godliness and holy living there. They just need to get free from the bigoted and sectarian spirit the group has imbibed.

As far as them saying they are trusting in their own sinless life to get to heaven, you will not catch me saying that. I do not know how you got that out of them. I cannot see them coming out and saying that, and I hope they do not believe that.

It may be possible to corner some of them who do not know how to articulate the teaching of holiness, and lead them down the garden path, adding up a number of things they said and pasting them together to get that. But I do not think you have had anyone tell you that point blank. “I am trusting in the merits of Christ and my sinlessness to get to heaven.”

Na, I do not believe it.

Pure Conscience Void of Offense

The conscience is a monitor. Its function is very important for us to understand.

It is the conscience that determines whether moral actions and reactions that we make, or are considering to make, are right or wrong, based on our personal standard of ethics.

From the basics of these decisions which the conscience makes, the conscience then provides us with a sense of duty to do that which is right and to refrain from doing that which it has determined as wrong. The conscience also provides us with a sense of approval or remorse, depending on whether the course judged as right was followed or not.



Q&A: Do Christians Lose Salvation When They Sin?

Questions: I have heard that you believe that when a Christian sins, they are now lost from God and need to be born again, again. Is this true?

Answer: Yes, I would hold when a Christian commits a willful sin then they are not longer saved.

The scriptures that I would use to support this would be, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (1Joh 3:15), "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1Joh 4:20), and "He that committeth sin is of the devil" (1Joh 3:8).

You can read my article on Sin is Not an Option for the Christian, Committing Sin Brings Spiritual Death, Biblical Definition of Sin, and Sinning and the Greek Present Tense. These will give you a better understanding of what I hold the New Testament teaches concerning what happens when a Christian sins.



Q&A: Are You Trusting in Your Own Holiness?

Question: As far as your doctrine of sinlessness, in my most honest of opinions, it is the silliest doctrine that anyone could hold. I have spoken with a number of young men from the Church of God Restoration that have clearly and plainly told me that they are trusting in the work of Jesus and their own sinless life to get them to heaven. Are you not trusting in your own holiness?



Answer: I am not sure what you mean by the doctrine of sinlessness. I would use the term "free from sin", but I reject (as do all holiness people) the term sinless perfection. This is a tag that those that disagree with the Wesleyan-Arminian view have put on the free from sin teaching. I suggest you read my article on the

in obedience and holiness is not dependent on the grace of God, and that (2.) he no longer has the ability to sin. Finney rejected this view entirely."

That definition is kind of unreal, but whatever. Of course I do not use the term Sinless Perfectionism as I prefer to use Scriptural terms. I do, however, teach the Free from sin teaching, and I think I am in good company on that one (Rom 6:18).

"Semi-Pelagianism is a Christian theological understanding about salvation; that is, how humanity and God are restored to a right relationship. The Semi-Pelagian teaching is derived from the earlier Pelagian teaching about salvation (see below), and teaches that it is necessary for humans to make the first step toward God and then God will complete salvation.

According to Semi-Pelagianism, man does not have such an unrestrained capacity, but man and God could cooperate to a certain degree in this salvation effort: man can (unaided by grace) make the first move toward God, and God then completes the salvation process. This teaching is distinct from the traditional patristic doctrine of synergeia, that the process of salvation is cooperation between God and man from start to finish."

-wikipedia: Semi-Pelagianism

I reject Semi-Pelagianism completely. I would not even accuse those that reject the Biblical doctrine of original sin as Semi-Pelagians, but I know some that would. I just find it so strange that someone would think I hold to Semi-Pelagianism.

So here is how I understand the Bible teaching concerning a person coming to God.

By God's unmerited favor (grace) toward mankind, He has promised to draw every person to Christ (Joh 1:9, Tit 2:11, 12). If God did not awaken us to our need of salvation and draw us to Christ, no-one would ever be saved.

The key scripture is "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day (Joh 6:44).

This may happen through your reading of the Bible, through listening to someone's testimony of how they found God, through attending a church meeting, through a dream, through God speaking directly to your heart, or through reading a track or booklet on how to find God.

As God draws you to Christ, by awakening your conscience, you will feel convicted of your sins and reprov'd for your sinning (Joh 8:9, 16:8). As you consider what your awakened conscience is telling you,

you will either defend your sins and make excuses for yourself, or you will agree with your conscience and accept the conviction and reproof.

When you agree with your conscience, the grace (unmerited favor) of God will begin to work a godly sorrow in your heart for the sinfulness of your life (2Cor 7:10). This godly sorrow will work a hatred in your heart for your sins and a desire to be free from them (Rom 7:15).

In this state of conviction and godly sorrow, you will find yourself unable to do the good that you would desire to do, and the evil that you do not want to do, you will find yourself committing (Rom 7:19). This conviction and godly sorrow is brought on by the grace of God and will lead you to a crisis decision where you will either reject God and his dealings, or you will repent (Luk 13:3) and be converted.

Now, so much for me holding to Semi-Pelagianism.

