

Freedom From Sin

Key Verse

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

Basic Biblical Understanding

Why do Christians continue to sin? That question is asked by Christians struggling with sin and by non-Christians who want to point out any perceived inconsistencies within Christianity. If God changed a person's life, shouldn't that person stop sinning?

Numerous answers are given for that question. It's been taught that Christians continue to sin because we have a sin nature, we don't have enough discipline, we need more accountability, or we don't understand enough about the Bible. While those responses sound correct, they fail to address two primary issues. There's a love problem and an identity crisis.

Jesus said in John 14:15, "If you love Me, you will keep my commandments." That's not a statement intended to produce guilt. Jesus is not saying, "If you really love me, you would do what I say." Instead, Jesus is diagnosing the problem and revealing the answer. Our sin problem is a love problem. There is a breakdown in intimacy with Christ. By choosing sin, we show that we love or value something else more than Christ in that moment (i.e. perceived freedom, the pleasures of sin, living for self, etc.).

The second part of the problem is an identity crisis. As Christians, we are not living according to our [new identity](#) in Christ. Second Corinthians 5:17 says, "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come." God didn't polish up the old; He made us completely new. We have new passions, new hope, a new future, a new family, a new relationship with God—and a [new identity](#).

Prior to Christ, we were identified as sinners. We were spiritually dead in sin and living according to our old nature in Adam (Ephesians 2:1; Romans 5–7). In Christ, we are identified as saints. We are spiritually alive to God and given a new nature in Christ (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10). The sin nature was crucified with Christ, and we were raised to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4–6). Part of walking in victory over sin is renewing our mind with the truths of that [new identity](#) (Romans 12:2).

Christians continue to sin because there's a love problem and an identity crisis. Victory over sin is not sustained by discipline, willpower, or personal effort. At best, those may bring temporary behavior modification. Victory over sin is the result of pursuing Jesus relationally and walking in your [new identity](#) in Christ. God uses each part for lasting character transformation.

Verses (ask God to show you how they apply to your life)

- "Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus." Romans 6:11
- "Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin." Romans 6:6

Helpful Questions and Application

1. Everything God desires to do in and through your life He will accomplish out of the overflow of your relationship with Christ. That statement becomes reality when we pursue Jesus with the goal of knowing Him. Start reading through the Gospel of John and ask two questions: (1) Who is Jesus? (2) What does it look like to follow Jesus? Record what you discover in a journal.
2. Do you know your new identity in Christ? Your [new identity](#) is who you are from God's perspective. It's how He sees you. Take time studying your new identity and highlight the aspects that mean the most to you right now.

Additional Resources

Scripture references: Ephesians 4:22–24; Colossians 3:9–10; Romans 5–7

WordTruth articles: ["The Two Greatest Priorities of Life"](#)
["Jesus—Who is He?"](#)