

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Turn your bibles with me to 1 John 3

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through this short but very personal, very powerful and practical letter that the Apostle John wrote to His spiritual children –

That's you and me

About the reality of who God is, the reality of who Jesus is and the reality of what it means to be a true believer.

And John writes that it all centers around fellowship.

We can have real intimate fellowship with God – through Jesus

When we have real fellowship with God – it leads to real fellowship with other believers.

And so John has provided these tests to help us determine whether or not a person has real fellowship with God and also to help reassure us of who we are in Christ.

Do we love one another

Do we walk in the truth, in the light

Do we walk in obedience to His word

Are we spiritually growing

Do we abide in Him?

John tells us – that if we have real fellowship with God – the answer will be yes.

Not to one or two of these but to all of them

In our text this morning, John is going to provide another test.

And this test will center around our actions – and the importance of not living continuous lives of sin.

Let's pray...

A believer who has real fellowship with God – will love the things that God loves  
(brethren)

But also hate the things that God hates

And of course, I am talking about sin

We are called to hate sin and then forsake sin

We know that it is our sin that breaks our fellowship with God

We know that it is our sin that sent Jesus to the cross to die for us – to pay for our sin.

And these two things alone – should be reasons enough to hate sin and forsake sin  
and flee from sin.

Paul tells us in Romans, that the person in sin's grip is a slave to sin.

**[Rom 6:16 NKJV] 16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin [leading] to death, or of obedience [leading] to righteousness?**

We become slaves of whomever we continue to obey.

Sin leads to death. Obedience leads to righteousness.

We choose which one to obey and become the slave of that one.

We are in an ongoing battle to serve the right master.

And depending on what master we choose – we are contributing to death or we are contributing to righteousness.

John is going to remind us – as Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus (4:24) that as believers, we have been given a new nature, we have been given a new life – and it has been placed within us - therefore, we no longer have to be a slave of sin.

Because He has delivered us from sin.

**[1Jo 3:4-9 NKJV] 4 Whoever commits **sin** also commits **lawlessness**, and sin is **lawlessness**.**

I want us to look back at the last verse we looked at last Sunday

Look at verse 3

This is our response to God's amazing love

**[1Jo 3:3 NKJV] 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.**

Our response to God's love, to Him making us His Children, to sharing in Christ's glory is one of walking in holiness.

God plays a part in it as He works in us – but so do we. (remember, we can choose the path we take)

John doesn't say we are to simply try to be better than what we were before – we are to walk in purity as He is pure.

And our motivation is that at anytime – we could find ourselves before Him

So we don't want to be ashamed when that happens.

So John provides for us the definition of purity/holiness.

Here in verse 4, he provides for us the definition of sin.

Keep in mind the context behind the letter –

There were these false teachers in the early church – the gnostics – who were going around saying that it really didn't matter what we did in the flesh

That God only cared about our spiritual wellbeing

They were saying that the pursuit of holiness/godliness that it was too strict.

That the Apostles should lighten up

They began advocating an attitude of compromise and accommodation to the world.

They began to look at sin in different tiers.

Whatever happened between consenting adults in private – they looked the other way.

Now, I had you make a note of the word “sin”

It is a word that means, to miss the mark.

It can also mean – to fail to meet the standard.

Who set the standard? God

The moment God says, “I don’t want you to do this” and we disobey Him, it becomes sin. We missed the mark.

Think about this, in the Garden of Eden

Adam and Eve, did they have to abide by the 10 Commandments? Was that the standard? No

The 613 do’s and don’ts of the Mosaic law – did they have to abide by that? No

They had one standard – ““but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.””

God gives one commandment and they missed the mark.

But the bible says that everyone of us has missed the mark

**[Rom 3:23 NKJV] 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**

The good news is that Jesus came from heaven to deal with the problem of sin and to expose the problem of sin – because sin is a human problem.

We live in a world today where even believers downplay what sin is.

Just like the gnostics did back in the early church

We call it a mistake

We call it a shortcoming

We call it a character flaw

We call it a failure

But we refuse to call it sin

The bible says that sin means

- Going our own way rather than God’s way
- Living according to self rather than God

- Sin is both disbelieving and disobeying God
- Sin is neglecting and ignoring God rather than honoring and worshipping Him
- Sin is denying Him and rejecting Him rather than accepting God

According to the bible we are all sinners and we are all sinful.

We are sinners by the choice and we are sinners because of our nature.

And church –

If we really do not grasp what the bible says about sinful condition – then we will not grasp what the bible says about God's solution to the problem of sin – Jesus Christ.

Sin entered the world through Adam and because of sin, all human being are spiritually dead forever and destined to die

But there is deliverance of sin – the gospel

There is a solution to the penalty of sin and the power of sin and eventually – even to the presence of sin and it is found in the sacrificial death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is why John calls on us to confess our sins (1 John 1:9)

And repent of our sins and find forgiveness in Christ

Because those who don't confess their sins and those who don't repent and forsake their sins – they don't find forgiveness for their sins.