Free from Sin Teaching

Being then made **free from sin**, ye became the servants of righteousness... But now being made **free from sin**, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. — Rom 6:18, 22

1) A person that desires to become a child of God must bring forth fruits to God that are consistent, worthy, keeping with, and befitting repentance (Mat 3:8). Fruits befitting repentance have no merit in becoming a child of God, but are scriptural requirements.

2) A person must have godly sorrow (2Cor 7:10) for their sins and repent of their sins (Luk 13:3) to become a child of God. Sorrow and repentance have no merit in becoming a child of God but are scriptural requirements.



Q&A: How 'Sin among Brethren', When 'Free from Sin'?

Question: The following scripture seems to indicate that love among the brethren covers sin. What sin would that be if it seems to be among the brethren? "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins" (1Pet 4:8).

Answer: Christian love or charity (1Cor 13) will cover a multitude of not only faults, but also a multitude of sins wherever they are found.



I do not think this scripture indicates that the sins here referred to are among the brethren, but that is not to say they cannot be. While God's standard is "go and sin no more", not all people are diligent (2Pet 1:5) to add to their faith the fruits of the spirit. Hence their lack of diligence does not provide them with the promise that Peter by the Spirit gives in verse 10: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: (2Pet 1:10)"

We do have a scripture where Peter came to Christ wanting to know how many times we should forgive our brother's sin. The Lord told him "until seventy times seven" (Mat 18:21) and in another place "seven times in a day" (Luk 17:4).

Now I would hold that the Bible teaches if a person sins seven times in a day against another person then they clearly are no longer saved; but we should still forgive them.

"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1Jn 2:4) and "He that committeth sin is of the devil;" (1Joh 3:8).

Also, the use of the word 'brother' here may mean your natural brother.

I would rather die than disobey my Jesus. He has done so much for me, and it is my desire to be faithful to him and point others to him that they may become more like Him.

I am human, I have faults, I am learning, I do not get everything done right the first time; but it is truly my desire to glorify Jesus and point people to Christ.

Q&A: Are Children Sinners?

Question: In the case of a child then, you would believe that even though they may do many things that seem to be sinful, they are not considered a sinner until they knowingly are going against God himself. Right?



Answer: With a child I hold that the Scriptures teach that from birth they are imputed righteous by God, but are not converted. Also, that a time will come in their life where they will knowingly transgress the law of God and will experience guilt and condemnation that will not be relieved by having that act revealed and receiving correction by their parents.

At this point, they are separated from God, or are spiritually dead or what the Bible calls “dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph 2:1). It is common for children to feel guilt for wrong actions, but this will pass when their acts have been revealed and they have received correction for the offense.

One of the signs that a child has passed from innocence into the age of accountability is when wrong actions have been revealed and received correction for, but the guilt the Child experiences does not leave. At this point, they need more than forgiveness and correction from their parents: they need forgiveness and conversion.

Paul brings this out in Romans 7 when he discusses when this happened to him. “For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died” (Rom 7:9).

This is referred to many as “the age of accountability”. Typically it will be from the age of 8 to 12, but can be as early as 5 or 6, and if the person is mentally-challenged they many never come to the age of accountability.

I suggest you read the article on Leading Your Children to Christ.

3) Repentance is a complete change in attitude toward your past sinful life and a commitment to completely change and reform your life by the power of God.

4) Becoming a child of God is by grace through faith and is not based on the merit of any works, but is the gift of God (Eph 2:8).

5) When by grace with godly sorrow and repentance through faith you believe in your heart (Rom 10:9) on the merits of the death and resurrection of Jesus, and ask God for forgiveness of sins, and believe by faith God has forgiven you (1Joh 1:9; Act 4:12 1Pet 1:9), you are converted and have become a child of God.

6) Freedom from sin (Rom 6:18) is obtained at the moment a person becomes a child of God (1Joh 1:8).

7) The sin that a person is freed from is willful acts of sins of commission and omission (Jam 4:17).

8) In order for a child of God to maintain victory over sin, the flesh, and the world (1Joh 2:15, 16), they must abide in Christ (Joh 15:4-6), in prayer obtain grace to help in time of need (Heb 4:16), be diligent to add the fruits of the Spirit to their life (2Pet 1:4-10), humble themselves before God (1Pet 5:5), built up their faith through reading the Word of God (Rom 10:17), hunger and thirst after righteousness (Mat 5:6), work out their salvation with fear and trembling (Phi 2:12), and be led by the Spirit of God (Rom 8:14).

9) If at any point a Christian commits a willful sin, they no longer have eternal life abiding in them (1Joh 3:15) and have become a child of the devil (1Joh 3:10).

How to Quit Smoking

Well, I do not have a 5 or 10-step program for this one, but I have a personal testimony of divine deliverance. For me, this was the hardest thing I ever did.

As a professing Christian, I struggled with smoking cigarettes for about 5 years before I



finally found deliverance from God. I knew smoking cigarettes was wrong, I knew it was sinful, but I was completely powerless. I hid my habit and did not smoke around other Christians.

