

# Self-Control



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As we study for truth, truth that sets us free **from** sin, we have an obligation to put that truth into action. Knowing truth and not being obedient to it will do us no good. “For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God’s sight, but it is **those who obey the law who will be declared righteous.**” Romans 2:13.

In our lives we must do what we know is taught by God, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To make a profession of faith in Christ, and then not be obedient to that faith brings shame and disrepute to the Name of our Lord who gave up everything for us. If you claim Jesus as your Lord, then you must obey Him as Lord.

“If we **deliberately keep on sinning** after we have received the knowledge of the truth, **no sacrifice for sins is left.**” Hebrews 10:26. The Bible is very plain; living in sin when we know what our duty is, will not be tolerated in the body of Christ. Christ, through His eternal power, separates the sin from the sinner. If we refuse to work with that Power, that Power leaves us and we are left in our sins, and those sins will destroy us.

If the devil has you bound by sin, you must turn to the power of Christ and break its hold. “Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30.

It is rest that our souls need. We have been ravished by sin far too long. The body is tired, the mind confused, the heart heavy with pain. By giving up the old life we accept the new life of Christ, His Yoke, the Ten Commandments, that gives us freedom from sin. We learn to accept the Power of Christ. By looking into His wonderful face, looking at His beautiful life, we behold the way to break the chains of sin and death.

teachings of Jesus to Stop sinning, Be perfect, and Keep the Ten Commandments to get eternal life. Let us truly make Jesus “Lord” of our lives by being obedient to His commands.

The life of Christ “teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.” Titus 2:12. About two thousand years ago the Bible started the first, “Just Say No” campaign. Just say “No” to sin and “Yes” to the power of God. We have an obligation to put our will on the side of God. “Everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, **just as He is pure.**” 1 John 3:3.



Jesus provides the cleanser, but ***we must pick it up and use it.*** As we use the Word of God as our cleanser to purify our hearts, minds and souls, the Spirit of God comes in and provides the power to clean us up. “Since we have these promises, dear friends, **let us purify ourselves** from everything that contaminates body

and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.” 2 Corinthians 7:1.

Self-control is the only remedy for success in our battle with sin. Our lives have developed a multitude of bad habits over the years. Through self-control God expects us to purify ourselves to righteousness, just as we polluted ourselves to wickedness. “Now that you have **purified yourselves by obeying the truth,**” keep that purity through self-control. 1 Peter 1:22.

Jesus was very concerned about people claiming to be His, yet were not His. He wanted to make it very plain that “not everyone who says to Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who **does** the will of My Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 7:21.

Christians must test the spirits, (1 John 4:1), to see if the person doing the claiming is of God. The person may have a spirit, but is it the Spirit of God? Not every preacher is a preacher of righteousness. Not every church is a church of God. “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you **in sheep’s clothing,** but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.” Matthew 7:15.

People who live the self-controlled, commandment-keeping life, are of God. “We know that we have come to know Him if we obey His commands. The man who says, ‘I know Him’, but does not do what He commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” 1 John 2:3, 4.

In both the Old and New Testaments, the self-controlled life is revealed as the only life that will enter heaven. God tells us in Ezekiel, “But if a wicked man turns away from all the sins he has committed and keeps all My decrees and does what is just and right, he will surely live, he will not die.” “But if a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits sin and does the same detestable things the wicked man does, will he live?... He will die.” Ezekiel 18:21, 24. This is not a “once saved always saved” but a continuous “stop sinning to be saved”.

It is very important that you understand this step in the Christian growth. All who are lost will lose their salvation because they refused to acknowledge their duty and responsibility of **taking their salvation into their own hands** and making decisions to stop sinning. Christ cannot save one rebellious sinner. The only way Christ can save a sinner is for that sinner to submit, humble himself to the **saving plan of God**. Jesus stands at the door of your heart and knocks, but you must let Him in. You have a part to play in your own salvation. He will not kick in the door or make you do what you do not want done. If you surrender that part to anyone else or to any church, you will lose your eternal salvation. Know what the requirements are and then step out in the power of Christ to do them.

“But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God’s wrath, when His righteous judgment will be revealed... But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil...”. Romans 2:5, 8, 9.

“Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that **the Lord will reward everyone for**

**whatever good he does.**” Ephesians 6:7, 8.

I have heard some people suggest that since they claim Jesus to be Lord, they must be saved. The text they use to back up this claim is found in 1 Corinthians 12:3. “Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, ‘Jesus be cursed,’ and no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.”

The problem with this concept is time. Taking a statement that had to do with a specific time period and trying to fit it into another time period. They try to do with this text as one might try to do with Exodus 25:8, 9 which had to do with Moses building the sanctuary, or Genesis 6:14, Noah building the Ark. No, we are not to build any more temples or Arks.

You can never remove a text from its historical reference. If you do, you will be guilty of adding and subtracting from the teaching and intent of scripture. The penalty for that is death. It may sound nice to say that you have the Holy Spirit simply because you say “Jesus is Lord”. But Jesus disagrees with you. “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he **who does the will** of My Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 7:21. If you read very carefully, you will find where even the demons claim that Jesus is Lord, but they are not saved. As Peter said about Paul and his letters, “Some things in them are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, leading to their own destruction, as they do the rest of the Scriptures.” 2 Peter 3:16.

So what is the writer of Corinthians talking about? When you go back into history it becomes very plain. If you were killed for saying, “Jesus is Lord”, would you say it? Today there is no persecution for being a Christian in most countries. Any devil can say it to deceive the blind. Back then, only a true believer could say it. No one else dared to say it, or they could die.

The other concept to this is, only a true Christian can call Jesus “Lord”. Not in name, but in truth. A true Christian will obey Jesus **as his Lord**. One who is not a true Christian can name the name, but Jesus is not “Lord” of his life if he is not obeying the