

# Why Do Christians Sin ?

## Introduction; All of us fail some time

### A. Even very faithful Christians sin.

1. This is often very discouraging, both to the child of God who sins and to those who know Him.
2. Sometimes a faithful child of God may sin greatly. He may even give up the faith and leave the church. When we leave the church we leave the Lord.
3. *Eph 1:22-23 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*
4. When this happens many are discouraged. Some may even fall themselves. Others fear for themselves that they may also fall away some day.
5. This is not a new problem. It has plagued God's people since the beginning. They sin. Many return to the Lord as David did. Yet despite our love for the good, we still fall.

### B. In the early church many went to the deserts to avoid sin.

1. Jerome is an example of this. He was born about AD 342. He lived a very fleshly life in Rome as a young man. He was baptized about AD 365. Yet he still struggled with the desires of the flesh.
2. Finally about 374 he did what many others had tried. He rejected modern society and went to live in the deserts of Syria. He fasted often and endured the elements. In a letter he later wrote he said this did not really help. He still thought about sensual things.
3. *"In the remotest part of a wild and stony desert, burnt up with the heat of the scorching sun so that it frightens even the monks that inhabit it, I seemed to myself to be in the midst of the delights and crowds of Rome. In exile and prison to which for the fear of hell I had voluntarily condemned myself, I many times imagined myself witnessing the dancing of the Roman maidens as if I had been in the midst of them: in my cold body and in my parched-up flesh, which seemed dead before its death, passion was able to live. Alone with this enemy, I threw myself in spirit at the feet of Jesus, watering them with my tears, and I tamed my flesh by fasting whole weeks. I am not ashamed to disclose my temptations, but I grieve that I am not now what I then was."* —Jerome's letter to Eustochium
4. About AD 379 (4 or 5 years later) Jerome returned to Rome. Like many he decided that running away from the world did not help.
5. Like others Jerome had visions in the deserts. These were actually hallucinations caused by exposure, lack of sleep and food. According to tradition he removed a thorn from the paw of a lion and the lion stayed with Him in gratitude.

### C. Usually we really do not really know why someone quits the faith.

1. Often times they will not tell the real reason. They do not say they simply love the world more than their Lord.
2. They make excuses and say things like, "There is no love in the church," or, "No one is doing anything."
3. However they have no excuse for why they were doing nothing or why they were not showing more love.
4. We cannot blame God for what some of His followers do. We cannot blame Christ for what some of His churches do.
5. The church is imperfect in the sense that it is make up of imperfect people. Yet we try.

### D. Today we will consider some reasons as to why Christians sin.

## I. Christians can be lost by sinning

### A. Sin is very serious.

1. Much of the religious world teaches that a person who believes and is saved can never be lost. However this is not true.
2. A Christian can sin and repent and still be saved. However he can be lost if he does not repent and if he continues in his sin.

### B. Many of God's followers sin and are lost.

1. This has always been true. No matter what age they have lived in or what divine law they were under, many saints have turned from God and have been lost.
  2. *Josh 24:14-15 "Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD! 15 And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."*
  3. The Israelites had conquered Canaan by God's help. They were ready to settle in and possess it. Joshua tells God's people they needed to make a choice and follow it.
  4. *Ezek 18:20-24 "The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself. 21 But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. 22 None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live. 23 Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" says the Lord GOD, "and not that he should turn from his ways and live? 24 But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die."*
  5. Almost a thousand years later Ezekiel explained to the Jews that they were each responsible for their own sins. They could sin and be lost.
  6. *Gal 5:3-4 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. 4 You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.*
  7. Paul deals with the Judaizing teachers. They were trying to bind circumcision on the early church. Paul says that if they do they fall from God's grace. They would be lost.
  8. *1 Cor 10:8-12 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; 9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; 10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.*
  9. Paul gives a serious warning to a church with a lot of problems. The brethren in Corinth really needed to be careful that they were not falling as ancient Israel did.
- C. When we sin we must confess our sins, repent and pray for forgiveness.
1. Since all sin and fall short of God's glory (Rom 3:23) God has made provisions for Christians to be forgiven. Christians do sin. They should 'sin less' than they world but they are not 'sinless'.
  2. *1 John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*
  3. If we say we have no sin we are liars. We must confess our sins when we fail and repent of them. God has promised to forgive us.
  4. *1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
  5. *Acts 8:22 "Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you."*
  6. *Matt 6:12 And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.*
  7. We must continually strive to be perfect. While we will not accomplish that in this life we must still strive for it. God has promised to forgive all those who trust in Him and not their own righteousness.
- D. We are saved by God's grace and must continually turn from our sins.