As a professing Christian, I was very ashamed of my smoking habit, even though I had the Sunday superintendent from the congregation I attended tell me once, when he caught me buying a package of cigarettes, that I had my sin and he had his sin, and God understood.

I always hated the sin of smoking and always wanted to be free. I had prayed so many prayers, repented so many times, and wept so many tears, it wasn't funny.

So here is how it happened. I went to a holiness camp meeting sponsored by the "Faith and Victory" group, where I had a good talk with a minister by the name of Merrel Smith. This was the first time I ever heard that there were Christians who taught you had to forsake all sin and live a holy life by the grace of God to get to heaven.

So I confronted him by telling him I smoked, and that I was very sure I was saved. God had delivered me from a rough street life of immorality and drugs, and without a doubt I had made some major changes in my life. He asked me if I knew smoking was sin, and I told him, of course it was sin. He then told me that if I left this place and went and smoked again, that I would not be saved.

Wow! Now that was judgment: I was floored. I asked him to step outside the dining room where we were all talking, and as soon as we stepped out where we were by ourselves, I start to tell him, with weeping, how I wanted to free. We walked down to the chapel on Charis Campground and knelt at the prayer bench and I prayed.

I do not remember what I said, but I sure do remember what God did for me there. God met me and delivered me. I have never smoked another cigarette, nor have I had the desire to; and that was over 25 years ago. God completely took the addiction away, and there was no struggle at all.

I do not understand why some people do not find complete deliverance like I did, but I do know what God has for each person. My heart goes out to all who struggle with this terrible habit; it truly is bondage.

There were a number of things that helped me. First, I felt that if I smoked again, I would be cut off from God. I think this was a wonderful and helpful truth for me. Second, I really really wanted to be free. I was sick of smoking and the guilt that came with. And third is God's mercy. God just had mercy on poor, weak, sin-laden, sin-sick, Bob Mutch.

So, my dear friend, if you are smoking, the first step is to realize that it is sin. I have only met one professing Christian in the last 5 years

"In Love With Jesus — Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, they are always talking about Jesus. They seem to have a one-track mind. Jesus helps with the simplest tasks from finding their keys to their deep spiritual needs. When something good happens, they seem to automatically blurt out "Thank you, Jesus!" Their whole aim in life is to love Jesus with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mar 12:30), and loving their neighbor as themselves - for as they do unto others, they have done unto Jesus (Mat 25:40). They do not have time for forwarding non-practical teachings, and their main theme is to become more like Christ. They do not make pet doctrines a test of fellowship, but only want to know that you love and obey Jesus."

This is taken from my article on Marks of a Victorious Christian.

I have quoted from a number of articles on my site to show that indeed I hold and teach a Christ-centered life.

Even though the name of my site is More Christ Like, and in many posts on my site I clearly point people to Jesus and clearly note the only way to live a victorious life is to abide in Jesus the vine; for some reason, and I am not sure why, some have tried to say that I have little to say about Jesus and too much to say about forsaking sin.

We are in the midst of a great apostasy where on every hand we have people professing to have the life of Christ in their soul, but they are living a low, shabby, sinful, and carnal life.

Jesus himself told us that the greatest commandment is that we love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. Further, Jesus told us that "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me" (Joh 14:21) and "He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings" (Joh 14:24).

We love God to the degree that we hate sin. The Lord reproveth those who had his name on the lips but their heart was far from him.

Part of the work that God has given us to do as saints is to call those to repentance that have been lulled to sleep by the unbiblical teaching that we will and must sin.

Many that have sin in their lives and have not been able to break the sinning and repenting cycle do not like the "free from sin" (Rom 6:18) teaching. I fully understand this, and they have my prayers. When it was first presented to me, I thought it was foolishness. At the time, I had a high profession, but smoked and did other sins regularly.

By God's grace I am living a Christ-centered life. My main emphasis is to bring glory to Jesus by living a life of obedience to him. I walk around throughout my day talking to Jesus. Jesus is my lover, my best friend, and the One I turn to who always understands me when others do not.

to do is believe), I do not think it would be uncommon even for those who are saved to wonder and be confused.

The question is why. Is it the devil accusing? Is it they have been under a wishy-washy, "only believe" teaching, and when they hear the true Gospel they are a little shocked? Or do you think there is something wrong with telling people that they must bring forth fruits meet for repentance (godly sorrow)?

Q&A: Where Does Jesus Come Into Your Doctrine?

Question: Bob, I see all your writings on living a sin-free life. I am all for that, but where does Jesus come into your doctrine?



Answer: "When by grace with godly sorrow and repentance through faith a person believes in their heart (Rom 10:9) on the merits of the death and resurrection of Jesus, and asks God for forgiveness of sins, and believes by faith that God has forgiven them (1Joh 1:9; Act 4:12 1Pet 1:9), they are converted and have become a child of God."

