

INTRODUCTION

1. Please take God's Word and turn with me to 1 John chapter 3.
2. In our last time together we looked at verses 3-4 and today we are looking at verses 6 thru 10.
3. As we said last time that verses 4-10 are a unit of thought where we learn who are the children of God and who are the children of the devil.
4. Beginning at verse 4 John says, "Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. 5 You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin. 6 No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him. 7 Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; 8 the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. 9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is

born of God. 10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.”

5. How can you tell the difference between something that is real and something that is fake?
6. We'll sometimes that is real difficult to do.
7. No one suspected Judas to be a traitor.
8. Everyone thought he was a genuine disciple.
9. John says in verse 10, “By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious.”
10. As we take a second look at verses 4-10 this morning we are going to see the obvious.
11. We are going to see what marks a child of God and a child of the devil.
12. In our last time together we looked at versed 4 and 5.
13. And we said...

REVIEW

I. If You Practice Sin You're Not a Child of God (v.4)

- A. Because Children of God practice righteousness
- B. Because Sin is incompatible with a Christian

II. Jesus Came to Take Away Sin (v.5)

- A. This was the Purpose of His Coming
- B. Jesus was the Perfect Sacrifice Because He is Sinless

John continues to build his case against Christians habitually sinning in verse 6 by saying...

LESSON

III. Christians Continue in Christ Not Sin (v.6a)

Kenneth Wuest says "The words "abideth" and "sinneth" are used here to designate a certain class of individual. Character is shown by one's habitual actions, not the extraordinary ones. The tense of the verbs is present, the kind of action, continuous, habitual. Thus, **"every one who habitually is abiding in Him," is a saved person, and, "every one who habitually is sinning," an**

unsaved person. A Christian as a habit of life is abiding in fellowship with the Lord Jesus. Sin may at times enter his life. But sin is the exception, not the rule."¹

So John says, "No one who abides in Him sins."

"Abides" (meno) (pres.act.part.), "to remain, stay."²

The idea is "to continue a certain state, condition, or activity."

Jesus used this word when speaking to the Jews who said they believed in Him in John 8:31-32 (NASB) So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

The mark of a true believer is (they)...

A. Believers Abide in Christ (v.6a)

1. The classic passage on abiding in Christ is found In John 15:1-8. Here Jesus contrasts those who

¹ Wuest, Kenneth S. [*Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*](#). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997. Print.

² Louw Johannes P. and Nida Eugene A. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament. Logos.

abide in Him with those who don't

2. In 1 John 2:4 John has already said if you don't continue in His commandments you're a liar
3. He also says later in 1 John 4:8 if you don't love you don't know God because God is love
4. When John wrote his 3rd epistle, he said in 3 John 1:11 (NASB) Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God.
5. **John is black and white on this issue. You're either a Christian who does not practice sin, keeps the commandments, loves, and does good or you're a child of the devil who practices sin, disobeys God, hates, and does evil. The line has been drawn.**

If you don't abide or continue in Christ you are continuing to serve the devil and practice sin because Christians...

B. They Do Not Continue or Practice Sin (v.6a)

“No one who abides in Him sins.”

“Sins” (hamartia) is a present tense verb. Again, refers to continuous action, a habit.

Lenski says, “Perfectionists misunderstood this statement and think that it refers to total sanctification: has stopped sinning altogether. They disregard the tense. They ignore 1:8–10; 2:1, 2; 3:3. In 1:8, 9 John makes confession also of his own sins: “If we keep confessing our sins.” So in Rom. 7:14–25 Paul deplores the fact of his still sinning, of the sin power trying to make him its war captive (v. 23).”³

1. For a Christian to practice sin makes it inconsistent with their nature as those who are born of Him (2:29; 3:9)
2. It also makes it inconsistent with the purpose of Christ’s coming to take away sins (v.5).
3. Christians do not continue to practice the sin for which Jesus died. That’s not to say they don’t have infrequent sins as we have already noted.

John continues in verse 6 to call out those who claim a relationship with Christ but practice sin. He says...

³ Lenski, R. C. H. [*The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude*](#). Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1966. Print.

IV. If You Continue in Sin You Haven't Seen Him or Known Him (v.6b-8)

A. The Issue is the Same

1. Continuing in Christ (or)

“Abides” present tense participle

2. Continuing in sin

(The word “sin’s” is used in verse 6 two times, again both occur in the present tense indicating an ongoing action)

“No one who (practices) sin has seen Him or knows Him.”

B. Habitual Sinners Do Not Know Christ (v.6)

Up to this point in John’s epistle, John has already defined what an unbeliever looks like. He says...

- 1. They walk in darkness (1:6)**
- 2. The truth is not in them (1:8)**
- 3. God’s Word is not in them (1:10)**
- 4. They do not keep His commandments (2:4)**
- 5. They hate their brother (2:9)**

6. Their sins have not been forgiven (2:12)
7. They love the world (2:15)
8. They left the fellowship (2:19)
9. They deny Jesus is the Christ (2:22)
10. They do not practice righteousness (2:29)

C. Those Who Abide in Christ Know Him (v.6)

John says...

