

Leave Sin in the Shadows and Walk in the Spirit

Many times in life, a Christian backslides and loses fellowship with the Holy Spirit. If you have known that fellowship and don't take care of it, allowing sin to return or push its way back into your life, you will experience unparalleled misery because you remember what it was like to have fellowship with God, but now you have suppressed it. I think every one of us has done this at some point in our lives. Even a Christian can act as though God isn't in their life. For a season, like a *"prodigal son,"* they leave Him out of their lives and focus on the pleasures of the flesh in this world. Somehow, they have strayed from walking with the Lord and fallen back into their old fleshly nature. When they repent and ask for forgiveness, God cleanses them of all their sins. The flesh can have great power over us, even as Christians. Paul tells us, **Galatians 5:16-17**: *"So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want."* While the flesh can exert a destructive force over each of us, deciding to live as a disciple of Jesus is not a matter of our personal determination or strength; it is a matter of dependence on the Lord. It's not how hard we try, but our trust and faith in the Lord. Sure, Satan will do whatever he can to trip us up. But understand that the same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead now lives in us, helping us, day by day, to overcome the flesh and walk in the Spirit of God. **Psalms 51:12**: *"Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and sustain me with a willing Spirit."* The phrase *"to walk in the light"* conveys the idea of relinquishing sin by following Jesus. **Ephesians 5:8**: *"for you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light."* Sin is what leaves us unsaved. Sin is what separates us from God. Sin is what puts us on the path to eternal destruction. Jesus told us in **John 8:12**: *"... I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."* Our God has established a standard for salvation, and the lordship of Christ is not optional. God clearly tells us we are saved by grace through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. The Lord has commanded us to be filled with His Spirit. **Romans 8:9**: *"You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him."* This is an important verse: If we are Christians, we are in the Spirit, not in the flesh. We are in the Spirit because the Spirit of God dwells in us. Note the end of the verse, *"Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him."* This means that if we don't have the Holy Spirit, we don't belong to Christ. Salvation comes only when a person believes in the Lord Jesus. Then that person will be saved and empowered with the Holy Spirit. God has already done all the work. All we must do is receive, in faith, the salvation God offers. As Christians, we live in the light God gives. Sin is left in the shadows as we walk in the Spirit and let our light shine before all men and women.