This is taken from my article on True Conversion.

Note that with salvation, one must believe in their heart on the merits of the death and resurrection of Jesus. So the starting point is believing on the merits of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

After we are saved, we are to abide in Christ the vine and receive the empowering sap of the Holy Spirit through Him that we may bring forth much fruit.

Joh 15:2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

"We increase in the fruit of the Spirit as we abide in Jesus the vine and He abides in us. Without the Lord Jesus we "can do nothing" (Joh 15:4). Christ must be the central theme of our life, and we must look to Him who is "the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb 12:2)." This is taken from my article on How to Increase in the Fruit of the Spirit.

One of the marks of a victorious Christian is they are in love with Jesus.

who has told me they do not think smoking is sin. Most people know that already. The second step is to realize that any willful sin in your life cuts you off from God. What I mean, is you cannot be saved and live in willful sin.

I do not mean to say you were never saved, but I am saying you cannot have willful sin in your life and be a Christian. You need to get it clear that salvation delivers you completely from sinning, and there is no room whatsoever for sinning. I would suggest you read my article on True Conversion.

After you get clear that real Bible salvation delivers and keeps from sin, you need to find someone who will pray with you and keep you accountable. Find someone who has been delivered from smoking and teaches the free-from-sin experience and has faith that God can and will deliver you.

I am going to meditate on this article a bit more, and perhaps I will add more later.

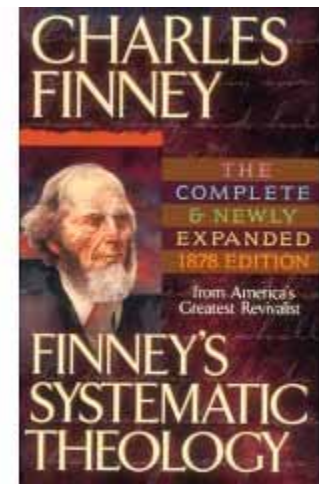
Sinless Perfection

In the back of Finney's Systematic Theology 1878 edition that is published by Bethany House Publishers, there is a glossary of terms. From what I can tell, the glossary of terms were not written by Finney but inserted by one of the publishers, as it is not in the online 1878 edition of Finney's Systematic Theology.

This definition will give you a feel for the kind of disinformation people involve themselves in when they are trying to invalidate a doctrinal position they disagree with.

This definition is found on page 589.

"SINLESS PERFECTION: [also called PERFECTIONISM] a theological view that holds that a believer can 'arrive' at a state in which (1.) his walk in obedience and holiness is not dependant on the Grace of God, and



that (2.) he no longer has the ability to sin. Finney rejected this view entirely.”

Sinless perfection is not a term I have ever used to explain the “free from sin” teaching that I hold. While I do not think anyone believes the above definition of sinless perfection, I put it there to make a point.

Carnal people have always been willing to build straw men and rejoice as they tear them down. In doing so, the only ones they are tearing down is themselves and the simple people who do not have enough prudence to find out what a person teaches for themselves. “The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going” (Pro 14:15).

So perhaps I should lay out what I consider the Bible teaches concerning the doctrine of “free from sin”. The following lays out clearly how I would hold the Bible teaches, when it comes to being free from sin.

Free from Sin Teaching

- 1) A person who desires to become a child of God must bring forth fruits to God that are consistent, worthy, keeping with, and befitting repentance (Mat 3:8). Fruits befitting repentance have no merit in becoming a child of God, but are scriptural requirements.
- 2) A person must have godly sorrow (2Cor 7:10) for their sins and repent of their sins (Luk 13:3) to become a child of God. Sorrow and repentance have no merit in becoming a child of God, but are scriptural requirements.
- 3) Repentance is a complete change in attitude toward your past sinful life and a commitment to completely change and reform your life by the power of God.
- 4) Becoming a child of God is by grace through faith and is not based on the merit of any works, but is the gift of God (Eph 2:8).
- 5) When by grace with godly sorrow and repentance through faith you believe in your heart (Rom 10:9) on the merits of the death and resurrection of Jesus, and ask God for forgiveness of sins, and believe by faith God has forgiven you (1Joh 1:9; Act 4:12 1Pet 1:9), you are converted and have become a child of God.
- 6) Freedom from sin (Rom 6:18) is obtained at the moment a person becomes a child of God (1Joh 1:8).
- 7) The sin that a person is freed from is willful acts of sins of commission and omission (Jam 4:17).
- 8) In order for a child of God to maintain victory over sin, the flesh, and the world (1Joh 2:15, 16), they must abide in Christ (Joh 15:4-6), in prayer obtain grace to help in time of need (Heb 4:16), be diligence to add the fruits of the Spirit to their life (2Pet 1:4-10), humble themselves before God (1Pet 5:5), build up their faith through reading

1Pe 3:21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

2Pe 1:9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

1Jn 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Rev 5:9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Q&A: Dangerous for Sinners to Seek Godly Sorrow?