1. They walk as He walked (2:6)
2. They love their brother (2:10)
3. They have the Word of God in them (2:14)
4. They do the will of God (2:17)

D. Make Sure No One Deceives You (vv.7-8)

The word “deceives” (planato, pres.act.imp.) It means, “to be lead astray.”⁴

1. This is a command!
2. This is a call to examine the lives of those who profess Christ and not be taken in by their deception

⁴ MacArthur, John, Jr., ed. [The MacArthur Study Bible](#). electronic ed. Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997. Print.

3. Since false teachers were attempting to pervert the fundamentals of the faith, the possibility existed that some Christians might be fooled into accepting what they were advocating. To prevent this deception from occurring, John repeatedly emphasized the basics of Christianity, e.g., the need for obedience, the need for love, and the need for a proper view of Christ.⁵

4. The issue is this: “the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil” (vv.7b-8)
 - a) “The devil has sinned from the beginning” (Ezek.28:11-17; Isa.14:12-16)

The day will come when all of Satan’s activity will cease in the universe and he will be sent to hell forever (Rev. 20:10).⁶

 - b) Jesus came “to destroy the works of the devil”

⁵ Ibid., MacArthur.

⁶ Ibid., MacArthur.

- c) What are the “works of the devil”? In John 8:44 (NASB) You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.
- d) That’s his character. His works are sin, rebellion, temptation, ruling the world, persecution and accusation of saints, instigation of false teachers, power of death.⁷

V. No One Who is Born of God Practices Sin (vv.9-10)

A. Because Born Again Christians Cannot Habitually Sin (v.9a)

1. They are “born of God”

Literally, “everyone having been born of God sin not is doing”), again expresses a universal assertion which allows no exceptions. The articular perfect passive participle (*ho*

⁷ Ibid., MacArthur.

gegennēmenos) asserts the past fact of his new birth with the result that he is now a new-born being.⁸ That “signifies that the Christian has already been born of God and remains in that condition.”⁹

2. And as a “new-born being,” he doesn’t “practice sin.”
3. John uses this phrase “born of God” throughout this epistle:
 - a) 1 John 4:7 (NASB) Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.
 - b) 1 John 5:1 (NASB) Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him.
 - c) 1 John 5:4 (NASB) For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the

⁸ Hiebert, D. Edmond. *The Epistles of John: An Expositional Commentary*. Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1991. Print.

⁵¹ Dodd, pp. 77–78; William Barclay, *The Letters of John and Jude*, Daily Study Bible (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), p. 94; Lenski, p. 463.

⁵² Westcott, p. 107; Bruce, p. 92; Kistemaker, p. 303.

⁵³ A. E. Brooke, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Johannine Epistles*, International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribners’ Sons, 1912), p. 89; Burdick, p. 247.

⁹ Womack, Morris M. *1, 2 & 3 John*. Joplin, MO: College Press, 1998. Print. The College Press NIV Commentary.

victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

d) 1 John 5:18 (NASB) We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him.

4. “Born of God” occurs 2 times in verse 9

5. If you practice righteousness it gives evidence you are “born of Him” (2:29).

B. Because God’s Seed Abides in Him (v.9a)

John says one of the reasons why he doesn’t practice sin any longer is “His seed abides in Him.”

What is meant by “His seed?”

“His seed” may denote the Word of God, or the gospel message, as the regenerating agent that produces the new birth (cf. James 1:18, 21; 1 Pet. 1:23–25).⁵¹ Others take the term more generally as designating the divine principle of life, the new birth, which God implants in the believer.⁵² Still others

suggest that the reference is to the Holy Spirit as the life-giving agent.⁵³

Another says, “The *spérma* of God denotes the power of God operative through the Holy Spirit working in believers.”¹⁰

Whatever the sperma is, it is “the germ of the divine life [that] has been implanted in our souls”¹¹ because it is called “His seed” which refers to it being God’s seed, so it seems to be connected with the phrase “born of God.”

So I lean to it being “the new life which is imparted to the believer at the time of conversion.”¹²

John MacArthur says, “The new birth involves the acquisition of a seed, which refers to the principle of life of God imparted to the believer at salvation’s new birth. John uses this image of a planted seed to picture the divine element involved in being born again.”¹³

¹⁰ Zodhiates, Spiros. [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) 2000 : n. pag. Print.

¹¹ Smith, David. “[The Epistles of John.](#)” *The Expositor’s Greek Testament: Commentary*. Vol. 5. New York: George H. Doran Company. 185. Print.

¹² MacDonald, William. [Believer’s Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments](#). Ed. Arthur Farstad. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995. Print.

¹³ Ibid., MacArthur.