## II. Reasons many leave the Lord

- A. We have seen that many have left the church—and the Lord.

1. It is hard to understand how someone who has known the way of the Lord and the promised blessings when this life is over can turn from them —Heb 6:6-8.
  2. There are probably almost as many reasons people turn away from God as there are people. We will consider just a few from the Bible.
- B. Jesus showed several reasons in the ‘Parable of the Sower.’
1. In the parable is the word of God. The different soils are the hearts of men. They receive the word in different ways. We will consider two of them.
  2. *Matt 13:20-21 "But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles."*
  3. The ‘stony heart’ gladly and quickly becomes a Christian. Yet he does not become strong and firmly grounded in the faith. Because of this he falls quickly when tribulation and persecution comes.
  4. We do not face the active persecution of the early centuries of the church and other places and times. Yet there are still obstacles, ridicule and other problems if we really follow the Lord.
    - a. *2 Tim 3:12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*
    - b. *1 Pet 4:3-4 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles; when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. 4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.*
  5. *Matt 13:22 "Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful."*
  6. Many Christians today are not fruitful because their usefulness is choked by their caring for the world and being deceived by riches.
  7. They may not have left the church but they have left the Lord because other things have first place in their hearts. They are more concerned with doing well in this world than in serving Jehovah God.
    - a. Judas loved the Lord and riches —John 12:6, Matt 26:14-16. His love for money caused him to sell his Lord. Many still trade Jesus for the world.
    - b. *1 Tim 6:9-10 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*
    - c. *2 Tim 4:10 ...for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica;*
  8. In Luke 10:40-42 the Lord says that Mary made a better choice than Martha. Martha took care of the things of the world. Mary choose to sit at Jesus’ feet.
  9. We need to think about what choice we are making. What is most important in our lives?
- C. The ‘Parable of the Prodigal Son’ also shows some reasons Christians fall.
1. In **Luke 15:11-32** we see the story of the Lost Sons. We often spend more time on the younger brother but the emphasis of the context is on the older brother. However for the needs of this lesson we will consider the younger.
  2. The younger brother asks for his inheritance before the time and leaves home to do as he pleases.
  3. He then wastes his inheritance in prodigal or wasteful living. He does not think about tomorrow. He lives only for today. He spends it all in a short time.
  4. Many people spend their lives this way. They usually know better. They are often taught better. Yet they love the world and the things of the world more that God. We are warned against this.
  5. *Heb 11:24-25 By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,*
  6. *1 John 2:15-17 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*
  7. The world has a lot to offer. Moses gave up a lot to wander in the wilderness with a group of complainers and troublemakers. Yet he made the right choice. We cannot love the world and still go to heaven. We must make a choice.

8. *Matt 16:26 "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"*

D. A last way that Christians fall away is by too many worldly friendships.

1. The prodigal son chose to associate with worldly people. He chose to do this, they did not make him. He then faced the consequences of his choice. Many still do this today.
2. *1 Cor 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."*
3. Solomon warns his son about evil associates in **Proverbs 1:8-19**. Yet he married many pagan women and they turned his heart away from Jehovah.
4. *1 King 11:4 For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David.*
5. Many are like Peter walking on the sea. He took his eyes off the Lord and began to sink. We take our eyes off Jesus and look at the world and what it has to offer. We begin to sink into the waves of the world. Unless we cry out to the Lord to help us as Peter did we will drown.
6. *Matt 14:30-31 But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"<sup>31</sup> And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"*
7. Our friends should make us better. We need to choose them carefully.
8. *Prov 27:17 As iron sharpens iron, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.*

E. We must not allow ourselves to fall away from the Lord and His church in these ways.

## Conclusion; Even Christians can be lost

A. This story is told about a preacher of the last century.

*D. L. Moody was visiting a prominent Chicago citizen when the idea of church membership and involvement came up. "I believe I can be just as good a Christian outside the church as I can be inside it," the man said.*

*Moody said nothing. Instead, he moved to the fireplace, blazing against the winter outside, removed one burning coal and placed it on the hearth. The two men sat together and watched the ember die out.*

*"I see," the other man said.*

B. One way we remain strong is to be an active part of the Lord's church.

1. We become a Christians (and part of the Lord's church) by believing, repenting and being baptized — Rom 6:3-7.
2. *Mark 16:15-16 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. <sup>16</sup> He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."*
3. *Acts 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*

C. If anyone needs to obey the Lord today, please let us help.