

1 John 3:7-8 (NKJV)

Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

Here we go again, talking about living a Christian life. We have to walk the walk as well as talk the talk. *He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning.*

We have to practice what we preach

We cannot leave our Christianity at the front door of the church. Being a Christian is a twenty four hour, seven day a week, fifty two weeks a year job.

And there is no time off for good behavior.

We constantly have to be on our guard. We never can let our guard down.

Saint Peter wrote, **1 Peter 5:8-9 (KJV)** *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.*

We all are tempted. Even our Lord was tempted. It's part and parcel of being human. We all sin. Only our Lord was able to not sin.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

Turning again to Saint John, **1 John 1:8-10 (KJV)** *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our*

sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

We all sin. We all have sinned and if we say that we haven't, we are saying Jesus is a liar. We are saying is a liar for the reason that He said he came to die to take our sins away and give us eternal life.

John 10:11 (KJV) I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

And of course there is ***John 3:16 (KJV) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.***

When I say we all have sinned I don't mean that we are chainsaw murderers but we all have our familiar old tacky sins that are so much a part of us as our fingerprints. It is those that we have to really work on.

And that is hard.

When we do slip, and we will because we are human, the goal is to get back up, dust ourselves off, ask God to forgive us and get back on the path.

Isaiah 55:7 (NKJV) Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the Lord, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

Fidelity Investments have a television commercial series where it shows a green line to follow. Following a Christian life is much like the example in the commercials... just stay on the line.... Just stay on the path.

God will give us the grace to persevere. That is how we can do it; with the grace of God. You know the old saying, There but for the grace of God go I.

That is true.

We all will be tempted one time or another. But God will give us the grace of strength to overcome the temptation, if we turn to him.

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NKJV)*No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

Paul tells us in **Romans 6:23 (NKJV)***For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

To live the Christian life costs. It costs us our selves. We have to give ourselves to God completely and entirely. We cannot hold anything back.

And that is hard. The strongest and the hardest sin to break is our pride, that we can do it ourselves, that we can do it ourselves without turning to God.

Next week we begin the season of Pre Lent, the time to begin to prepare ourselves for Lent.

Let us take advantage of the right now to resolve that we all will stay on the path and as we all heard in last Sunday's Epistle, **Colossians 3:16-17 (NKJV)** *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*

Amen.