



CAN A CHRISTIAN SIN?

Some denominations teach a dangerous wrong doctrine that says a Christian cannot sin. These people teach that once a person is saved, he cannot be lost. There are many scriptures that show that Christians can sin and show sin will destroy the Christian.

First, look at the plain case where a Christian sinned. In *Acts 8* Phillip preached in the village of Samaria. Many people became Christians including Simon the Sorcerer, a juju man (*Acts 8:12, 13*). When Simon saw the power of the apostle, he lusted for the power and tried to buy it with money (*Acts 8:18, 19*). Peter told him to perish with his money, that his heart was not right, and that he should repent of his wickedness and pray for forgiveness (*Acts 8:20-23*). Here is a baptized believer that sinned from his heart and would be condemned if he did not repent and pray for forgiveness.

Read *II Peter 2:20-22*. Those who have "escaped the pollution of the world through the knowledge of Christ" are Christians -- only Christians have escaped the wickedness of the world. He says if Christians are entangled (trapped) again (the second time) and overcome (captured) by the pollution (wickedness) of the world the punishment will be so severe it would have been better if they never had become a Christian. *Verse 21* makes it plain that these are Christians who have known the way of righteousness and turned away from it.

Hebrews 6:4-6 says the same thing. *Verse 4* and *5* describe the Christian who has enjoyed complete spiritual blessings. *Verse 6* says if these Christians fall away after enjoying all these blessings, they will find it impossible to repent because they do not value the crucified Christ. *Hebrews 3:12* warns Christians to be careful not to let an evil heart of unbelief enter them and cause them to leave the living God.

John writing to Christians says in *I John 1:8-10* that if we say we have no sin we are lying to ourselves and the truth is not in us.

Christians can sin. If a Christian continues to live in sin, sin will destroy him. If a Christian repents of his sin, sin will not destroy him. The Christian who falls back into the old life of sin and remains in sin will receive God's greatest punishment in judgment.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why is the wrong doctrine that Christians cannot sin so dangerous?
2. Tell the story of Simon in *Acts 8* and show how it proves a Christian can sin.
3. When Peter condemned Simon for his sin, what did he tell Simon to do to correct the sin?
4. What does *II Peter 2:20-22* say about Christians who become entangled again and overcome by the pollution of the world?
5. *Hebrews 6:4-6* says Christians who have enjoyed full spiritual blessings and leave Christ to go back to their sinful lives will find it impossible to do what?
6. What does *I John 1:8* say about Christians who say they have no sin?
7. Who will receive God's greatest punishment in judgment?