

Sermon #1818¹

Miscellaneous Sermons

Title: **“IN HIM IS NO SIN”**

Text: 1 John 3:5

Subject: *The Believer’s Freedom from Sin
 In Christ*

Introduction:

Let me begin by telling you why I am preaching this message.

1. I am bringing this message to you, first and foremost, for **the glory of God**. I want to magnify God our Savior in all things, but most especially in that which I preach. The first and primary object of gospel preaching is, ought to be, and must be the glory of God.

¹ Redeemer Baptist Church – Louisville, KY – Friday, May 19, 2000 – Spring Lake, NC (05-26-00)—Christian Fellowship Church, North Brunswick, NJ (Saturday AM 09/20/03)—Danville (AM 09/28/03) — Todds RD Grace Church, Lexington, KY (Wednesday 10/05/05) — Danville (Sunday AM – 09/28/03) — College Grove Grace Church – College Grove, TN (SAT 10/17/09)

Tape # X-79a

Reading: 1 John 3:1-24

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2. Second, I am preaching this message because I hope that God the Holy Spirit will use it to inspire your hearts, the hearts of you who know, love, and trust the Lord Jesus Christ, with greater love for and confidence in him. **I hope your hearts will erupt with love, praise, gratitude, and adoration for Christ.**

3. Third, I am bringing this message to you because I want to do what I can to **entice and persuade you who are yet without Christ to trust him.** I want you to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. I want you to be saved. I want you to experience the wonder of his grace.

LOOK AT OURSELVES

With those things in mind, we will begin in 1 John 1:8-10. **Let's take an honest look at ourselves, as we read these verses together.**

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(1 John 1:8-10) “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (9) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (10) If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”

I am going to tell you some things about myself that may shock some of you. They will shock you because you because you refuse to honestly face and acknowledge what you are. Some of you will identify with what I have to say because, as I describe myself, you will know that I am describing you, too. I want us to open the door of our dark corrupt hearts, and enter into its most secret chambers. What loathsome, creeping things, what foul creatures, what abominable and frightful monsters do you see there? I will tell you what I see.

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In my heart of sinful flesh I see every evil thing that a man has ever done or imagined against God (Matt. 15:19-20).

(Matthew 15:19-20) “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: (20) These are *the things* which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.”

Here, in my depraved heart, I see depravity itself. **Total depravity is more than a doctrine I have been taught. It is the every day experience of my life!** Evil thoughts, murderous imaginations, vile adulteries and fornications, deceit, thefts, lies, and blasphemies are the things that I find in me, in my flesh. Therefore, I readily acknowledge that “*in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing.*” (Rom. 7:18).

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Before God saved me, I thought things would be different. I knew my sins would not be eradicated. But I did think they would be fewer, weaker, and less troublesome. Things are not as I had dreamed! I was shocked to wake up one day and realize that I am, by nature, just as sinful and vile as ever, and that I always will be in this world. Until this body of flesh dies, my sin will not die, or even diminish!

I am trying to be honest with you because I want you to be honest with yourself and honest with God. Before God saved you, did you ever imagine that a saved person could be so vile and base as you know yourself to be? **I never thought it was possible for a saved man to...**

- love Christ so little as I do and to love this world so much!
- trust the Son of God so little and to fret so much!

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- have such a cold heart of indifference to the things of God and such a lively spirit toward the things of this world as I do!
- have such a hard time praying and reading the Word of God as I do!
- be so impatient, murmuring, and resentful of God’s providence as I am!²

In myself, honestly, in myself, I see no good thing, nothing righteous, nothing holy, nothing good! **I do pray**; but my prayers are full of selfish desires. I never prayed a prayer that deserved to be heard of God. **I do read the Word of God** and desire to believe it and obey it; but my mind wonders all over the world and runs to every imaginable evil, even when I am reading and studying Holy Scripture! **I do love Christ**. I love him because he first loved me (1 John 4:19). But my love for Christ is shameful. **I**

² We prepare for big trials; but the little, every day trials are more difficult. One of the old writers said, “It takes as much grace to bear patiently the breaking of a piece of fine china as it does to bear the loss of an only child.”