They live in opposition to God

They live in rebellion to God

They live their lives in lawlessness.

So for the Gnostics that were claiming that they had an inside track on God – John says – they are wrong, they have no regard for the standard.

**5 And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.**

The word manifested refers to the incarnation

Jesus first coming

His purpose for coming – to deal with the problem of sin – to take away our sins.

Jesus didn't just come to pay for our sins, but leave us sitting in them, but to take them away.

BTW – when John uses the word sins (plural) – he is referring to all of our transgressions

And when he uses sin (singular) he is referring to our sinful nature.

So how does Jesus take away our sins?

How does He take them away and make us acceptable to God?



John gives us a clue at the end of the verse

Because in Jesus there is no sin

Remember,

The Jewish people would offer a lamb without blemish in their sacrifices

And Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Because Jesus lived a perfect life and sacrificed Himself for sin, people can be completely forgiven.

**[1Jo 2:2 NKJV] 2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.**

He suffered for our sake

Bearing our sins

In order to make us acceptable to God

In order to save us from judgment

And only Jesus can fill the gap between a holy God and sinful people.

Now, think about what John is saying –

Jesus took on human flesh and subjected Himself to torture and the shame and humiliation of dying on a Roman cross for us to take away our sins.

How then can we justify clinging to the sins that He came to take away.

So John asks the question – “Has Jesus taken away your sin?”

And if we really want to know that answer to the question – we look to verse 6

**6 Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.**

In our study last week – we looked at one of the tests that John provides us and that was the test of whether or not we abide in Him.

And John makes the point that abiding goes beyond a simple profession.

If we abide in Him, we practice righteousness – because He is righteous.

And because we abide in Him, and we abide in the power of Christ then that means we are living absent from the power of sin.

If we are connected to Christ – then that means we are disconnected from sin

We can't live in sin and in Christ at the same time.

In the same way we cannot walk in the light and in darkness at the same time

The two of them are mutually exclusive.

If I am living in Christ and walking in the Spirit, I can't be living in the flesh and walking in sin at the same time.

John takes a little further at the end of the verse

He says the person whose lifestyle is marked by a pattern of consistent sin, hasn't even yet encountered Christ.

Please understand that John isn't saying that a person who is born again never sins.

Back in 1:8 he said those who say they don't sin occasionally are liars.

What John refers to here is the person whose regular mode of operation is sin.

They don't struggle with sin because it doesn't even register as something wrong.

So the question becomes – how can a Christian live a life free from sin?

1. We become aware and sensitive to sin's presence.
2. We acknowledge sin presence and we engage in a sincere repentance
3. We accept God's forgiveness in Christ

The Christian who imposes on grace and trivializes forgiveness

The Christian who uses grace and forgiveness as an excuse to continue in sin doesn't understand grace and doesn't understand sin.

**7 Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.**

NLT

**[1Jo 3:7 NLT] 7 Dear children, don't let anyone deceive you about this: When people do what is right, it shows that they are righteous, even as Christ is righteous.**

The false teachers of the day were living immoral lives

They were living immoral lives and then claiming to love God

So the person who claims that they love God

And serve God

And know God

And live a lifestyle of rebellion and disobedience is either a nonbeliever or a make believer.

God desires righteousness in our lives.

The difference between a believer and a nonbeliever is that when a Christian falls, they will get up, confess their sin, they will walk away from it.

But the non believer and the make believer, when they fall in the mud, they will remain in the mud and they won't want to be washed off.

God's love for us never changes. And He loves us so much, that He doesn't want us wallowing in a mud pit.

**8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.**

What John is saying here is that when people continue to live a life of habitual sin – it is proof that they have not abandoned their loyalty to the devil.

So when these false teachers spoke lies without remorse and without regret, they revealed that they belonged to Satan.

And those who followed these teachers – were also declaring their loyalty to Satan as well.

Now – if we think that John is being a little harsh here –

Turn to John 8

Because we are going to see the same thing said by Jesus to the religious rulers of the day.

**[Jhn 8:42-45 NKJV] 42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. 43 "Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. 44 "You are of [your] father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he**

**speaks a lie, he speaks from his own [resources], for he is a liar and the father of it. 45 "But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.**

Here is what Jesus is basically saying

There is a group of people that believe what He says

And there is a group of people who doesn't believe what He says

And because of that – a loyalty is assigned

Loyalty to Jesus

or

Loyalty to Satan

And that is exactly what we do

Either when we believe in a lie or walk in a lie or walk in rebellion.

But notice again this amazing biblical truth that John provides –

**For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.**

John already told us earlier that Jesus was manifested to take away our sins

And now he tells us that Jesus was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil

**[Jhn 12:31 NKJV] 31 "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.**

On the cross Jesus accomplished many amazing things.

He took the penalty for our sins and gave us His righteousness.

Therefore, the devil has no power over the eternal destiny of believers in Christ.

It isn't that the devil can't tempt a Christian to sin—and succeed sometimes—it's that Jesus' death bore all the wrath of God against that sin, and God doesn't hold the sin against the Christian.

