

# Why Do We Still Sin After Salvation?

From: [gotquestions.org](http://gotquestions.org)

Salvation begins the moment we receive, by faith, God's offer of forgiveness through the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus ([Ephesians 2:8–9](#); [John 1:12](#)). Jesus called it being "born again" ([John 3:3](#)). In repenting and giving up our old life, we receive the new life Jesus purchased for us with His blood ([2 Corinthians 5:17, 21](#)). We are washed clean, and God chooses to remember our sins no more ([Psalm 103:12](#)). But we soon notice that our propensity to sin is still part of us. How can that be, since we are [new creatures](#) in Christ? We still sin because we, though forgiven, are still fallen human beings.

Salvation breaks the power that sin once had over us. We were slaves to sin and served it willingly ([Romans 6:20–23, 7:14–15](#)). While slaves to sin, it was impossible to please God ([Romans 8:8](#)). Regardless of how often we turned over a new leaf, straightened up, went to church, or performed righteous deeds, our souls were still enslaved to unrighteousness and we stood as condemned before God.

Upon [surrender](#) of our lives to the lordship of Jesus, we became God's sons and daughters ([Ephesians 1:5](#); [Romans 8:15](#)). But just as children sometimes disobey their parents as they grow, God's children sometimes disobey Him. We rebel, get angry, or doubt for a while; the difference is, we can no longer live lifestyles of sin because our nature has changed ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#); [1 John 3:4–10](#)). A fish may long to live on the beach, but once it has flipped itself onto the sand, it wants nothing but to return to the water because its nature is not designed for dry land. A fish was created for the water. So it is with us. The nature of those indwelt by the Holy Spirit is to live in righteousness. We may flip ourselves into sin at times, but we can't survive there. The new nature thrives in righteousness and obedience to God. The degree to which we allow the Holy Spirit access to every area of our lives is the degree to which we live as God intended us to live.

Good parents don't let their toddler play on the highway. They may start with a stern warning, but if the child persists in heading toward the road, good parents come after him, and the discipline will be memorable and effective. So it is when we, as God's children, stiffen our necks and charge toward evil. Our Father comes after us. God does not allow us to get away with sin because He is a good Father. [Hebrews 12:5–11](#) says that God's discipline in our lives is one way we can tell that we belong to Jesus.

To the praise of God's glory, after we are saved, God deals with our sin differently than He did before we were saved. [First John 1:9](#) tells us that we can confess our sin and be [forgiven](#). Confession means we humbly agree with God about how bad sin is. We admit we were wrong and ask His forgiveness. The awareness of our sin and the confession of it should be a regular practice. The first of Martin Luther's [95 Theses](#) says, "When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said 'Repent,' he intended that the entire life of believers should be repentance." God can pardon us and maintain His justice because our sin was already paid for by Jesus. There is no need to punish us because He has already punished His Son ([Colossians 2:14](#)).

As we "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" ([2 Peter 3:18](#)), we overcome [besetting sins](#) ([Hebrews 12:1](#)). Peter lists steps we can take in developing our new nature and ends with the promise that, if we do these things, we "will never stumble" ([2 Peter 1:3–10](#)). Our holiness is the goal, but John acknowledges that we still sin: "My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One" ([1 John 2:1](#)).

God's desire for us is that we not sin, and one day our sanctification will be complete ([1 John 3:2](#)). But, until that time, we still inhabit fallen bodies in a fallen world, and we struggle with the flesh and sometimes lose the battle. But we will not be lost; Jesus Himself intercedes for us as our High Priest ([Romans 8:34](#)).