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do trust my God; but my faith is so mingled with unbelief that it can hardly be described as faith. **I do rest in Christ**; but my rest is terribly restless.

What about you? What do you see in yourself?³ Old **John Newton** said it better than I can. — He said, “I am nothing. I have nothing. And I can do nothing. So if I come to nothing, nothing will be lost.” I think I can identify with that.

Illustration: *Conversation in Grand Rapids*
– “Are you more holy now than you were ten years ago?”

LOOK AT CHRIST

³ Look at yourself. What do you see? Is it sin, just sin, nothing but sin? If you see anything else, you are not being honest. When I hear men talk about living the victorious life, or getting the victory over sin, I must confess, I know nothing about that, nothing at all!

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Now, **let’s take a careful look at the Lord Jesus Christ, as he is revealed in Holy Scripture** (1 John 3:5).

(1 John 3:5) “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.”

Though he was made sin for us when he hung upon the cursed tree, bearing our sins in his own body, our Lord Jesus Christ had no sin of his own.

- No Original Sin!
- No Adamic Sin Nature!
- No Actual Sin!

Though he is the only man who ever lived who truly knows what sin is (He knows how God views sin because this man is himself God!), **“He knew no sin.”** He was **“holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.”** Though

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he ate and drank with sinners, though he graciously receives sinners, he was himself infinitely **“separate from sinners,”** for this man is personally perfectly holy, both as God and as man.

This is very, very important. It is important that we see this, because, **in order for him to be a suitable sacrifice for sin, it was necessary that our Savior be altogether without sin.**

The sinners’ Substitute must be personally innocent, righteous and holy. — He must be a man. – Else he could not suffer for man (Heb. 10:1-5).

(Hebrews 10:1-5) “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. (2) For then would they not have

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ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. (3) But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. (4) For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. (5) Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.”

He must be an innocent man. — Else his sufferings must be for his own sins. It is written, *“It must be perfect to be accepted.”* — **He must be the God-man, a man who is God, a man of infinite worth.** – Else his death could not satisfy the justice of God.

But, in order to redeem us from our sins and justify us, in order to make us just before God, the Son of God, the Darling of Heaven, the Lord of Glory had to be made sin for us!

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— By a wondrous, mysterious, unexplainably, infinitely gracious transfer of our sin and guilt to him, the Lord Jesus Christ was made sin for us. **Our sins** were made his. When he was made sin, our sins became his and were imputed to him. **Our guilt** was transferred to him and became his. **Our shame** became his shame. **Our reproach** he took to be his own reproach. **Our foolishness** (perversity) was made his foolishness (perversity) (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:24; Ps. 40:12; 69:4-5).

(2 Corinthians 5:21) “For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

(1 Peter 2:24) “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”

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(Psalms 40:12) “For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me.”

(Psalms 69:4-5) “They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, *being* mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored *that* which I took not away. (5) O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee.”

Listen carefully and understand what the Scriptures teach. **When Christ was made sin for us, he became totally responsible for all the sins of God’s elect in the eyes of God’s holy law, and was rewarded accordingly.** The law and justice of God was fully spent on him. The sword of justice awoke against him, and

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buried itself in him. The fire of God’s wrath consumed him; and he consumed the fire of God’s wrath! “With one tremendous draught of love, he drank damnation dry!”

Illustration: Here is the one Sacrifice that Consumed the Fire!

(Romans 8:1) “*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

Look at 1 John 3:5 again. The Holy Spirit here declares that “**He was manifested to take away our sins.**” Either he did it or he didn’t! I am here to tell you that he did it! **When he died under the terrible wrath of God as our Substitute, he actually put away our sins, which had been made his, by the sacrifice of himself.**

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He didn't try to do it. He did it. He didn't offer to do it. He did it. He didn't make it possible for sins to be put away. He actually put away all the sins of all those people for whom he died! **Redemption by blood is the forgiveness of sins!** You cannot have forgiveness without redemption; and you cannot have redemption without forgiveness (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14).

(Ephesians 1:7) “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.”

(Colossians 1:14) “In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins.”

“Now, once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself!” — Thank God! Christ has put away the sins of his people! Behold the risen Christ,

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“justified in the Spirit.” Search the empty tomb. The risen Christ has put away our sins!

