

# How Can We Truly Recover From Sin?

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## I. Introduction

What reality are you living, yours or God's? Are you living the reality given to you by your upbringing, your horrible circumstances, or perhaps your own bad decisions? Is there a way to change it or do you think the "facts" of your life are too great to overcome? Have you asked God?

## II. Confession is the Way to Overcome Our Sin, But What are We Supposed to Confess?

**What do we usually confess to God when we sin?** The sin! Is this what God wants us to confess? Does this fix our sin problem? If you're a young man who has a terrible lust problem, will confessing your lust every time you sin fix your compulsive lust issues? Nope. Why not?

**What's the real problem behind our sin?** Why do people sin, what leads them to sin? Behind every sin is a lie(s). For example, a common sin people commit every weekend is getting drunk/high. Why do people get drunk every weekend? What are the "good" and bad reasons why people get drunk/high? All the "good" reasons boil down to this: "It's fun." All the bad reasons boil down to this: "It'll help me cope" (with stress, hopelessness, boredom, etc.). Do you see the lies behind the "good" and bad reasons? Is it true that getting drunk is fun? It "feels" like fun, but in the end it's not really. Is it true that getting drunk/high will help you cope with your problems? While you're drunk, you can actually forget your troubles. But is it really helping? No, it's actually making your troubles worse. But because people believe these lies, they get drunk/high every weekend.

### How do we fix the problem behind our sin?

First, listen to the warning lights God gave you, cars have warning lights that tell you when something's wrong, even when your tires are low. Did God give us a warning system? Yes, every negative emotion we feel is there to tell us that something is wrong. If we're angry, it's God saying, "Be careful, you're about to fall into a ditch." If we're afraid, it's God telling us, "Pull over and ask Me for directions." If we're anxious, He's saying, "We need to talk about who I really am; you seem to have forgotten that I can fix anything, including your life." Every negative emotion is God tapping us on the shoulder saying, "You need to ask Me before you go over this cliff." But our emotions can also turn into sin. Is it sin to be anxious? Yes, Philippians 4:6. Is it sin to feel anxiety? No. Anxiety (or other negative emotions) becomes sin when it alters our behavior negatively.

Second, don't just confess the sin, let God show you the real problem behind your sin, when we think of confessing sins to God, we usually think of naming them like, "God, forgive me for lusting after that woman." When we're done, we go on our merry way. But we must remember that there was something deeper that led us to sin. And if we don't deal with that, then we will continue to sin and confess, sin and confess, etc. If we want to end the cycle, we need to have a serious conversation with God about what's really behind our sin, so He can free us from it.

Third, confess the lie(s) and ask God for the truth, when we trace our sin to its root, there is usually a lie there, either about us, our life, or God. This is what we need to confess to God so He can show us the truth that will set us free.

**How does God help Gideon recover from his sin(s), Judges 6?** As soon as Israel raised any crops or animals worthwhile their enemies would swoop down, plunder them, and leave them with nothing. This devastation went on for 7 years. Things were so bad and the people were so afraid that they hid in caves and dens in the mountains. Israel then cried out to God and He sent them a message, a reminder of who He is, who they are, and therefore what they were supposed to do, but they had not obeyed His voice.

This is the context in which the Lord appears to Gideon and they have a strange conversation. Gideon's afraid and keeps telling God, "There's nothing I can do about Israel's enemies, I'm weaker than weak." God keeps saying, "You're a mighty man who's going to destroy Israel's enemies." Why's there such disconnect between God and Gideon? Why is Gideon unable to see what God sees? Why does he see himself as weaker than weak and the enemy as strong?

*Frist, what were the warning lights God gave Gideon (and Israel)?* Who are the children of Israel? They're a people who have a God who can destroy nations at will, disposes them, and give Israel their land. This is precisely why they weren't supposed to be afraid of the people around them. But instead they were afraid, living in caves, and barely surviving. The moment Gideon (and the rest of Israel) felt fear, anxiety, and hopelessness he was supposed to stop and ask God about it.

*Second, God shows Gideon the real problem behind his sin(s)?* What were Gideon's sins? He was afraid, insecure, and felt hopeless. Again, feeling fear is not a sin, but responding to it negatively is. And what was behind his fear and hopelessness? What did Gideon believe? That God: was no longer with Israel, was not going to do miracles for Israel, and had forsaken Israel and delivered them to their enemies. Gideon also believed that he was the weakest of the weak. How did this impact his behavior negatively? He had no faith in God and was cowering in a wine press.

*Third, Gideon confesses the lie(s) and God shows him the truth,* it's amazing, we won't confess the lies we believe out loud, but we will live them. In his conversation with God, Gideon keeps giving God the "facts" of his life and the life of Israel. But all these facts are actually lies. Huh? How can all these things Gideon cites be lies? Isn't Israel being oppressed by her enemies? Aren't they living in caves? Didn't God hand them over to their enemies? Yes, this is all true. So how can these be lies? Because first of all, God keeps refuting each one these "facts":

Gideon says, "The Lord is not with us." The Lord says, "I am with you."

Gideon says, "I'm weaker than weak." The Lord says, "No, you're a mighty warrior."

Gideon says, "No more miracles for Israel." The Lord says, "Not true, I'll be with you."

Gideon says, "The Lord has forsaken us." The Lord says, "Nope, I'm right here."

Gideon says, "The Midianites will keep beating us." The Lord says, "No, you're gonna defeat them as if they were one guy."

Second of all, how did all these "facts" become Gideon's (and Israel's) reality? They turned their backs on God and His truth. When you walk away from God, you will live some other "truth" and it will blind you to who God is, who you are, and what your life is truly supposed to be. Gideon and Israel were not supposed to be cowards who live in caves. They were supposed to conquer their enemies as they followed and relied on their God. What "truth" are you living, yours or God's? If you find yourself lost and afraid, turn back to God and ask Him about it, He'll answer you.

### III. Conclusion

*So he said to Him, "O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." And the LORD said to him, "Surely **I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man.**"*