Not only did Jesus' death destroy the works of the devil in relation to our eternal destiny, but it provided for our personal sanctification.

Believers have the gift of the Holy Spirit who indwells them and leads them into Christlikeness.

The Spirit seals those who believe in Christ, and the devil cannot remove them from His promises.

**9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.**

Do believers still sin? Yes

1 John 1:8

We know that we still struggle with sin

So what does John mean when he says -

Whoever has been born of God does not sin – in what sense?

In the sense - that we don't want to

A believer cannot persist in habitual, continual sin because he or she is born of God.

When a believer sins – a little voice will whisper in the ear, “That is not you – this is not what you were meant to be -”

We have the Holy Spirit

We have the Word of God

We have been set apart

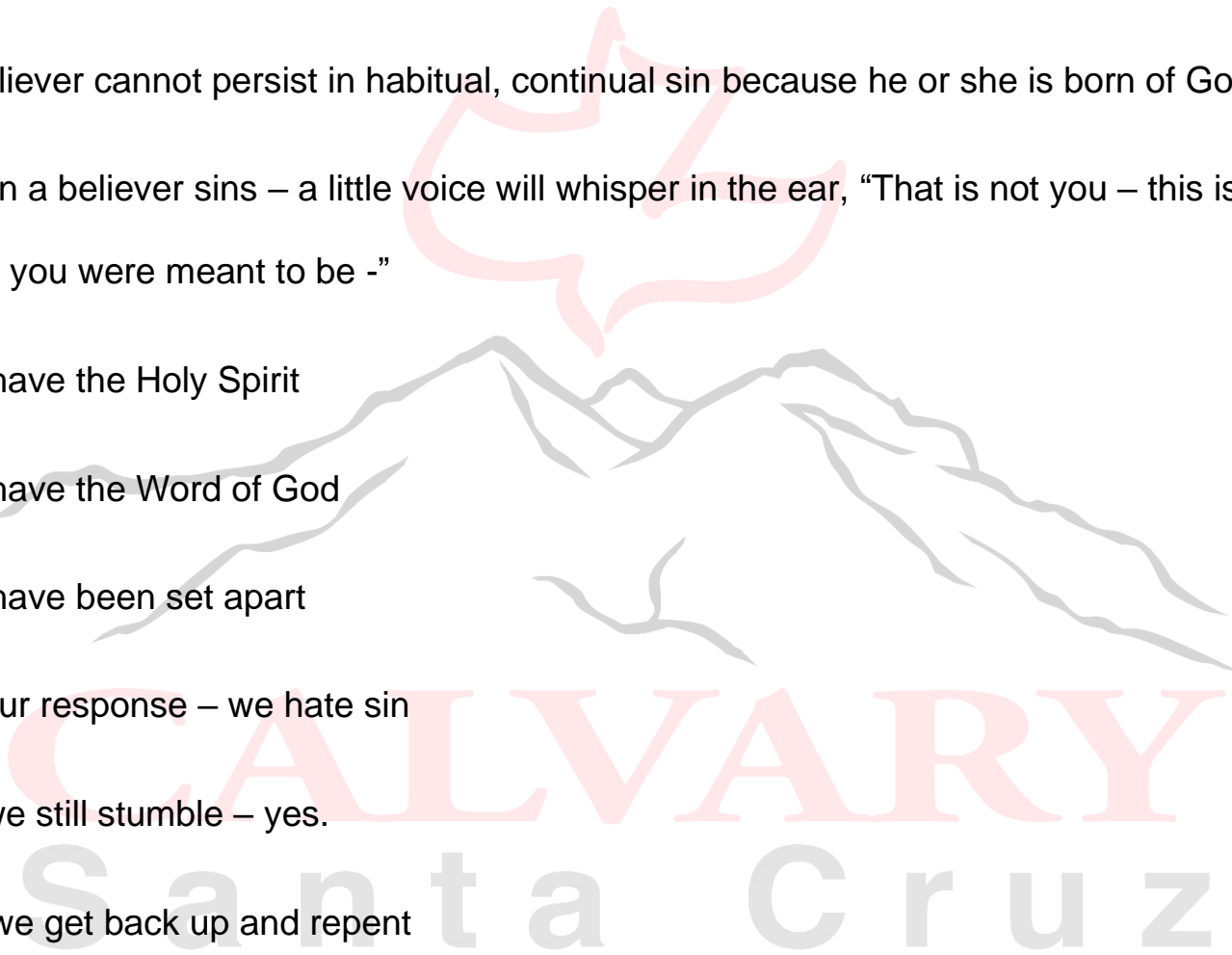
So our response – we hate sin

Do we still stumble – yes.

But we get back up and repent

And yes, we will continue to be tempted and He will give us the power to overcome the temptation – He will give us a path to take

And little by little, as we abide in Him – we will have fewer failures





That is what the mark of a real Christian is, he or she is growing away from sin and he is turning away from evil things.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I

accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

The only sure, unchallengeable, unshakeable proof of Christian grace is Christlike character and righteous living.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

