

overcoming life-dominating sins



Characteristics of life-dominating sins

1. We practice a sin even though we have tried repeatedly to stop (Rom 6:1-2, 6-7, 11-13).
2. We practice a sin and blame others or circumstances for our failure to stop (Ez 18:4, 20; Mark 7:20-23; Rom 14:12; 2 Cor 5:10).
3. We deny that what we are doing is sin (1 Pet 1:16; 1 John 1:8, 10).
4. We convince our self that we are not enslaved to a sin and “can stop at any time,” even though we continue in this sin (John 8:34; 2 Tim 2:22; James 2:10, 4:17; 1 John 3:3).
5. We repeat a sin even though any pleasure or satisfaction to our self is short-lived while the harm to our self and others is considerable and long term (Prov 26:11; 2 Pet 2:22; Ps 85:8).
6. We seek to hide our sin (Ps 32:1-5)
 - We have separate “sets” of friends or acquaintances, taking care not to let either know about the other.
 - We lie on a regular basis to cover up our sin.
 - We try to make others think that we are living God’s way. (Matt 23:27)
 - We act indignant or quarrelsome when someone finds inconsistencies in our life that lead him or her to suspect our problem. (Prov 10:17, 17:10)
7. We revile or slander the very people who are seeking to restore us to the Lord and others (Prov 9:8, 16:28).
8. We still commit this sin although we know that it obscures the testimony of Jesus Christ in our life and is a stumbling block to others (Matt 5:16; Rom 14:13; 1 Pet 2:11-12, 24).
9. We repeatedly commit this sin while knowing that this does not please the Lord nor bring glory to God (1 Cor 10:31; 2 Cor 5:9; Col 1:10).
10. As we can see, a life-dominating sin is very much a worship issue (Ex 20:3; Deut 6:5, 10:12; 2 Kings 17:35; Matt 13:45-46; Luke 10:27; Phil 3:8)

Biblical _____ of life-dominating sins

God sometimes uses labels that describe a person with a certain kind of lifestyle. God gives these labels not upon a person who commits these acts occasionally, but to those whose whole life is dominated by these acts; There is an unbroken and habitual pattern of sin.

Example: 1 Cor 6:9-10 “Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you ...”

Figure 1 Sin Cycle to be PUT OFF

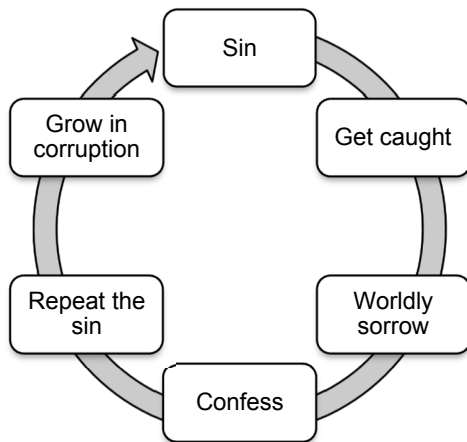
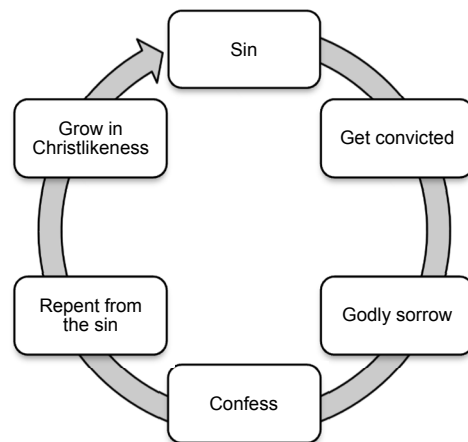