Question: I believe your teaching will cause a sinner to seek out a godly sorrow or wonder if they had enough godly sorrow to work repentance in them. I have seen people respond that way to what you are teaching. Don't you believe that this is dangerous?



Answer: I think a person should seek the Lord to give them sorrow for their sins if they do not have any. After we are saved though, and we are by God's grace living a holy life through the power of the God through faith, we should not be looking back with confusion and wondering if we had enough godly sorrow or repentance.

If we are saved, we are saved and do not need to be concerned with how we got there. Now if we are falling in and out of sin, that is another subject.

I expect for those who have not had true godly sorrow for their sins and have not truly repented and are falling in and out of sin, to respond negatively to the gospel that demands fruits meet for repentance (Mat 3:8).

Mat 3:8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

On the other side it is not uncommon for the devil to try to confuse the saved when they hear something stronger than they are used to hearing. After having heard easy-believism for years (all that you need

1Co 7:23 Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.

2Co 5:14, 15 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Php 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Col 1:13, 14 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

Col 2:14, 15 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

1Th 1:10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

1Th 5:10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

1Ti 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

2Ti 2:11 It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:

Tit 2:14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Heb 9:22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

Heb 9:26-28 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

1Pe 1:18, 19 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

the Word of God (Rom 10:17), hunger and thirst after righteousness (Mat 5:6), work out their salvation with fear and trembling (Phi 2:12), and be led by the Spirit of God (Rom 8:14).

9) If at any point a Christian commits a willful sin, they no longer have eternal life abiding in them (1Joh 3:15) and have become a child of the devil (1Joh 3:10).

Really, there is no difference between becoming free from sin and becoming a child of God.

How to Promote a Revival

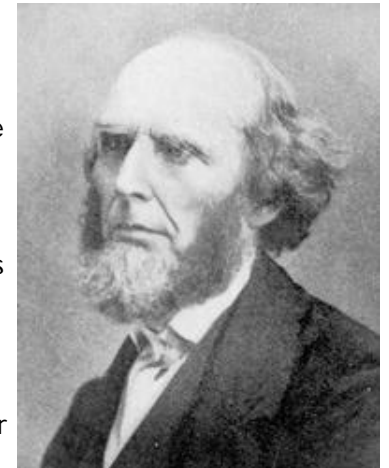
Note of Introduction by Bob Mutch:

I think there are many good things in Finney's writings, which I myself have benefited from. However, sometimes he can be difficult to understand. I have had a number of people misunderstand this article, so I feel the need to offer some guidance in the use of it.

In the fourth paragraph, Finney suggests to take up your "individual sins one by one, and look at them." I would apply this, whether he means it that way or not, to the willful sins you have committed since you have been saved or the last time you rededicated your life to Christ. If there has been pattern of on-going willful sin in your life, you need to have godly sorrow which will work "repentance unto salvation" (2Cor 7:10).

In the breaking up of your fallow ground, what you want to do is to put sin away once and for all and put an end to all backsliding and lukewarm living. Jesus will empower you to live a holy life, free from willful sinning (1Cor 10:13, 2The 3:3, 2Pet 1:10, Jud 1:24).

The reason you need to look at your life and note these past sins is so you will not make these failures again. Writing them down and repenting of them is only a start. You need to make sure you do not fall back in to them, and this will mean taking action to make sure you do not. You need to find a zealous sin-free, same-gender Christian to keep you accountable and to counsel and support you in your battle against sin.



While I cannot provide a guide to getting victory over every besetting sin in this short introduction, I want to make clear that victory over sin comes with salvation, and it is by faith alone, not of works. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1Joh 5:4) and we "are kept by the power of God through faith" (1Pet 1:5).

In Finney's list of sins of omission, I would hold that these should be dealt with secondary. I would only consider willful omissions to be sin. However, we do need to deal with the items he presents in his list, but only after we have dealt with any present or past willful sins that have been in our experience.

The position that all unwillful omissions of the New Testament commandments are sins would imply that we are all sinners. This leads to the "woe is me" Puritan position, where we would be finding numerous sins in our life each day. This definition of sin just does not fit with the New Testament teachings of having been made "free from sin" (Rom 6:18, 22).

Sins of commission and sins of omission are willful acts of transgression or willful acts of omission against a known law of God. Salvation saves us from sin, and sin is not to be part of a Christians life.

How to Promote a Revival-by Charles Finney:

The Jews were a nation of farmers, and it is therefore a common thing for God to refer, in the Scriptures, to scenes from their daily lives as illustrations. Hosea addresses them as a nation of backsliders, but uses words that farmers and shepherds are familiar with. He rebukes them for their idolatry and sharply warns them of the impending judgments of God.

A revival consists of two parts: its effect on the Church, and its effect on the ungodly. I will speak at this time of a revival in the Church. Fallow ground is ground which has once been tilled, but now it lies waste and has gotten hard. It needs to be broken up and made soft again, before it is ready to receive seed.

