

“What about Sin?” ***1 John 3:4-10***

INRO:

The Apostle John wrote his epistle to tell us how we can know that we know God. In other words, he wrote in order to teach us how we can be sure we are walking in light as He is in the light, and having fellowship one with the other and how the blood of Jesus, His Son can be continually cleansing us from all sin. **(1)** He started by telling us about the importance of confessing our sin. **(2)** Then he wrote about how we can ***“know that we know”*** because we want to keep His commandments. **(3)** We can also ***“know that we know”*** because we love our brothers and sisters in the Lord. **(4)** He warned us about those who would undermine our knowing, the antichrists. Then he taught us how to be ready for His coming.

After this great statement in **1 John 3:3** that ***“we know that we know”*** because we who really count on this certain return of Christ prepare by working on being holy like He is holy, John tells us again that how we act toward sin helps us ***“know that we know.”*** **V.10** shows us clearly where John is going with this discussion.

“In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.” (1 John 3:10)

How are the children of God and of the devil obvious? First, the Children of God Understand the Nature of Sin. Second, they also are not Sin Practicers. Finally, they are obvious because they are wary of the Peril of Sin.

I. God's Children Understand the Nature of Sin (v. 4-5).

II. God's Children do not Practice Sin (v. 6-7).

III. God's Children are Wary of the Peril of Sin (v. 8-10).

I. God's Children Understand the Nature of Sin (v. 4-5).

A. After John said in **1 John 3:3**, if we really believe Christ is coming we will want to be holy like He is holy, He begins to describe how our conversion is also obvious to us. Our conversion is obvious to us because of our relationship with sin itself. First, he said we who are God's children understand the nature of sin itself.

“Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.” (1 John 3:4-5)

B. John makes three statements about sin. Sin is Lawlessness. If we sin, we are many times choosing to violate the Lord's Law. This is significant because of what John has already told us in **1 John 2:3-4**.

“Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

C. He also said we know that Christ was manifested to take away sin. This is a vital truth.

“And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins.” 1 John 3:5

Our whole relationship with God depends on this one reality. He forgave and took away our sins. **Hebrews 9:26** says;

“He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”

He abrogated them. He wiped our sins away.

D. Third, the Lord is sinless. Our Christ is holy that is why we want to be holy like Him. So, we can know that we know Him because we understand these three truths.

II. God's Children do not Practice Sin (v. 6-7).

A. The obvious child of God understands the nature of sin, and he or she also does not practice sin.

“Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.” (1 John 3:6-7)

B. These two verses spawned many different attempts at interpretation. **(1)** Some try to make this verse positional. **V.10** shoots that idea in the head. We cannot see position except through external works in our own lives.

“Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’ Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.” (James 2:17-18)

(2) Others fear John is suddenly teaching sinless perfection. Remember what John wrote in **Ch 1**. Obviously, John understood that we cannot be sinlessly perfect this side of glory. The fact is that he tells us that someone who can habitually live in sin better check his salvation experience. An indication that we really are converted is that we cannot abide in sin.

C. In **v.7**, John turns the coin over and repeats how we must practice righteousness. This indicates that the sinning in **v.6** is not falling into sin but practicing sin. In short, the Apostle is saying again we want to be righteous and do righteous because He is righteous. Our relationship with Jesus Christ is shown not just by not doing wrong, but by desiring to do right.

III. God's Children are Wary of the Peril of Sin (v. 8-10)

A. The children of God and the children of Satan are obvious because, God's children know the nature of sin. Second, they are obvious because God's Children do not practice sin. Finally, God's children are obvious because they are wary of the peril of sin. They

understand that tolerating and practicing sin in one's life is dangerous because of two reasons.

B. To practice sin may indicate that that one belongs to Satan instead of to God.

“He who (practices) 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.” (1 John 3:8)

The problem with sin is that it is deceptive and we can deceive ourselves easily that it is not dangerous to play with sin. If we play with sin, John warns us that it may indicate that Christ never came into our lives. This is true and important because it goes against the very reason that Jesus came. He came to destroy the works of the devil.

C. Practicing sin is dangerous because practicing sin is not something a child of God can do regularly.

“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.” (1 John 3:9)

This is saying the same thing as v.8 with a slightly different emphasis. The evidence of a divine work in our hearts through faith is a very different relationship with sin. We cannot persistently remain in sin without God bugging us because we are changed.

D. All of this is why John could state the conclusion in v.10.

“In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.” (1 John 3:10)

How does this apply to us?

Keep in mind this is not a standard to be held up to measure others. It is a standard for our self-examination. This is how you know that you know. You know that you know Him because sin bothers you and you cannot tolerate it continually in your life.

So, how are you and I doing here? We need to answer this question to God alone.