

IF I SIN, WHAT THEN?

When a person accepts Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, their life style is usually turned around and wonderful changes occur. For some individuals the changes are immediate. Old sinful habits are quickly broken and replaced with positive attitudes, as we see drastic “night and day” changes. For others, it’s a slower process, as God lovingly walks us through wounded childhood memories. As we learn to trust Him, healing comes to comfort our hearts and to cleanse our souls. This process is often painful and the tendency to fall back into old sinful ways often plagues us.

For me, the process was slower and as I was working through some of the changes, painful childhood memories of abuse would come back to haunt me. I kept sliding back into old sinful habits. I felt I was losing ground rather than growing in my Christian walk. After awhile, I became discouraged; doubting if my walk could ever please the Lord. I even questioned if I was really saved. I felt like the worst hypocrite to ever walk upon planet earth.

I couldn’t accept that the Lord would be with me through these times as my strength and comfort, so I withdrew from His presence—running back into my old world that was familiar, yet I knew it was destructive. God still loved me, understood my failings, and called me his child; but those were not truths I could hold onto. Not understanding the *grace* of God, I was desperately trying to change my life through whatever means I could, and failing miserably. He was seeing the whole picture of course, while I was only seeing through tunnel vision, and *believe me*, the tunnel looked long, dark and scary.

Yes, God saw my shortcomings, but He also knew my heart. One day he sent a dear Christian lady into my life. She started mentoring me. I loved our time spent together. She ministered the Word in truth and power as she taught me about God’s grace, His mercy and the power of forgiveness. Her love for her Savior was real. She walked in God’s love and I wanted my life to reflect the same. One day I broke down and told her of my struggles and fears. She wiped away my tears, gave me a mother’s hug, and told me to read Romans 7:15-25 (NLT). I went straight home and I read it over and over.

In Romans 7:18-25, Paul stated it this way—*I know I am rotten through and through so far as my old sinful nature is concerned. No matter which way I turn, I can’t make myself do right. I want to, but I can’t. When I want to do good, I don’t. And when I try not to do wrong, I do it anyway. But if I am doing what I don’t want to do, I am not really the one doing it; the sin within me is doing it. It seems to be a fact of life that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God’s law with all my heart. But there is another law at work within me that is at war with my mind. This law wins the fight and makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: in my mind I really want to obey God’s law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin* (NLT).

Suddenly light swept away the darkness—hope rose up within me in comforting waves as God’s truth revealed the answer. I wasn’t alone! Others struggled as I did, yet we were never alone! Psalm 119:105 says, *Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light for my path.*

Then I read Romans 8:1-2 which says, *So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. For the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you through Christ Jesus from the power of sin that leads to death.*

PRAYER:

Thank You Heavenly Father for Your Word that says you'll never leave nor forsake me Thank you for the Holy Spirit that you sent to be my Comforter and Helper. You are my hope in painful struggles, and in you will I trust. Thank you for your Word that gives truth to stand upon and shines upon dark areas in my life so my path is clearly seen; therefore, I will not stumble nor fall.

For every difficult situation, problem or circumstance that comes into my life, You will walk by my side through them and together we will overcome. I will do as you say, dear Jesus, I will be of good cheer—put a smile on my face and daily sing your praises. For You alone are worthy of all praise.

I love you, Father, your child always.