

**Text:** Various

**Title:** No License to Sin

**Truth:** The Christian does not have freedom to sin.

**Date/Location:** Sunday September 13, 2020 at FBC

## Introduction

Genuine Christians know this: the attitude that it is acceptable or excusable or permissible for a Christian to go on sinning is preposterous.

This may be hard to understand for someone of a different perspective—say a non-Christian or a person who believes that the Christian must earn salvation by works. But for the believer in Christ, it is not at all hard to understand.

It is true that the forgiveness Christ offers extends from past through present to future. All the Christian's sins have been forgiven in Christ. God does not hold them against us. They are not a ground for eternal retribution because Christ bore them in his own body on the cross (1 Peter 2:24, 3:18).

This does not mean, however, that sin is irrelevant in our relationship with God. Sin does great damage to our life and to our present relationship to God. It cannot cut that relationship off, but it can strain it tremendously.

Someone who lives in a pattern of sin indicates that they have not known the grace of God in truth. This fact solves a lot of the tension for those who criticize the “evangelical” viewpoint. We recognize self-deception is a possibility. We acknowledge that there are people who claim to be Christians who really are not.

Now, on to more detail.

## The Main Objection to “Fundamentalism”

“For many Fundamentalists and Evangelicals it makes no difference—as far as salvation is concerned—how you live or end your life. You can announce that you’ve accepted Jesus as your personal Savior, and, so long as you really believe it, you’re set. From that point on there is *nothing* you can do, no sin you can commit, no matter how heinous, that will forfeit your salvation. You can’t undo your salvation, even if you wanted to.”

“Take a look at what Wilson Ewin, the author of a booklet called *There is Therefore Now No Condemnation*, says. He writes that “the person who places his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and his blood shed at Calvary is

eternally secure. He can never lose his salvation. No personal breaking of God's or man's laws or commandments can nullify that status."<sup>1</sup>

## Answer to the Objection

The statement above has several wrong parts that make its explanation of "fundamentalist" salvation into a false caricature.

A. First, it is **entirely false** that "it makes no difference—as far as salvation is concerned—how you live or end your life." Biblical Christianity teaches clearly that the grace of God that saves is a grace that also transforms and purifies. How you live or how you end your life is evidence of whether you are truly born again or not. How you live or end is not how you *earn* salvation; it is the natural *evidence* of salvation.

It is Biblical to say that "you must do good works" but you cannot say "you must do good works *in order to obtain merit with God.*"

B. An "announcement" that you accept Jesus as personal Savior is well and good. But that is **not the complete picture** of the gospel. You never see that language in the New Testament. You see things like "repent believe the gospel" or "believe that I am He" or "confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe that God raised Him from the dead and you will be saved." Statements of that nature are more accurate than "accept Jesus." That has become so vague that it has no connotation of following or becoming a disciple. Bottom line is that someone who "accepts" may not be legit.

C. "From that point on there is nothing..." The initial moment of salvation is just the beginning, so that from that point on, you are a new creature in Christ. You are transformed.

D. Doing sin is different than presumptuously and high-handedly doing sin. The former is a weakness of sinful, even redeemed, humanity. The latter is an activity of pagans and mere professors of faith (Heb. 10:26). Also, doing sin constantly is different than struggling against sin and living a pattern of righteousness (1 John 3:6).

E. Having a knowledge of the truth is different than being transformed by the truth.

## I. In the Beginning of My Christian Life

Back to our main thesis. There is no license to sin because...

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.catholic.com/tract/assurance-of-salvation>

- A. Salvation begins with repentant faith. Repentance has to do with sin in general. All sin: the sin of rejecting Jesus; the sin of trusting in your own works for salvation; the sin of self-autonomy (rule); the sin of thinking or doing anything displeasing to God. As repentant people, Christians have turned away from sin in principle and they continue to take diligent steps to stay away from sin.
- B. Christ is Lord. The Christian confession is *that*. 1 Cor. 12:3, Luke 2:11, Acts 10:36, Rom. 6:23, 8:39, 1 Cor. 1:2, 8:6, 2 Cor. 11:31, Phil. 2:11, 3:20, 2 Peter 2:20. The fact that He is Lord means that we do not have permission to sin, because He commands us to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect (Matt. 5:48; see also 1 Peter 1:15).
- C. The gospel does not give a license. We are told to “sin no more” (John 5:14). The gospel gives a prohibition.
- D. You have been made new (2 Cor. 5:17). We are given a new nature that desires holiness. Our new nature despises sin. We hate that we sin; we hate sin in our own lives; we hate that we have a desire to sin.

## II. During My Christian Life

There is no license to sin because...

- A. We are called upon to be sin-confessing people (1 John 1:9). This means that we acknowledge God’s view of our sin as true—and we genuinely feel it to be so.
- B. We have a conscience that is instructed by God’s word and used by God’s Spirit to convict us of sin and righteousness.
- C. God preserves His people and sanctifies them. Jude 1:24.
- D. Christ died so that we would live for righteousness. 1 Peter 2:24.
- E. Christ gave himself for us to create a people zealous of good works. Titus 2:14. Our time should be taken up with good works, not evil works. That gives us less time for evil works.
- F. I am a citizen of the coming kingdom of Christ. My conduct should match as his citizens and ambassadors (Phil. 3:20; 2 Cor. 5:20).
- G. We are made servants of righteousness, not servants of sin. Rom. 6:1-23 is an entire section of Scripture devoted to this question. Read it carefully. Paul does preach salvation by grace alone through faith alone based on the imputed righteousness of Christ. Therefore, people charged him with the same objection we are dealing with in these notes. And he

responded. In the same way, we should respond. Paul teaches that we don't have license to sin because:

1. We died to sin. We are not living in that sphere anymore.
2. We live a new life.
3. We have been justified and thus "freed" from sin's claims on us.
4. We reckon ourselves to be dead to sin, because we are.
5. We are told not to let sin reign in us.
6. We are commanded not to present our bodies as tools of unrighteousness to sin. Instead we are tools of righteousness.
7. Sin does not have dominion over us.
8. We are freed from sin's bondage.
9. We became slaves instead of righteousness for holiness. Sin's wages are death.
10. The fruit of sin is death, and we do not want anything to do with that. Instead, we want fruit to holiness and everlasting life. God's gift is eternal life.

### **III. In the Future of My Christian Life**

There is no license to sin because...

- A. We do not want to be ashamed when Christ returns. 1 John 2:28.
- B. In light of the second coming, after which all the things in the world will be burned up, 2 Peter 3:11 asks, "what sort of people ought we to be in holy conduct and godliness." The future drives present behavior.
- C. I will be judged as to my faithfulness to Christ. While the Christian's sin won't change God's decision at the last minute and send the person to Hell, that sin means that the person has not lived effectively for the Lord and will be docked reward.
  1. 2 Cor. 5:10
  2. 1 Cor. 3:13-15
  3. Rom. 14:10-11

### **Conclusion**

Sin is not something we get away with or can do with impunity. It is something we hate.

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