

## **Standing Against Sin**

**Text : Colossians 3:1-11**

### **INTRODUCTION :**

**A. In previous lessons we have discussed what to do when Satan hands us a defeat.**

1. We observed that no Christian ever gets to the point that he is above sin.
  - a. **I John 1: 6-10**
  - b. **I Cor. 10: 12**
  - c. **Rom. 3: 10, 23**
2. We learned the necessity of dealing openly, honestly, and frankly about sin.
3. We have observed the importance of having strong relationships already in place.

**B. Christians are expected to “grow spiritually.”**

1. Any living thing must either grow or die. ( **It's the normal course of nature.** )
2. Growth infers increased strength, stamina, independence, etc.
3. Spiritual growth includes the ability to resist temptation, **i.e.**, NOT to sin.

**C. With this lesson we want to observe three ways we can prevent sin in our lives.**

1. We'll see “The best defense is a good offense.”
2. “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”
3. The best way to survive a defeat is not to have one.

### **TRANSITION :**

**Jesus died to purchase a people who would be a city set on a hill, a light to the world, an example which would lead people to God. This is a noble ideal, but how does one accomplish it. There are many ways, but with this lesson we will only examine these three.**

### **I. In order to stand against sin, one must truly desire NOT to sin.**

**A. Most of us are so busy we don't take time to think about sin one way or the other.**

1. In fact, we don't take time to think much about God either.

**ill.-** Husband told wife, **“A new study has shown that the greatest problems in the country are ignorance and apathy.”**

**Wife replied, “I don't know about that and I don't care. Did you remember to buy the bread I asked you to pick up ?”**

2. Most Christians are not rebellious or willfully sinful.
  - a. We're basically a good moral people.
  - b. We don't desire to do evil ... we hate it when we do. ( **We feel guilty when we sin.** )
  - c. **BUT** .. we get so caught up in our daily activities that we seldom give sin a thought until we stumble.

\* **Therein lies the problem ... Avoiding sin is just not a priority for most of us.**

3. By nature, we tend to accomplish the things we prioritize most highly.
  - a. When we prioritized it, we put a man on the moon.
  - b. Young people get their first house by making it a top priority in their life.

**ill.- I bought a new over & under shotgun ... \$1600 ... could buy a VW car for that.**

**B. Overcoming sin must be a true priority ... not dealt with on an ad hoc basis.**

1. Many priorities receive lip-service only ... no real commitment.
  - a. National priority : eliminate poverty, secure the border, repay the nation's debt, etc.
  - b. Personal priorities : Loose 20 lbs. , keep in touch with .....
2. Only those who are truly determined to break bad habits succeed.

**ill.- When I quit smoking :**

- a- I had NO success for years. ( **mental decision only** )
- b- I succeeded when finally prioritized it. ( **heartfelt commitment** )
3. Likewise, if we are determined and committed we can overcome any sin in our life.

**C. We must “set our minds” on things above ... PRIORITIZE THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

1. To become a Christian is to transfer loyalty. ( **From self to God** )
  - a. **Phil. 3:19-20** ... “**Our citizenship is in Heaven ...**”
  - b. **Contrast** : ... Worldly people think about their life in the world and plan for it.  
... Citizens of Heaven think about Heaven and plan for it. ( **invest in it** )
2. **Col. 3: 1-3** **Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.**
  - <sup>2</sup> **Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.**
  - <sup>3</sup> **For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.**
  - a. Christians must keep our hearts and minds focused on our homeland.
  - b. We must make the top priority in our life to reach Heaven.
  - c. Set your heart / mind ... Make a conscious decision and act upon it.
3. “EARTHBOUND” thinking prevents spiritual growth.

\* **So, the first step in overcoming sin is to make it your top priority.**

## II. In order to stand against sin, one must expect success. ( visualize your success. )

### A. **Prov 23:7- For as he thinks within himself, so he is.**

1. Once a goal is set, the first step in accomplishing it is to truly believe you can do it.
  - a. A goal is not just a wish.
  - b. It's a commitment to specific action.
  - c. It's one step in the process of accomplishment.
2. You must visualize yourself having succeeded.

**ill.- One of an athletic coach's most important tasks is to get his team thinking like winners. ( also public speakers, salesmen, etc. )**

3. The Christian must have faith. ... TRUST God.
  - a. **I Cor. 10: 13** ... He will not allow us to be tempted beyond our ability.
  - b. **Phil. 4: 13** ... There is nothing we cannot overcome through Jesus Christ.

### B. Talk in terms of success. ( **Thing, speak, and act as if it is a present reality.** )

1. If one is going to be successful, he must act successful.
2. Don't be afraid to publicly commit yourself success.

**ill.- A champion boxer never says, "I'll try and I hope ..."**  
**Successful sales people never say, "I hope I'll sell ..."**

### C. We must challenge each other to overcome specific sins.

1. We challenge our children to motivate them to success.
2. If others expect us to achieve, we will work harder to meet their expectation.
 

\* **This is one of the advantages of confessing our sins to each other. James 5: 16**
3. There is NO sin you or I cannot overcome. ( **Especially when the brethren help.** )

### D. One is only disappointed at failure if he expected success. ( cf.- **Rom. 13: 14** )

1. The one who expects not to sin is grieved when he does.
2. His grief will lead him to repent. ( cf- **II Cor. 7: 8-11** )

## III. Never look back at your failures. ( **Keep your eye on the goal.** )

### A. Remember lot's wife. ( **Luke 17:32** )

1. Don't turn back. ... She had kids in Sodom. ( **Gen. 18-19** )
2. We all left loved ones and treasures behind in the world.

**B. Remember the children of Israel.**

1. It was easy for God to get them out of Egypt, BUT much harder to get Egypt out of them.
2. At every adversity, they looked back longingly.
3. Many Christians look back longingly at the pleasures they left behind in the world.

**C. We must come to hate sin, NOT keep longing for it.**

1. **Jude 23** .. “... **hating even the garment polluted by the flesh ...**”
2. Make a decision not to like it.
3. Place a negative value on it.
4. All tastes are acquired. **One can learn to dislike sin.**

**D. Successful people dwell on the positive.**

1. Every salesman missed many sales, but he doesn't dwell on the failures.
2. Every team loses games, but they put the loss behind them and prepare for the next game.

**ill.- Why do basketball players step away from the foul line when they miss a shot ? ... To forget the miss.**

**\* They visualize ( remember ) the shots they have made.**

3. Every Christian loses battles, but they learn from them, put'm behind them and press on.

**Phil. 3: 13-14** Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

**CONCLUSION :****A. Of the many ways to overcome sin, we have observed but three :**

1. Set our heart, mind, and soul on things above ... really want to win.  
\* **Make Heaven a goal, not just a dream.**
2. Expect to be successful at overcoming sin. ( **Be truly disappointed if you fail.** )
3. Never dwell on past defeats.

**B. If we will consistently do these three things, we will significantly increase our success rate in overcoming “the sin which so easily entangles us.” ( Heb. 12:1 )****INVITATION :**

**There is forgiveness in Christ Jesus.**