



ACHILLES HEEL

Achilles was the mightiest warrior on the Greek side during the Trojan War. According to Greek mythology, his mother, Thetis, tried to make him deathless by putting him into fire at night and rubbing him with ambrosia by day. These efforts having failed, she dipped him into a river but did not wet the heel by which she held him. So Achilles could be killed only by a wound in the heel. Achilles became a great warrior but was killed at Troy when he was struck in the heel by an arrow.

From this myth has come our metaphor, "Achilles heel," used to refer to one's key area of weakness or vulnerability. Do Christians have an area or areas in their lives where they are especially vulnerable to temptation and failure? Certain Bible characters come to mind: Solomon (sex), Jeremiah (depression), Peter (impulsiveness), Jacob (deceit), and Jonah (prejudice).

It seems that some individuals are drawn toward particular sins more frequently and strongly than others. Some need help in identifying this problem area and learning how to handle it.

A Look at the Past

1. In what ways did you most often sin before you became a Christian? What most often brought misery, trouble, and regret?
2. What sins have had to be confessed most often after conversion? Are there any recognizable patterns?
3. What criticisms have been brought against you? Whether these have been well founded or not isn't the issue but rather, how have others perceived your actions (attitudes, etc.)?
4. Consider the failures in the lives of your parents and grandparents. What conflicts brought on arguments, etc.? It is possible for there to be patterns

of sin from one generation to the next (Exodus 20:5; Deuteronomy 5:9,10). However, the chain can be broken.

5. What sins and failures are you quick to see in others? Could these also be areas of vulnerability for you?

Action Steps to Take

1. Make sure to understand the nature of sin and the consequences it brings. Every sin is against a Holy God and has ramifications for those around you.
2. Take personal responsibility for every area of weakness in your life. It is all learned, sinful behavior.
3. Begin immediately to take definite steps to overcome your area(s) of weakness
 - sin cannot be dealt with by a “one time” decision
 - it will require daily application of spiritual dynamics
 - old habits must be unlearned and new habits must be acquired
 - when a weakness has been a habitual part of one’s life it will be difficult to correct. It will require disciplined obedience to God’s Word over a period of time
 - Giving way to an area of weakness can be prevented with loving accountability
4. Become familiar with the Christ-like qualities that counter-act the work of the flesh