John Piper says, “The reason the new birth inevitably changes the life of sinning, John says, is that when we are born again, “God’s seed” abides in us, and we “cannot keep on sinning.” That’s how real the connection between the new birth and daily physical life is...God himself is at work in the new birth so powerfully that they cannot keep on practicing sin. God’s seed cannot make peace with a pattern of sinful behavior.”¹⁴

In short, “The believer does not continue in sin because of the implanted seed.”¹⁵

C. Because He is Born of God (v.9b)

Daniel Akin says, “This statement is more sweeping than the first and emphasizes the incongruity between the life of sin and the new life of the child of God.”¹⁶

D. Edmond Hiebert writes: “John insists that the believer’s inability to continue in the practice of sin is due to the fact that he has been born of God.... It is a moral incompatibility between the believer’s old and new nature.”¹⁷

¹⁴ <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/no-one-born-of-god-makes-a-practice-of-sinning>

¹⁵ Akin, Daniel L. [1, 2, 3 John](#). Vol. 38. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001. Print. The New American Commentary.

¹⁶ Ibid., Akin.

¹⁷ Ibid., Hiebert.

As Bruce maintains: The new birth involves a radical change in human nature; for those who have not experienced it, sin is natural, whereas for those who have experienced it, sin is unnatural—so unnatural, indeed, that its practice constitutes a powerful refutation of any claim to possess the divine life. John’s antitheses are clearcut. While they are to be understood in the context of his letter and of the situation which it presupposes, any attempt to weaken them out of regard for human infirmity, or to make them less sharp and uncompromising than they are, is to misinterpret them.”¹⁸

The life of the child who has been born of God is marked by the purity and righteousness of the One whom he follows. The child of God does not live a life of habitual sin because (1) the seed of God remains in him, and (2) he has been born of God. Although the Christian still falls prey to sinful acts, John insists that it is impossible for sin to become a believer’s pattern of life.¹⁹

D. Because He is a Child of God Not a Child of the Devil (v.10)

¹⁸ Bruce, *Epistles of John*, 92.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Akin.

1. The devil has his children that manifest his deeds
2. God's children habitually display the righteousness of God

John says in verse 10, "By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother."

3. This verse serves as both a summary and conclusion of what has gone before and a transition to what follows.
4. Opinion is divided as to the antecedent of the phrase "by this" (*en toutō*).
5. Some believe it refers to what precedes.³⁹²
6. Others see it as a transition to what follows,³⁹³ and still others suggest it refers to both what precedes and what follows.³⁹⁴
7. John uses the pronoun both ways in his epistle.

8. Burdick points out, “It makes little difference since both the preceding and the following context speak of the same fact: the family of God is marked by the practice of righteousness.”³⁹⁵
9. What is crucial to John’s transition is the identification of the members of two opposing families: the children of God and the children of the devil.
10. This verse brings to a conclusion John’s discussion in vv. 4–10 concerning the identifiable nature of the child of God.
11. John reaffirms that both the child of God and the child of the devil can be identified by what they do.
12. There are only two classes of people in John’s diagnosis—those who are children of God and those who are children of the devil.
13. John knows of no intermediate group.
14. Sharp lines are drawn between those who practice sin and those who practice

righteousness.

15. One is fathered by the devil, and the other is fathered by God.
16. The apostle's twofold criterion for distinguishing the children of God and the children of Satan is stated negatively.
17. First, "anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God" (*pas ho mē poiōn dikaiosunēn ouk estin ek tou theou*).
18. The absence of righteous character, as revealed by one's continual unrighteous conduct, indicates that the individual is not a child of God.³⁹⁷
19. Moral conduct is a test of one's spiritual heritage.
20. Second, "anyone who does not love his brother" (*hō mē agapōn ton adelphon autou*) is not a child of God.
21. This last phrase provides a transition to the theme of love that will dominate the second major section of the epistle (3:11–5:12), but it is not to

be separated from its immediate application.

22. As Plummer notes, “Love is righteousness in relation to others.”³⁹⁸²⁰

1. **CONCLUSION**

Are you born of God?

2. If so, it will evidence itself in righteous living.
3. The pattern of your life will be righteousness and holiness.
4. That doesn't mean you are perfect in displaying righteousness but it does mean your sin will be infrequent.
5. Erwin Lutzer says, “Although we become Christians instantaneously by faith in Christ, knowing God and developing faith is a gradual process. There are no shortcuts to maturity. It takes time to be holy.”²¹

²⁰ Ibid., Akin.

³⁹² See Robertson, *WP* 4:223.

³⁹³ Brooke, *Johannine Epistles*, 90.

³⁹⁴ Marshall, *Epistles of John*, 187.

³⁹⁵ Burdick, *The Letters of John the Apostle*, 248.

²¹ Draper's Quotations for the Christian World.

6. Although that is true it's clear to note that your habits have now changed.
7. If you're habits have not changed you're not a Christian and I would call you to repent and surrender your life to Jesus Christ for salvation.
8. Let's pray.