

**QUESTION: It is my belief that once a person accepts Jesus Christ as their Savior, that this person is now to be considered a "saint". Does this mean we are no longer a sinner? Is it possible to be a sinner and a saint at the same time? I do believe that a saint can still make a mistake, yet the saint has an avenue of asking for forgiveness, a sinner does not.**

**ANSWER:** The "quick answer" is that when a person believes in Jesus Christ and is born again, we become a "new creation in Christ" and God's word calls us saints. God does not look on us as "sinners" anymore, but we, as saints, are still in our physical, fleshly bodies, and because of sin that is in our flesh, we do commit sins at times. **We are not "sinners who are saved" but we are "saints that occasionally sin"**. Do you see the difference? God does not see you as the sum total of your sinful acts which you have committed or even keep on committing, but He sees you as His child, and you have areas where you still need to grow and mature (see definition of "sanctification" below). As you grow in your walk with the Lord, and allow Him to conform you to the image of His Son Jesus Christ, the "sins which so easily beset or ensnare you" (Hebrews 12:1-2) will begin to drop off and be replaced with godly, Christlike virtues and behavior. **There is some effort and work of your own that you need to do to cooperate with God as He transforms you, and the first one is to renew your mind with the word of God.** As you renew your mind, you will begin to see things as God sees them, and as the Holy Spirit convicts you of sin in your life, you will repent and give it up to God. You may slip back into some of your old ways, but your growth will depend a lot on how much of God's word you read and put into practice in your life. We have written many papers on these subjects, so we will refer you to some of them, rather than "reinventing the wheel" and writing it all out again. These papers would be "Living a Holy Life", "The Truth Shall Make You Free", "[Being Filled with the Spirit , Abiding in Christ, and Bearing Spiritual Fruit](#)", "Keys to the Victorious Christian Life", "[Names & Titles That God Uses for ALL Believers](#)", "Knowing Who You are in Christ", and "[Q&A - If a Sin Still Oppresses and Habits Still Linger](#)".

The last part of the question is "the saint has an avenue of asking for forgiveness, a sinner does not." Yes, the true Believer, or "saint" has the precious promises of God that He will cleanse us from all sin if we confess our sins to Him. Confessing our sins to God restores us to fellowship with Him, and restores the "joy of our salvation". Our sin did not cause us to be "unborn" and no longer be a child of God, it just caused us to be **temporarily out of fellowship with our Father. God is no longer holding our sins against us**, but ALL of OUR SINS have been paid for by Jesus on the cross, in fact, the Scripture says they have "been nailed to His cross" and that He has removed our transgressions from us.

- **I John 1:9** "If we confess our sins, **He is faithful** and just to **FORGIVE us our sins**, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
- **Psalms 103:10-14** "He has NOT dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, **SO GREAT is His MERCY** toward those who fear Him (reverence Him); as far as the east is from the west, so far has **He REMOVED our TRANSGRESSIONS from us.**"
- **Colossians 2:13-14** "And you, being dead in your trespasses (sins)..... has He made alive together with Him, **having FORGIVEN you ALL trespasses**; blotting out (wiping out) the handwriting of requirements (God's laws that you could never keep) that was against us, and took it out of the way, **having nailed it to His CROSS.**"
- **Ephesians 1:1** "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the **saints** which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:"
- **Definition: "SAINT" - One who is SET APART for God** ("Saints" - also translated "Holy ones" - God wants us to be **SET APART for His use, and SEPARATED from sin.**

- **Definition: "SANCTIFICATION"** - HOLINESS, PURITY, being SET APART for God and His use. The word "SAINT" comes from the same word as "sanctified" in the Greek. This is a PROCESS and a ONE-TIME EXPERIENCE, both. We are sanctified, or MADE HOLY in God's sight when we accept Jesus Christ as Savior, but our continual SANCTIFICATION is the PROCESS by which **we are becoming MORE LIKE CHRIST** as we YIELD more and more of our SELVES to the control of the Holy Spirit.

#### God Doing the Sanctifying at Salvation:

- **I Thessalonians 5:23** "Now may the God of peace Himself **SANCTIFY you completely**, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless (pure, holy) at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."
- **I Corinthians 6:9-11** "Do you not know that **the UNRIGHTEOUS will not inherit the kingdom of God**? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous (greedy), nor drunkards, nor revilers (users of abusive language), nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were SOME of YOU. But **you were WASHED, but you were SANCTIFIED**, but you were JUSTIFIED in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." Paul is speaking to Christians here, so when he says, "And SUCH were some of YOU" he is showing us that the Church of Jesus Christ is made up of SINNERS!! However, **it is only by the BLOOD of JESUS CHRIST** that we are forgiven and CLEANSED of those sins. Notice in I Peter 1:2 all three persons of the Godhead are involved in our salvation and sanctification. The Holy Spirit seems to do the work of sanctifying, but it is by the blood of Jesus, and all according to the Father's plan from all eternity.
- **I Peter 1:2** "Elect, according to the foreknowledge of **God the Father**, in **SANCTIFICATION of the Spirit**, for obedience and sprinkling of **the blood of Jesus Christ**."

#### The Process of Sanctification in Our Lives:

- **II Corinthians 7:1** "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, **perfecting HOLINESS** (sanctification) in the FEAR of GOD."
- **I Peter 1:13-16** "Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be SOBER, and **rest your hope fully upon the GRACE** that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as OBEDIENT children, NOT conforming yourselves to the FORMER lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, **you also be HOLY in all your CONDUCT** (sanctification), because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy.'"
- **Ephesians 4:22-24** "That **YOU put off**, concerning your former conduct, **the OLD MAN**, which is **CORRUPT** according to its deceitful desires and lusts; and **be RENEWED in the spirit of your MIND**; and that **YOU put on the NEW MAN**, which was **CREATED** according to God, in righteousness and true **HOLINESS**."

**WHO** puts off the "old man", God or **we ourselves**? God's word says that **WE as Believers** are the ones who have a **CHOICE** about following the **old nature** and its desires. If we **renew our minds** with the word of God, we will have the **will power** and strength from God to **choose the new nature** (the UNSAVED person does not even HAVE a new nature).

- **Romans 6:12-13** "**Do not LET sin reign (have control)** in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its desires. And **do not yield your members** as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but **yield yourselves unto God**, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members (parts of your body) as instruments of righteousness unto God."