If you mean to break up the fallow ground of your heart, you must begin by looking at your heart: examine carefully the state of your mind and see where you are. Many people never even seem to think about doing this! They pay no attention to their own hearts, and never know whether they are doing well in their walk with the Lord or not; whether they are gaining ground or going backwards; whether they are bearing fruit or are totally barren. Now you must draw off your attention from all other things and look into this right now! Make a business of it, do not be in a hurry. Examine the state of your heart thoroughly, and see where you are: are you walking with God everyday, or with the Devil?

Dan 9:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

Hos 13:14 I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.

Jon 1:17 Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Zec 13:7 Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

Mat 26:28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Mar 10:45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Luk 24:46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

Joh 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Joh 12:32, 33 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.

Act 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Rom 3:24-26 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Rom 7:4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

1Co 2:2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

1Co 6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

Lev 17:11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

Num 21:9 And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

Deu 21:22, 23 And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

2Sa 24:25 And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.

1Ki 18:38 Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

2Ki 5:13 And his servants came near, and spoke unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?

2Ch 4:1 Moreover he made an altar of brass, twenty cubits the length thereof, and twenty cubits the breadth thereof, and ten cubits the height thereof.

Ezr 6:20 For the priests and the Levites were purified together, all of them were pure, and killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves.

Job 42:8 Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.

Psa 22:1 To the chief Musician upon Ajeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?

Isa 53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Self-examination consists of looking at your life, considering your motives and actions...calling up your past and seeing its true character. Look back over your past history. Take up your individual sins one by one, and look at them. This doesn't mean that you should just take a casual glance at your past life, and see that it has been full of sins and then go to God and make a sort of general confession, asking forgiveness. This is not the way. You must take them up one by one. It's a good idea to take a pen and some paper as you go over them, and write them down as they come to mind.

Go over them as carefully as a businessman goes over his books; and as often as a sin comes to your memory, write it down! General confessions of sin are not good enough. Your sins were committed one by one; and as much as you are able, they ought to be reviewed and repented of one by one. Now begin, and start with what are usually, but improperly called 'sins of omission' (i.e. things you didn't do that you should have).

Sins of Omission

INGRATITUDE (unthankfulness). Take this sin, for example, and write down under this heading all the times you can remember where you have received great blessings and favors from God for which you have never given thanks. How many cases can you remember? Some remarkable protection where your life was spared, some wonderful turn of events that saved you from ruin.

Write down the instances of God's goodness to you when you were living in sin, before your conversion, for which you have never been half-thankful enough; and the uncountable mercies you have received since. How long the list of times where your ingratitude has been so black that you are forced to hide your face in shame! Get on your knees and confess them one by one to God, and ask Him to forgive you.

As you're confessing these, they will immediately remind you of others...write these down too! Go over them three or four times in this way, and see what an incredible number of times God has given you mercy for which you have never thanked Him!

LACK OF LOVE FOR GOD. Think how grieved and alarmed you'd be, if you suddenly realized a great lack of affection for you in your wife, husband, or children; if you saw that someone else had captured their hearts, thoughts and time. Perhaps in such a case you would almost die with a just and holy jealousy. Now, God calls Himself a jealous God. Have you not given your heart to other loves and infinitely offended Him?

NEGLECT OF THE BIBLE. Put down the cases where for perhaps weeks, or longer, God's word was not a pleasure. Some people, indeed, read

over whole chapters in such a way, that afterwards they could not tell you what they had been reading. If that is so with you, no wonder your life has no direction, and your religion (relationship with God), is such a miserable failure.

UNBELIEF. Recall the instances in which you have virtually charged the God of truth with lying, by your unbelief of His express promises and declarations. If you have not believed or expected to receive the blessings which God has clearly promised, you have called Him a liar.

LACK OF PRAYER. Think of all the times you have neglected private- prayer, family-prayer and group-prayer meetings; or prayed in such a way as to grieve and offend God more, than if you hadn't prayed at all.

NEGLECT OF FELLOWSHIP. When you have allowed yourself to make small, and foolish excuses that have prevented you from attending meetings. When you have neglected and poured contempt upon the gathering of the saints merely because you "didn't like church!"

THE MANNER IN WHICH YOU HAVE PERFORMED SPIRITUAL DUTIES. Think of all the times when you have spoken about God with such lack of feeling and faith, in such a worldly frame of mind, that your words were nothing more than the mere chattering of a wretch who didn't deserve that God should listen to him at all. When you have fallen down upon your knees and "said your prayers" in such an unfeeling and careless way, that if you had been put under oath five minutes later, you could not say what you had been praying for.

LACK OF LOVE FOR SOULS. Look around at all your friends and relatives, and think of how little compassion you have felt for them. You have stood by and seen them going straight to hell, and it seems as though you didn't even care. How many days have there been, when you have failed to make their wretched condition the subject of even one single fervent prayer, or to prove any real desire for their salvation?