Figure 1 Sin Cycle to be PUT ON



of life-dominating sins

1. We are held accountable to God for all our wants, thoughts, speech and behavior. Genetic predispositions, personalities or “addictions” do not remove us from responsibility.
2. We become a slave to whatever controls us (Rom 6:16-18).
3. Life-dominating sins affect every area of our life. They are rarely relegated to one particular area.
4. We will doubt our salvation (1 Cor 6:9-10; 1 Pet 1:7; 2 Pet 1:10-11).
5. God does not assure us that He will hear or answer our prayers (Ps 66:18; Prov 15:29, 28:9; 1 Pet 3:12).
6. We will bear spiritual as well as physical consequences (Ps 32:3-5, 38:1-10, 51:3; 1 Cor 5:3-5, 11:28-30; Col 3:25; Heb 12:5-11).
7. We will lose the joy of our salvation (Ps 51:8-12; 1 John 1:4).
8. We will become increasingly more miserable, and life will become more difficult (Prov 1:24-32; 13:15, 21a; 28:13-14).
9. We place our self under the corrective discipline of the Lord (Heb 12:5-11), and the sternness of the discipline to restore us to the Lord and others will increase (Matt 18:15-20).
10. We, through our own deeds, will hinder all true fellowship with those in the body of Christ (1 Cor 5:9-11; 2 Thess 3:11-15).
11. We remain in spiritual delusion because we are merely a hearer of the Word and not a doer (James 1:22-24), and we cannot discern clearly between good and evil (Heb 5:14).
12. We become false witnesses for Christ and the gospel (Rom 6:19; Eph 4:22; 1 Cor 9:27).

13. We may realize we are not a child of God

- Lack of love for God (Luke 10:27; Rom 8:7)
- Lack of repentance from sin (2 Cor 7:10; 1 John 1:8-10)
- Lack of being devoted to God's glory (1 Cor 10:31)
- Lack of selfless love (1 John 3:14)
- Lack of any spiritual growth (John 15:1-6; Eph 4:12-16)
- Lack of obedient living (1 Pet 1:2, 22; 1 John 2:3-5)

life-dominating sins

1. Assess the situation

- We are often blind to life-dominating sins
- Ask good intensive questions
 - How long has this been going on?
 - Interview people closest to you
 - Keep weekly journals of what you fear, get angry about, etc.
 - Record of your daily schedule to see how you really spend your time
 - Record of how you spend your money
 - Record of your daily calorie intake
 - Make lists like the ways in which you desire to control everything at home or the thoughts you say to yourself when you are tempted in a particular area (e.g., "I can handle this.")
- Ask good extensive questions
 - Most often, all areas are affected
 - A focus on one sin or problem is most often insufficient
 - Ask, "How have all your relationships been effected by your drinking?"
 - Ask, "How has your lack of self-control shown up in other areas of your life?"
 - Ask, "How has your pattern of deceit affected your finances?"

- Ask, “What physical issues have been brought about by your use of drugs?”
 - Ask, “How has your desire to *get* (characteristic of idol worship) versus your desire to *give* affected your view of church and ministry?”
 - Interpret the information biblically
 - What idols have emerged?
 - What or who are you worshipping?
 - What do you want more than glorifying God?
 - What is the desired payoff by indulging in that sin?
 - Who is behind sin’s domination of you?
2. Declare war and show no mercy to sinful desires (1 Cor 9:24-27)
- Know your identity in Christ (Rom 6:4; 2 Cor 5:17)
 - Don’t excuse it. That would simply encourage the self-deceptive consequences of sin
 - Confess it as sin against God (Ps 51)
 - Look to Jesus as the One who shows grace and mercy to sinners
 - Grow in faith by knowing your God as He reveals Himself in Scripture
 - Learn to delight in obedience and glorifying God (Ps 1)
 - Don’t rely on yourself but partner with and be accountable to others (Gal 6:1; Heb 3:13, 10:24; 2 Pet 1:12-15)
 - Pursue wisdom aggressively (Prov 2:1-5)
 - Fight the temptations within you (James 1:13-15)
 - Don’t just avoid sin; hate it (Deut 7:26; Ps 84:10, 101:3-4, 119:104; Prov 8:13; Rom 7:15; 1 Cor 13:6)
 - Love God and others
3. Make decisive and concrete plans for change
- Live as if you were at war ... because you are! (Eph 6:11; James 4:7; 1 Pet 2:11, 5:8; 1 John 3:8, 10)
 - Live objectively and not by your feelings (Jer 17:9; Prov 14:12; Gal 5:16-17)
 - Be diligent (Ps 119:4; 2 Pet 1:5, 3:14; Prov 13:4, 21:5; Ecc 11:4; Gal 6:7-9)

- Identify the appropriate biblical practices (“put ons”) and do them (1 Tim 4:7)
- Get rid of all things that make it easy to commit a particular sin (Matt 18:8-9; Rom 13:14)
- Confess to others and engage in relationships for accountability
- Remain steadfast (Gal 6:9)
- Remember your goal to know Christ and make Him known to others