

What about Easter, the resurrection? Is it really that important? I tell folks I'm a Christ follower, but then the question arises, am I really? Are there times when I'm, perhaps, more concerned with the legalism in my denomination? Is the image I'm presenting being seen as too sensitive to that special gift of possessing and applying the wisdom, the counsel and the direction of my Lord's Holy Spirit?

Or perhaps, I should ask myself if there are times when I might feel so pre-forgiven by my misunderstood definition of our Lord's grace that yielding to a particular temptation has become so routinely driven that it's evolved into sort of a habit?

Am I sometimes motivated more by trying to impress God and others with my performance than in wanting to demonstrate who my Lord is in my life and how He has allowed me to become a spiritual incarnation as I possess His Spirit?

Do I see my natural talents, learned skills and spiritual gifts to be more from me to God and society than to understand that they're my Lord's special anointed gifts for me to apply as my contribution while I'm on His Kingdom building team?

Are there times when I get my motives wrong and self serving preservation becomes a higher priority than my concern for my specific purposes and the needs of others?

Are there times when I think I own all I've been allowed to accumulate for my security and comfort rather than realizing that I'm only a steward for a while? Do I sometimes forget that it's not possible to out give my Lord's loving providence?

Am I truly thankful that my Lord's love for me has always been, from birth, totally "unconditional?" Each day when I wake up, am I keenly aware that a genuine transformation is taking me from being that fear driven person born after the fall (Described as Genesis 3 as partaking from "*The tree of knowledge of good and evil*") to progressing as a more mature "New Creature" re-born after my Spiritual birth?

So, I am aware and thankful that I am now blameless, though I know I'll never be faultless in this mortal life. Romans 14:23b reminds me that any choice not stimulated by faith is sin. I guess that's why 1st John 1:10 needs to tell us, if we say we don't sin we're calling God a liar.

This reminds me that we can all observe two categories of sin. The first would be called sin by nature because our faith wavered after the fall. However, we are also vulnerable to being tempted by a second category of sin, sinning by choice. Even though we're aware that it's obviously wrong, people will know, almost instinctively, right from wrong, good from bad, greed from need or generosity from selfishness. Not many would fail a test on these.

Of course sinful behavior may hurt everyone involved, and we usually conclude that the victim is damaged more than the perpetrator. This is not necessarily the case. Every time we violate what we subliminally know to be moral, ethical or right, we subdue our ability to maintain the self-worth values that allow receiving the grace our Lord wants to provide. This grace is free, however to possess it we must first be receivers. The proverbial ball is in our court, therefore repentance is essential if grace is to abound!!! That's when we become the "New Creatures" our Lord wants us to be. Heaven will surely abound with NEW CREATURES IN CHRIST!!! Will my FAITH make me one? Will your FAITH make you one? Will I see you there???

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