



In Galatians chapter five we see that there are two forces battling in our lives: our sinful nature and the Holy Spirit. You said that the Holy Spirit is the stronger force, but isn't our sinful nature stronger? I mean, we keep on sinning.

This is a great question that came during a confirmation class. I'm sure it's something each of you have noticed - even if you didn't phrase it exactly the same. You are not alone. Even the apostle Paul, who usually strikes us as pretty close to perfect, says in Romans chapter seven: "*The good that I want to do - that's what I don't do. The bad that I don't want to do - that's what I do.*" And most of the letters of the New Testament are filled with exhortations to *Christians* to quit sinning and start acting like believers in Jesus.

One of the realities of sin is that it will be with us until the day we die.

(Another great reality is that sin will NEVER be with us in eternity!)

A couple things are important to remember as we await eternity:

1) Thank God He sent His Son to this earth for the express purpose of taking the punishment for our sin! Thank God that we receive that forgiveness every time we turn to Jesus and repent!

2) Your sinful nature doesn't need to get the upper hand. Think of Satan and your sinful nature as a team that knows it has lost the championship. But it keeps trying real hard to make life miserable for the team that is going to win. When you trust in Jesus, you are on the team that wins. You don't have to let Satan and your sinful nature keep the game close to the end. Here's the key:

"Submit to God. Resist the devil. And he will flee from you." James 4:7

Notice what comes before the "resist the devil" part? The "submit to God" part. If you are trying to resist the devil on your own power, you *will* lose. But when you submit to God and trust that His will for you is always best, you resist the devil with the power of God on your side. The devil has no choice but to run from God. So, submit to God. Resist the devil. (Just say "No."). And he flees.

After the Holy Spirit has defeated Satan by bringing you to place your faith in Jesus, He continues to work in your life to help you "submit to God" (to quit living like you are the one in charge and let God be in charge). How can you tap into the power the Spirit has for you to submit to God and resist the devil? Pray and read God's Word daily. Like an electrical outlet, the power is there. But you still need to 'plug into it' to bring it into your life.

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net