LACK OF CARE FOR THE POOR AND LOST IN FOREIGN LANDS. Perhaps you have not cared enough about them to even attempt to learn of their condition. Do you avoid missions-magazines? How much do you really know or care about the unconverted masses of the world? Measure your desire for their salvation by the self-denial you practice, in giving from your substance to send them the gospel.

It will do no good to preach to you while your hearts are in this hardened, waste, and fallow state. The farmer might just as well sow his grain upon concrete; it will bring forth no fruit. This is why there are so many fruitless professing Christians in the Church, and why there is so much technique and tradition, and so little sincere feeling. Look at the Sunday-school for instance and see how many programs and trappings there are, and how little of the power of Godliness. If you go on like this, the work of God will continue to harden you, and you will grow worse and worse, just as the rain and snow on an old fallow field make the turf thicker and the clods stronger.

Professing Christians should never satisfy themselves or expect a revival just by getting all excited, blustering about, and talking to sinners. They must get their fallow ground broken up. You may get into an excitement without this breaking up; you may show a kind of zeal, but it will not last long. It will not take hold of sinners, unless your hearts are broken up. The reason is, that you go about mechanically, without the Spirit, having not broken up your fallow ground.

And now, finally, will you break up your fallow ground? Will you enter upon the course now pointed out and persevere until you are thoroughly awake? If you fail here, if you do not do this, and get prepared, you can go no farther with me. I have gone with you as far as I can, until your fallow ground is broken up. Now, you must make thorough work upon this point or all I have further to say will do you little good. No, rather it will only harden, and make you worse. If you do not set about this work immediately, I shall take it for granted that you do not want to be revived. If you do not do this, I charge you with having forsaken Christ, with refusing to repent and do your first works (Revelation 2:5)!

Atonement Scriptures

For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. — 1Cor 2:2

Gen 22:8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

Exo 12:13 And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses



you have committed against them. If you have defrauded anybody, send the money, the full amount and the interest.

Go thoroughly to work in all this! Go now! Do not put it off; that will only make matters worse. Confess to God those sins that have been committed against God, and to man, those sins that have been committed against man. Do not think about getting off easy by going around the stumbling-blocks. Take them up out of the way. In breaking up your fallow ground, you must remove every obstacle. Things may be left that you may think are little things, and you may wonder why you don't have your peace with God, when the reason is your proud and carnal mind has covered up something which God has required you to confess and remove. Break up all the ground and turn it over. Do not turn aside for little difficulties; drive the plow right through them, beam deep, and turn the ground up so that it all may be mellow and soft, and fit to receive the grain and bear fruit, "a hundredfold".

When you have gone thoroughly over your whole history in this way, if you will then go over the ground a second time, you will find that the things you have put down will suggest other things of which you have been guilty, connected with them, or near them. Then go over it a third time, and you will recollect other things connected with these. And you will find when you are finished that you can remember an amount of history in specific detail, that you did not think that you could remember even if you had all eternity.

Unless you take up your sins in this way, and consider them in detail, one by one, you can form no idea of the amount or weight of them. You should go over the list as thoroughly, and as carefully, and as solemnly, as if you were preparing yourself for the judgment (1Corinthians 11:31).

As you go over the catalogue of your sins, be sure to resolve upon immediate and entire reformation. Wherever you find anything wrong, resolve at once in the strength of God to sin no more in that way. It will be of no benefit to examine yourself, unless you determine to change, in every aspect, that which you find wrong in heart, temper, or conduct.

Set yourself to the work now; resolve that you will never stop until you find you can pray. Let there be this deep work of repentance and full confession, this breaking down before God, and you will have as much of the spirit of prayer as your body can bear. The reason why so few Christians know anything about the spirit of prayer is because they never would take the pains to examine themselves properly, and so they've never known what it is to have their hearts all broken up in this way.

Do you deny yourself even the hurtful expenses of life, such as tobacco, alcohol, expensive food, clothes, and entertainment? Do you defend your standard of living? Will you not suffer yourself ANY inconvenience to save them? Do you daily pray for them in private? Are you setting aside funds to put into the treasury of the Lord when you go up to pray?

If you are not doing these things, and if your soul is not agonized for the poor and lost of this world, then why are you such a hypocrite as to pretend to be a Christian? Why, your profession of faith is an insult to Jesus Christ!

NEGLECT OF FAMILY DUTIES. Think of how you have lived before your family, how you have prayed, what an example you have set before them. What direct efforts do you habitually make for their spiritual welfare?

LACK OF WATCHFULNESS OVER YOUR WITNESS. How many times have you failed to take your words and actions seriously? How often have you entirely neglected to watch your conduct and speech, and having been off your guard, have sinned before the world, the church, and before God!

NEGLECT TO WATCH OVER YOUR BRETHREN. How often have you broken your covenant, that you would watch over them in the Lord? How little do you know or care about the state of their souls? And yet you are under a solemn duty to watch over them. What have you done to get to know them better? How many times have you seen your brothers or sisters growing cold in faith and have not spoken to them about it...neglecting one spiritual duty after another, and you did not reprove them in love? You have seen them falling into sin, and you let them go on. And you pretend to love them? What a hypocrite! Would you watch your wife or child going into disgrace, or falling into a fire, and hold your peace?

