

Stifling Sin

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death was not payment enough for all our wickednesses, but because while we may be saved on the inside, we still have the same sinful flesh with which we were born. Our spirit wants to obey, but our flesh still wants to sin.

We cannot stop sinning, but we can limit what sins we continue to do. One of the Bible's admonitions in limiting our sin is to "confess our sins." God, of course, knows of our sin. There is nothing that is hidden from His eyes. When we humble ourselves by admitting the deed to Him, He recognizes that we know of our guilt and are repentant. God will then forgive us. Most of the time a truly repentant heart carries with it the desire not to do it again. By confessing to God, we not only get His forgiveness, but it also is more likely that we will not want to sin again.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9

I remember learning the 'burn-your-bridges-behind-you' principle from my mom. The phrase comes from a military situation. Soldiers from the past would burn the bridges of escape behind them. When the battle raged fiercely they had no alternate route of escape, only to fight

and go forward to victory. Confessing your sin to God helps burn one of those bridges, so you cannot go back to the old, wrong ways.

The early church was also taught that don't-make-it-easy-for-yourself-to-sin principle by James. The disciple taught them to tell others about their sin. James gave them the advice because God showed him that when we admit to another our wrong-doing, embarrassment from doing it again, many times will keep us from committing it again. Public confession is certainly difficult and humbling, but it burns a bridge to help us to restrict our sin.

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed ..."
James 5:16

We are all sinners. If our character does not bridle our sinful nature, it will gallop down the road of sin. To keep it from going down the wrong course, keep from mounting the horse! Don't even think of the sin!

Once the wickedness is thought of, it goes downhill from there. That is why the world's philosophy about teaching children about sex and drugs in the public schools will never stop their fornication and drug taking. It will, and has, only increased it. Speaking about sin puts it in the forefront of the mind where it can be meditated

"SIN IS MAN'S DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE OF GOD."

on, and the temptation can be acted on. God commands us not even to talk about sin.

"For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret."
Ephesians 5:12

How do you get the thought out of the mind, so it cannot turn into action? The key is to attend to it immediately. The split second we have the thought is the time to switch subjects. God's Word says think on good righteous things. It's hard to think of wickedness, when you're thinking about the things of God.

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Philippians 4:8

When the things of God enter the mind's room, the desire to sin leaves. Scripture is referred to as "light". Light and darkness (sin) cannot dwell together. When the wrong thoughts or actions come, immediately flood them out with memorized verses. It would be edifying to quote a verse about the sin to chase away its memory. Quoting, "I will set no wicked thing before mine

eyes..." (Psalm 101:3) a few times will chase that temptation you absorbed when watching a wrong TV program. When a man's roaming eyes get out of control, remembering, "... That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart," (Matthew 5:28) can help get the wrong, sinful thoughts out of harm's way.

Reading scripture is one of the most important sin deterrents. As you read daily, different verses will expose sin. Daily examinations of weaknesses is a good preventative against the "big" sins. Most out-of-control problems are usually arrived at by small, sinful steps. No criminal woke up one morning and robbed a bank without having paved the way with smaller, sinful steps. Perhaps his big robbery started when he stole answers for a third grade test; or when he took a toy that did not belong to him. One sin leads to another. If he had read his Bible daily, God would have convicted him about cheating on the test, and he would never have gone any further down that road of sin. Bible reading nips sin in the bud.

No one is exempt from sin. All are sinners; even those that have their sins forgiven. There is no such thing as being without sin. Its temptation has to be fought. Some of the weak have given in to its grasp. God hates sin, and although he knows our frailties, we can still keep out of its continual grasp or control.

Our sense of sin is in proportion to our nearness to God. — Thomas Bernard



Words to Find: *Jonah* *Noah* *Timothy*
Apollos *JohnMark* *Paul* *Titus*
Barnabas *JohnTheBaptist* *Philip*
Epaphras *Luke* *Silas*

Answers at: <http://www.openthoumineeyes.com/Puzzle/Evangel.htm>

Billy Sunday Fought Sin

Author Unknown

Billy Sunday, the baseball evangelist and reformer of the last century, never spared himself nor those he wanted to help in the vigor of his attacks on sin. He thundered against evil from the Gay Nineties through the Great Depression. He preached Christ as the only answer to man's needs until his death in 1935.

"I'm against sin," he said. "I'll kick it as long as I've got a foot, and I'll fight it as long as I've got a fist. I'll butt it as long as I've got a head. I'll bite it as long as I've got a tooth. When I'm old and fistless and footless and toothless, I'll gum it till I go home to Glory, and it goes home to perdition!"



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Stifling Sin

Bill Brinkworth

As a young man, I certainly knew what sin was. One day, after being so angry about the trouble my sin had gotten me into, I decided that I would not sin any more. The decision was made about noon, and by supper time, even though I was restricted to my room and all alone, I remember being even more frustrated as I had sinned again. At that young age, I learned that it was impossible not to sin.



Years later, after being saved, I learned why we sin. It's our nature. We're born sinners, and we will die sinners. Fortunately, we can be saved from the price of sin in hell, if we trust that Christ died as payment for our sin. We can have our sin forgiven and paid for by Jesus' act of love for us on the cross. Even after salvation, we will still sin. We will sin not because Christ's

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Label It 'Sin'

The Bible Friend

The late Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman used to tell of a Methodist preacher who often spoke on the subject of sin. He minced no words, but defined sin as "that abominable thing that God hates."

A leader in his congregation came to him on one occasion and urged him to cease using the ugly word "sin". Said he, "We wish you would not speak so plainly about sin. Our young people, hearing you, will be more likely to indulge in sin. Call it something else, as 'inhibition', or 'error', or a 'mistake', or even 'a twist in our nature'."

"I understand what you mean." The preacher remarked and going to his desk brought out a little bottle. "This bottle," he said, "contains strychnine. You will see that the red label here reads 'Poison.' Would you suggest that I change the label, and paste one on that says, 'Wintergreen?' The more harmless the name the more dangerous the dose will be."

