

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

1 John 5:18
Lesson #22
New man / Old man
05/29/2022

1 John 5:18

“We know that **no one who is born of God sins**; but He who was born of God keeps him and the evil one does not touch him.”

“**3:9 No one who is born of God practices sin**, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”



Berean helper

1:8 “**If we say that we have no sin**, . . . the truth is not in us.”

2:1 “**If anyone sins**, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;”

1 Corinthians 1

“² to the church of God which is **sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling**, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:”

1 Corinthians 3

“¹ And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to **men of flesh**, as to babes in Christ.... ³ for you are **still fleshly**. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are **you not walking like mere men?**”

The Corinthian Christians were saints by calling but not by conduct.

Experiential context

Sinless behavior is not observed to be the experience of any, **let alone every Christian.**

Some claim that we “need not” sin **but no one claims that we “cannot” sin.**

Others believe that John is talking about persisting in sin. **But persist for how long and to what extent?**

Biblical texts can seem to be clear **until they are read in context.**

✓ **The “flesh” is still present in Christians.** “The flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.” *Gal. 5:17*

✓ **Paul was not free from sin.** “For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want.” *Rom. 7:19*

Powerlessness in this life is unnatural.

Perfection in this life is unrealistic.

Progress in this life is unfinished.

1 John 5

“¹⁸ We know that no **one who is born of God sins**; but He who was born of God keeps **him** (himself) and the evil one does not touch him.”

Paraphrase

“Those who are “in Christ” by faith have the very Spirit of Christ (a new nature that cannot sin). To the extent that we walk in that Spirit, we do not sin and are protected by God.”

The challenge is to “walk in the Spirit.”

Galatians 5

“16 But I say, **walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.**

17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.

19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is against such things there is no law.

24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”

6

Taking active responsibility for our choices is a part of “walking in the Spirit”.

- **The Holy Spirit is a Helper not a Surrogate. He works with us, not for us.**



- **Believers are soldiers not spectators in Spiritual warfare.**



7

Saying “NO” to our old sin nature is a part of “walking in the Spirit”.

Ephesians 4

“22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you **lay aside the old self**, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and **put on the new self**, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.”

8

Take our baptism seriously.



9

“Walking in the Spirit” will require RESISTING “fleshly” passions.

Romans 6

“12 Therefore **do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts**, 13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; **but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.** 14 For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace.”

10

As Aliens, we are pressured by the world and the flesh.



1 Peter 2:11
“I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.”



11

We must take our baptism seriously if we are to “Walk in the Spirit”

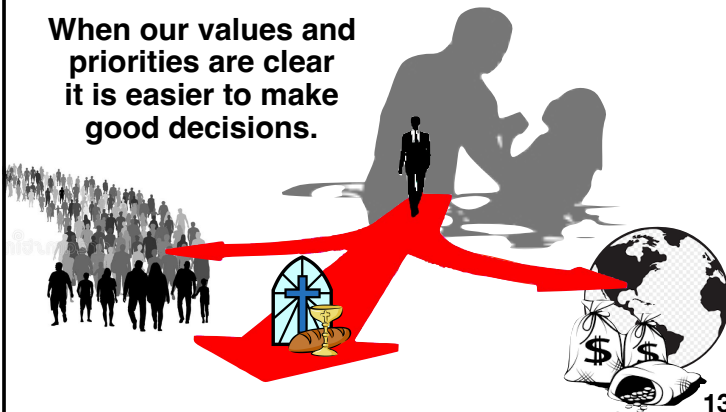
Romans 12

“¹ I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to **present** your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. ² And **do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

12

Facing in the right direction makes it easier to “walk in the Spirit”.

When our values and priorities are clear it is easier to make good decisions.



13

Sowing to the Spirit, not the flesh, fosters “walking in the Spirit”.

Galatians 6

“⁷ Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. ⁸ For **the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life.**”

Choose your community carefully.

14

Christians have
two natures.

The one that we feed will grow.

15

Besetting sins (deeply entrenched & not so obvious)

1. MEDICATIONS: (pain killers)

- work
- ministry
- adventure
- shopping
- sex
- material wealth
- addictions
- relationships

These are more ugly in that they can bring guilt and shame to the sensitive Christian.