NEGLECT OF SELF-DENIAL. There are many professing Christians who are willing to do almost anything in religion that does not require self-denial. They think they are doing a great deal for God, and doing about as much as He ought to reasonably ask, but they are not willing to deny themselves any comfort or convenience whatever for the sake of serving the Lord. They will not willingly suffer reproach for the name of Christ. Nor will they deny themselves the luxuries of life to save a world from hell. So far are they from realizing that self-denial is a condition of discipleship, that they do not even know what it is. They never have really denied themselves a ribbon or a pin for Christ and the gospel. Oh, how soon ones such as these will be in hell! Some are giving from their abundance, and giving a lot, and will even complain that others do not give more; when, in truth, they are not giving

anything that they need, or anything that they would enjoy if they kept it. They only give of their surplus wealth!

Sins of commission

LOVE OF THINGS AND POSSESSIONS. What has been the state of your heart concerning your worldly possessions? Have you looked at them as really yours - as if you had a right to use, or dispose of them as your own? If you have, write it down! If you have loved property, and sought after it for its own sake, or to gratify ambition or to lay it up for your family, you have sinned and must repent.

VANITY. How many times have you spent more time decorating your body to go to church than you have in preparing your heart and mind for the worship of God? You have cared more about how you appeared outwardly to men than how your soul appeared in the sight of God. You sought to divide the worship of God's house, to draw off the attention of God's people, to look at your pretty appearance. And you pretend that you do not care anything about having people look at you. Be honest about it! Would you take all this pain about your looks if every person were blind?

ENVY. Look at the cases in which you were jealous of those who were in a higher position than you. Or perhaps you have envied those who have been more talented, or more useful than yourself. Have you not so envied some, that it has caused you pain to hear them praised? It has pleased you more to dwell upon their faults than upon their virtues...upon their failures rather than their successes. Be honest with yourself, and if you have harbored this spirit of hell, repent deeply before God.

BITTERNESS. Recall all the instances in which you have harbored a grudge, or a bitter spirit toward someone, or have spoken of Christians in a manner completely devoid of charity and love. Love "hopes all things", but you have given no benefit of doubt, and have suspected the worst!

SLANDER (gossip). Think of all the times you have spoken behind people's backs of their faults, real or supposed, unnecessarily and without cause. This is slander. You need not lie to be guilty of slander; to tell the truth with the intent to injure is slander.

LEVITY (a spirit of excessive humor). How often have you joked before God, as you would not have dared in the presence of an earthly dignitary or important official. You have either been an atheist and forgotten that God existed, or have had less respect for Him and His presence, than you would have had for a mere judge on earth.

LYING. Now understand what lying is. Any form of designed deception is lying. If you purpose to make an impression other than the naked

truth, you lie. Put down all those cases you can recollect. Do not call them by any soft names. God calls them lies and charges you with lying, so you'd better charge yourself correctly! Think of all your words, looks, and actions designed to make an impression on others contrary to the truth, for selfish reasons.

CHEATING. Set down all the cases where you have dealt with anyone in a way you, yourself would not like at all. That is cheating. God has said that we should treat all men in the same manner we would like to be treated. That is the rule. And if you have not done so you are a cheat! God did not say that you should do what you would expect them to do, for if that were the rule it would allow for all kinds of wickedness in our actions. But it says, "Do what you would want them to do to you! (Have you cheated the government? i.e., unemployment insurance, welfare, food stamps, social security, student loans, etc...gained by fraud?)

HYPOCRISY. For instance, in your prayers and confessions to God, set down all the times in which you have prayed for things you didn't really want. How many times have you confessed sins that you never intended to stop doing? Yes, you have confessed sins when you knew in your heart you as much expected to go and repeat them, as you expected to live!

ROBBING GOD. Think of all the instances in which you have totally misspent your time, squandering the hours which God gave you to serve Him, and save souls. Precious time wasted in vain amusement or worthless conversation, in reading worldly novels, or even doing nothing; cases where you have misused your talents and ability to think. Think of how you have squandered God's money on your lusts, or spent it for things which you really didn't need, which did not contribute to your health, comfort, or usefulness.

BAD TEMPER. Perhaps you have abused your wife, or your children, or your family, or employees, or neighbors. Write it all down!

HINDERING OTHERS FROM BEING USEFUL. You have not only robbed God of your own talents, but tied the hands of somebody else. What a wicked servant is he who not only is useless himself, but hinders the rest! This is done sometimes by taking their time needlessly. Thus you have played into the hands of Satan, and not only proved yourself to be an idle vagabond, but prevented others from working also.

SOME IMPORTANT GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW

If you find you have committed a fault against anyone, and that person is within your reach, go and confess it immediately, and get that out of the way. If they are too far away for you to go and see them, sit down and write them a letter (or better yet call them) confessing the injury