(Romans 4:25) “Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”

(Romans 5:1) “Therefore being justified, (**PUT THE COMMA RIGHT HERE.**) by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:”

And, now (Are you listening?), **that glorious Mediator in heaven, who was once made to be sin for us, once again has no sin.** — “*In him is no sin!*” — (1 Pet. 4:1)

(1 Peter 4:1) “Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.”

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Illustration: The Scapegoat

He who sits yonder, upon the throne of God, in heaven and makes intercession for us has no sin! We know, and are assured, that God will accept his intercession for us because he is without sin and perfect. He is holy. He is righteous. — **“And in him is no sin!”**

This is the basis of our assurance and confidence with God. We have a perfect Substitute and Sacrifice. We have an Advocate with God the Father, whom God the Father has accepted on our behalf (1 John 1:1-2).

(1 John 2:1-2) “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: (2) And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins* of the whole

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world.”

The holy One was made sin. He who was made sin, having put away sin, is now made holy again.

We have seen ourselves. By nature we are nothing but sin. And we rejoice to see Christ, who was “*manifested to take away our sins*” and “*in whom is no sin.*” Now, ...

LOOK AT OURSELVES IN CHRIST

Now, third, let’s look at ourselves in Christ.

(1 John 3:5) “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.”

When John says, “in him is no sin,” he is talking about Christ the Mediator and those who are in him, those whose sins he has put

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away. He is telling us that in Christ we who are Christ’s have no sin! Imagine that! The Lord Jesus Christ “**was manifested to take away our sins;**” and he has done it! — “**In him is no sin!**” The all-seeing eye of God sees no sin in the believer, because in Christ the believer has no sin.

Let me tell you plainly what this does not mean. — This does not mean that God is not aware of our transgressions. – That would be a denial of his omniscience.

This does not mean that God is not displeased by our sins. – That would be a denial of his holiness. – We are told plainly that the thing which David did in the matter of Uriah displeased the Lord.

Because God is aware of our sins and displeased with them, he chastens us because of them, as the loving Father he is (Heb. 12:5-11). – Yet, he

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is never angry with us. – He never punishes us for sin, sins which Christ put away, for which Christ suffered, the debt of which Christ has already paid in full.

What does John’s statement mean? — *“In him is no sin.”* **It means that our sins have been completely expunged from the record books of the court of heaven.** – In so far as the law and justice of God is concerned, those sinners for whom Christ died have no sin, no guilt, no debt, no obligation (Ps. 103:12; Isa. 44:22; 1 Pet. 4:1-2).

(Psalms 103:12) “As far as the east is from the west, *so* far hath he removed our transgressions from us.”

(Isaiah 44:22) “I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.”

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(1 Peter 4:1-2) “Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; (2) That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.”

It also means that God will never remember our sins against us (Isa. 43:25; Heb. 8:12; 10:12-17).

(Isaiah 43:25) “I, *even I, am* he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.”

(Hebrews 8:12) “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”

(Hebrews 10:12-17) “But this man, after he

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had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; (13) From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. (14) For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. (15) *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, (16) *This is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; (17) And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.”

Our great God has cast all our sins into the infinite depths of the sea of his infinite forgetfulness (Mic. 7:19).

When John says, “*in him is no sin,*” he is talking about **the just and righteous, absolute, and complete forgiveness of sin, such forgiveness as demands the non-imputation of sin to us**

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(Rom. 4:8; Ps. 32:1-7; Num. 23:21; Jer. 23:6; 33:16; 50:20).

(Romans 4:8) “Blessed *is* the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”

(Psalms 32:1-7) “Blessed *is he* whose transgression *is* forgiven, *whose* sin *is* covered. (2) Blessed *is* the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit *there is* no guile. (3) When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. (4) For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah. (5) I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah. (6) For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of

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great waters they shall not come nigh unto him. (7) Thou *art* my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.”

(Numbers 23:21) “He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the LORD his God *is* with him, and the shout of a king *is* among them.”

(Jeremiah 23:6) “In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

(Jeremiah 33:16) “In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this *is the name* wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness.”