2. MESSIANIC: (false hope)

**Idolatrous
applications
of medications**

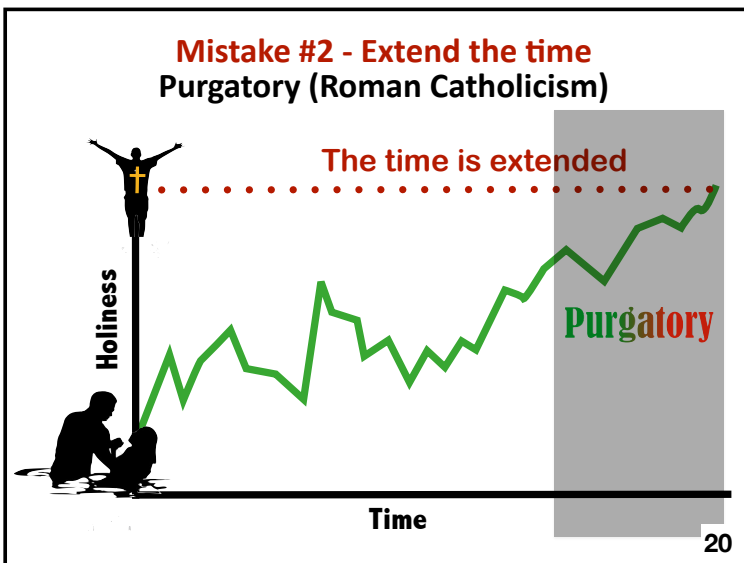
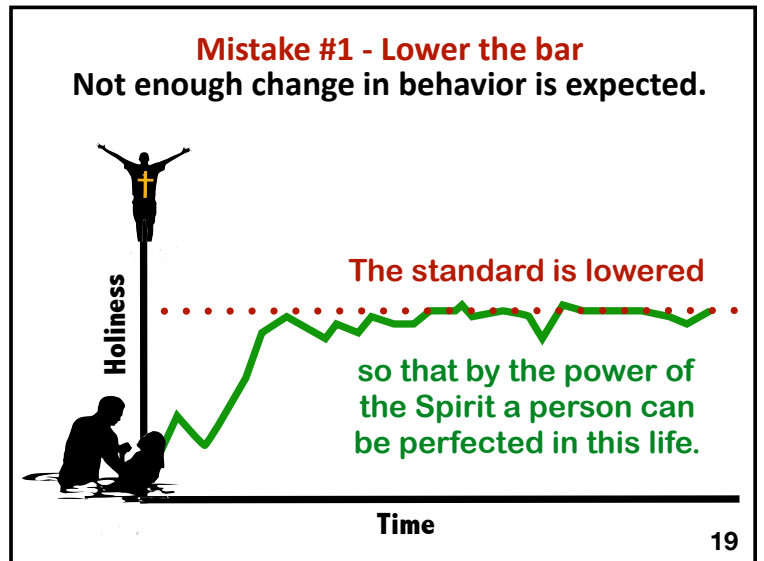
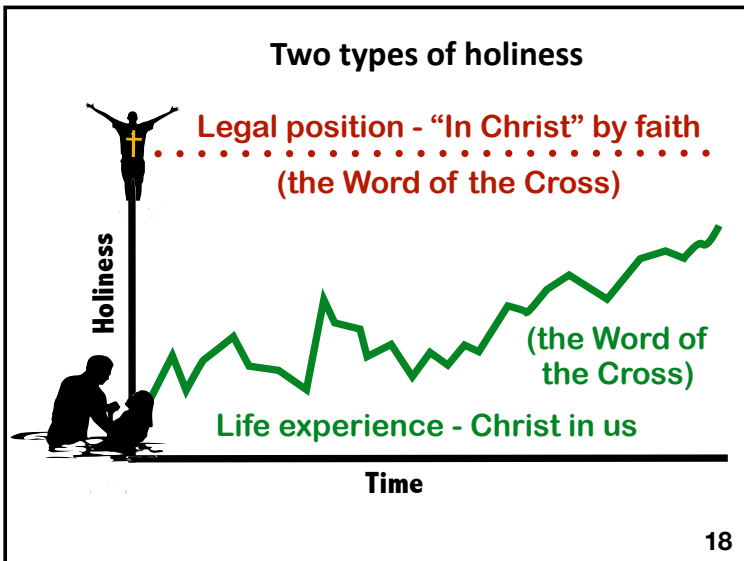
These are more dangerous in that they dull the sensitivity of the believer.

16

Embrace five areas of responsibility for “walking in the Spirit”.

- ✓ **The Character mandate**
“cultivate “Christ’s love in & through us”
- ✓ **The Creation mandate**
“control, & conserve the planet”
- ✓ **The Cultural mandate**
“be salt & light in the earth”
- ✓ **The Charismatic mandate**
“use our gifts to minister to others”
- ✓ **The Commission mandate**
“build the Body of Christ”

17



- ### Why don't people change?
1. They **don't really want to** unless it is easy, fast, and painless.
 2. They **settle for managing pain** without growing through it.
 3. They **refuse to let go** of the old self with its medicinal comforts.
 4. They **don't have a plan** that starts with facing in the right direction from within a supportive community.
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- ### Consider:
1. It's hard to turn **TO** something if we are unwilling also to turn **FROM** something.
 2. **PAIN** can be a doorway to real change if we respond to it wisely.
 3. Dramatic change is more **POSSIBLE** than we realize but it may require more work and time than we expect.
 4. We seldom change until we **REALLY, REALLY WANT TO**.
 5. **PRAY** for eyes to see the liabilities of sin and the assets of righteousness.
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- ### Lessons from this text
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1. How to be a Berean with challenging texts and issues.
 2. Confidence / assurance in defending the Gospel of grace through faith.
 3. Avoiding mistakes in the "faith / works" tension in Scripture and life.
 4. Seek to "walk by the Spirit".
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