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How To Defeat Sin

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Temptation and sin in general are things everyone struggles with. Whether you are a Christian or not, whether you even realize it or not, sin is affecting you.

The dictionary definition of sin is as follows:

Deliberate disobedience to the known will of God. A condition of estrangement from God resulting from such disobedience. Something regarded as being shameful, deplorable, or utterly wrong.

I think we can all agree that we have both witnessed and partook of the activity and mindset of sin during our time on this earth. So how do people defeat it? That is the question I will answer in this article...

Often times Television shows will portray a little devil on one side and an equally little angel on the other side of a person to illustrate the “forces” of good and evil as they try to coax the person to a decision in favor of one side.

In actuality, that scenario (albeit simplified), is not far from the truth. Each of us has good and evil thoughts and ideas enter our minds time and again. Those thoughts do not come *from* our own minds, they come from those forces of good and evil. And it's how we treat those thoughts that ultimately determine if we win or lose the battle with sin.

Our minds are fertile ground, and whatever seeds get planted there will most certainly grow. Now both the Lord God, and Satan know this to be true. And they are constantly trying to obtain “planting rights” of our mind... the trick is to only let the good seeds (the seeds from God) be planted.

Tips for gaining victory over sin

So how do we do that? By following these simple guidelines:

- **Stay alert!:** A lot of people today suffer from some sort of chronic boredom, I'm sure it's not simply coincidence. Boredom causes people to enter a lull where the power of suggestion is much stronger and people listen to that suggestion usually just to relieve the boredom. We must always guard our minds.
- **Examine every thought:** This goes hand-in-hand with staying alert. The moment a thought or suggestion enters our mind, we must catch it and examine it... Where did the thought come from? Is the source pure and holy or evil? What would the

result of listening to the thought be? How would I feel *after* I have listened to the thought?

That last question is important because sin always feels good during the act, it is only afterwards that we realize the consequences, and it is then that we will always regret our mistakes. So it is important to super-analyze each thought and determine whether it is revealed as good or evil.

- **Don't entertain evil spirits:** This one may seem obvious but you would be surprised how many people do indeed entertain evil spirits and then wonder how they lose the battle to sin.

So what does entertaining evil spirits mean? Things like trying to argue with the spirits, daring them to convince you that the sin is okay. For example: Let's say that an evil spirit plants the thought of doing drugs into your mind. You say "no, that would harm my body", and then the evil spirit plants a counter-thought "No it makes your body feel good", and before you know it you are either engaged in a foolish argument, all the while the spirit is keeping the thought and allure of sin in the forefront of your mind. The situation is akin to a person recovering from alcoholism going to a bar while trying to refuse every drink offered him... it won't happen.

- **Rebuke the evil spirit:** Note that this is not the same as arguing with it. Simply quote an appropriate scripture and cast it out of your presence. This is why studying the Bible and memorizing it is so important. This is why the Bible is referred to as "The Sword of the Spirit". The Bible is the tool used to slay the evil spirits that come against us all. For example if someone is being tempted with sexual sin, simply quote the scripture: "Thou shalt not commit adultery."; "My body is the temple of the Lord." and then be done with it. Don't give the evil spirits any opportunity to tempt further. Pray to God, ask His help, and ask the Holy Spirit to give you power, it works.
- **Don't give up!:** Make no mistake, once you start defeating sin, Satan will work overtime on you. He works harder for the bigger trophies, and you most certainly will become one once you start growing in the Lord.

Indeed you should expect attack, but not be fearful of it. God has given us all power and authority over evil, we need only exercise it.

If you are finding it difficult to get your mind off of a particular temptation (and it will happen sometimes because Satan knows which buttons to push) the best things to do is surround yourself with the Lord. Read your Bible, pray, recite scripture, listen to worship music. It's funny how demons can't stand when the Lord is being praised, even when it's just a recording. Trust me, it works.

When you start doing these things you will start defeating sin, and when these things become instinct for you, then you will truly be a force in Gods' army.

Long term success and perseverance

One final note: If you should fall, Satan will try to crush you with guilt, but don't let him. While it's true that you did lose a battle, the only way you can lose the war is if you never get back up. It is because of our sin that Jesus sacrificed Himself on the cross... If we don't get back up and try again, we would dishonor His sacrifice. As the Bible puts it:

"Rejoice not over me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD will be a light to me." (Micah 7:8)

It is also important to remember that one should **never** expect defeat. In-fact, the Lord promises to never allow us to be tempted beyond what we can handle. He also promises to always provide us a way out of temptation:

"No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it." (1 Corinthians 10:13)

This is not only a great comfort to us, but also a warning to us not to weakly submit to sin under the excuse that we can't help it.

Also don't be ashamed to ask for prayer:

"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control." (2 Timothy 1:6 – 1:7)

You now have the knowledge to defeat sin. If you are lacking a sword (Bible) I would suggest getting a copy as soon as possible. I would recommend either the NIV (New International Version) or the ESV (English Standard Version) as those two versions are in my opinion the easiest translations to read while still remaining accurate and faithful to the original text.

May we all Rise to the Challenge!

James