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(Jeremiah 50:20) “In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be none*; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.”

LOOK AT OURSELVES
AS WE REALLY ARE IN CHRIST

But there is more to this, much more than legal mumbo jumbo. This is real.

- Christ really was made sin for us.
- He really suffered the wrath of God for us, until wrath was gone forever!
- He really did put away our sins.
- And all who are in Christ, in the sweet experience of his grace really are without sin; for that new man created in us in righteousness and true holiness is “*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*”

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So, fourth, I want us to briefly look at ourselves as we really are in Christ (1 John 3:5-9).

(1 John 3:5-9) “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. (6) Whosoever abideth in him **sinneth not**: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. (7) Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. (8) He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. (9) Whosoever is born of God **doth not commit sin**; for his seed remaineth in him: and **he cannot sin**, because he is born of God.”

That new man in you is the real you! That new man in you is Christ in you. Christ and the

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heaven born soul cannot be separated. We are in Christ and Christ is in us (Romans 7:14-23; Galatians 2:20). — Blessed union!

‘Twixt Jesus and the chosen race
Subsists a bond of sovereign grace,
That hell, with its infernal train,
Shall ne’er dissolve nor rend in vain

Hail! sacred union, firm and strong,
How great the grace, how sweet the song,
That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity!

One in the tomb, one when He rose,
One when He triumphed o’er His foes,
One when in heaven He took His seat,
While seraphs sang all hell’s defeat.

This sacred tie forbids their fears,
For all He is or has is theirs;
With Him, their Head, they stand or fall,

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Their life, their surety, and their all.”

Application: Let me wrap this message up. I pray that God the Holy Spirit has blessed it to your soul, for the glory of Christ, that it will be bread to strengthen you for your journey and wine to rejoice your heart.

In the covenant of grace, before the world began, the Lord God promised that he would forgive our sins (Jer. 31:33-34; Heb. 8:10-12; 10:16-18). — By his sin-atonement sacrifice of himself, as our Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ has completely put away our sins (Rom. 8:3; Col. 2:14; Heb. 9:26).

(Romans 8:3) “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”

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(Colossians 2:14) “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”

(Hebrews 9:26) “For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”

Now, believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, we are freed from sin. – Being united to him by a living faith, in him we have no sin, for “*in him is no sin.*” (Rom. 6:7-8, 11; 1 Pet. 4:1-2).

(Romans 6:7-8) “For he that is dead is freed from sin. (8) Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.”

(Romans 6:11) “Likewise reckon ye also

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yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

(1 Peter 4:1-2) “Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; (2) That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.”

The Lord God, the just and righteous God of the universe, who made the Lord Jesus Christ sin for us and punished him for our sins, to the full satisfaction of his own holy law and justice, will never impute sin to us again (Rom. 4:8). — Because Christ has put away our sins, there is no sin to be imputed to us!

It is only in this way that our God can be both “*a just Gods and a Savior*” (Isa. 45:20). Only in

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this way can his law be honored and grace bestowed. Now, believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, trusting him as our Representative, Substitute, Mediator, and Surety before God, we fulfill the law of God perfectly and completely. Because Christ fulfilled it for us, when we trust him, we establish, fulfill and magnify God’s holy law (Rom. 3:31: 8:4).

(Romans 3:31) “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.”

(Romans 8:4) “That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

Now, listen to this and rejoice. – **The law of God, being perfectly honored, totally satisfied, and completely fulfilled for us by Christ (and by us in Christ), can no more charge us with sin than it can charge Christ with sin!** Child of

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God, can you get hold of what I am preaching to you? **“IN HIM IS NO SIN!”** What blessed, God honoring, soul-cheering news this is! No wonder it is called *“the gospel,”* – the good news and glad tidings of great joy!

“My sin O the bliss of this glorious thought,
My sin, not in part, but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more, --
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!”

Being united to Christ by faith, we are truly blessed of God, for *“in him is no sin!”* *“Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord will not impute sin!”*

How would you like to go to bed tonight without sin, absolutely without sin, in God’s sight?

(2 Corinthians 5:17) “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are

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become new.”

(1 John 3:5) “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.”

Amen.