

Dear Lynn,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You asked, "If we never have joy after sinning, why keep trying?" You wanted to know if we might ever have joy again after sinning.

Even though we are all sinners and continue to sin, we are nonetheless encouraged to always rejoice in the Lord. "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4) We rejoice because as Christians we have direct access through prayer to our Father's heavenly throne of grace. By confessing our sins to Him with contrite hearts we are forgiven and cleansed of our trespasses, thereby lifting the weight of sin from our shoulders. "And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick [weary] person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven." (James 5:15) Knowing that our sins have been forgiven fills us with immeasurable joy and strengthens our resolve. "The joy of the Lord is your strength." (Nehemiah 8:10)

This joy cannot be gotten in the world. In fact, it is one of the fruits of the spirit. (See Galatians 5:22-23.) The development of joy and the other fruits of the spirit requires effort, since we are constantly fighting against our sinful natures. But the end result of the Christian's fight is well rewarded. "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it." (Hebrews 12:11) Jesus gives us the greatest example of joy. Throughout his entire earthly ministry, he never let his focus waver. He set his mind on things above. It was this mind set that allowed him to endure even the cross. Therefore, "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." (Hebrews 12:2-3)

You asked if we might ever have joy again after sinning. The answer is definitely yes. Our joy comes from the forgiveness of sins, which allows us to continue on the path of righteousness that God has set before us. Shortly before Jesus was to be crucified he told his disciples, "As my Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." (John 15:9-11)

We hope we have answered your question. Please write us again.

Sincerely,
Christian Questions Radio