

Are we consistently harboring a recurring sin in our life?

Have we become complacent in our faith and convinced ourselves that God will forgive us anyway?

Have we refused to surrender areas of our life that offends God, in actions or even thoughts?

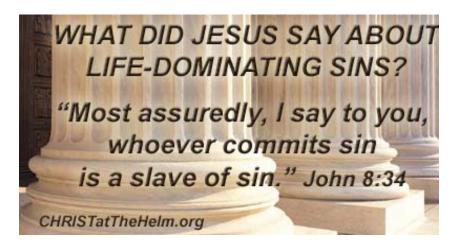
Jesus in Mark 7:20-23 said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles them. For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and defile a person."

The reason James 1:14-15 says, "Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."

Rom. 8:6-7 clearly states, "So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will."

Obviously, recurring sins a believer harbors, knowing it is wrong by God, is the result of a life-dominating problem that hasn't been dealt with.

Do we understand our responsibility to totally surrender our hearts to Christ?



Interestingly, Jesus clearly declared that we must focus our hearts to follow Him and reject sin. Here's what He said:

Luke 9:23-24: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it."

John 15:1-2: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit."

John 14:15: "If you love Me, keep My commandments."

Luke 9:62: "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

Mat 26:41: "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak."

He then warned us in Mat 7:21-23, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!"

Will we deny ourselves to follow Christ?



Do we ever stop and examine ourselves, especially if we harbor sin in our lives?

2Cor 13:5 tells us, "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you, unless, of course, you fail the test?" Why?

1Cor 6:19-20: "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies."

Rom 14:7-8: "For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's."

Gal 5:24: "Those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."

Rom 8:10: "If Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness."

Therefore, as Eph 4:30 warn us: "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

Will we crucify our passions, honor God with our body, and sincerely ask God, as Ps 51:10 states, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me?"



Let's consider, from scripture, what true commitment to follow Christ involves:

Gal 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Rom 8:1-2: "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death."

Why then should we focus our hearts and minds into living according to God's Word and be steadfast in our faith?

Heb. 3:14: "For we have become partakers of Christ if we keep the beginning of our commitment firm until the end."

Gal 4:6-7: "And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

Rom 8:18: "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Do we understand that salvation incorporates the commitment to surrender our hearts to Christ and focus on living in accordance with God's Word?



How do we reject life-dominating sins in our life, and resolve to totally surrender to Christ?

Rom 6:12-13: "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."

Heb 12:1: "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us."

Rom 12:2: "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Col 3:5-6: "Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience."

Do we realize that harboring life-dominating sins to God is idolatry? Therefore, all bridges leading to such sins must be burned in our life, to make the repetition of the sin difficult, through whatever means we must take to achieve complete rejection and full surrender to Christ. Will we renounce and reject any and all sins that dominate our life?



What could we define what bad company is as referred to in 1Cor 15:33?

What is it that drives our hearts away from the Lord?

Is it the people we keep company with, the places we visit for entertainment, the events we attend, or even our TV's, phones and computers?

What also can we expect if we continue in sin?

Heb 10:26: "For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins."

1Cor 6:9-10: "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God."

Ecc 12:13-14: "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil."

The very reason Col. 3:5-6 warns us, "Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming."

Will we reject sin and follow Christ, or be deceived and live as a slave to evil?