
Words of Truth

Is Forty-Eight Hours Of Faithfulness Good Enough?

By: Brian A. Yeager

A man, that falsely believes he is a faithful Christian, stated that he is doing good when he goes forty-eight hours without sinning. He also thinks that sin is okay, as long as you aren't sinning constantly. His thought is that the blood of Christ continues to cleanse someone who is not sinning on a continual basis.

Before we get to the Scriptures that expose the thoughts above as false, let us reason together for a moment. What if a wife looked at her husband and said that she is faithful to him because she only commits adultery every seventy-two hours? What if a man was on trial for murder and he argued that he has committed murder, but he is not a murderer because he has only killed a few people this year? What if a worker embezzled from his employer twice a week for twenty-years, but believes he is not a thief because he doesn't steal every day? What reasonable person cannot see the stupidity of the thinking above?

Those who profess to be disciples of Christ are in a relationship with God that is likened to a marriage (Matthew 25:1-13, Romans 7:1-6, Ephesians 5:22-33, and Revelation 21:1-10). Even during the time the Law of Moses and the prophets was in effect, God related Himself to Israel using the language of a marriage (Isaiah 54:5, Isaiah 62:5, and Hosea 2:19-20). When Israel erred, the Lord looked at their sinful behavior as spiritual adultery (Jeremiah 3:1-14). His mindset has not changed in that regard (James 4:1-4). Therefore, when someone says occasional sin is okay; they are saying that it is okay to cheat on God every once in a while! Who, in his or her right mind, could ever think that is okay? That is where reason comes in. However, if one cannot reason and see that, let me show you clear Scriptures that teach we are not permitted to sin, err, etc.

God Has A Zero Tolerance Policy

I have heard many people say that God does not expect anyone to be perfect. Let's see what God actually says: *“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect... Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent*

me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me... Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God... Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you... Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus... All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (Matthew 5:48, John 17:20-23, II Corinthians 7:1, II Corinthians 13:11, Colossians 1:28, and II Timothy 3:16-17).

Many say and have said that it is unreasonable to think that God expects us not to sin. If that is your conclusion, you are saying that God is unreasonable. I say that because, God expects you NOT to sin. Notice: *“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein... Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame... Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity”* (Romans 6:1-2, I Corinthians 15:34, and II Timothy 2:19).

As you read through the word of God, you find many more Scriptures than what I just briefly referenced that shows God expects His followers to cease from sin (John 8:1-11, Galatians 5:17-24, Ephesians 4:21-5:11, Colossians 3:1-17, Titus 2:11-14, I Peter 2:5-4:5, I John 3:1-10, etc.). Jesus lived a sinless life on this earth (II Corinthians 5:21). He is our example to live after in a sin-free life (I Peter 2:21-22). We are expected to live our lives as He lived His (I John 2:3-6). Don't act like He didn't face temptation. He faced all that we face and yet without sin (Hebrews 4:14-16). Study Christ. See how He did it. Understand that temptations will come, but you can avoid such (Matthew 26:41 and Romans 13:12-14). When you desire something sinful, you can stop yourself before sin occurs (James 1:13-15). There is nothing that we face, in regard to temptation, that is uncommon to man and that is beyond our ability to overcome (I Corinthians 10:13).

Conclusion

The expectations of our Lord are not too high (I John 5:1-3). If this is not clear to you, think about turning to your spouse and telling them that you'll agree to be faithful, but only in forty-eight hour stretches. If you don't have a spouse, think about turning to your employer and telling them you will do your job, but only a quarter of the time you are getting paid for. If you don't work, think about standing before a judge and telling he or she that you will murder people on occasion, but you promise you will only do it a few days per week. Think about it. Be reasonable. Understand that God says DO NOT ERR (James 1:16). If you are in sin, make it right and keep it right before it's too late (Psalms 32:5 and James 4:6-10).