

# SIN AND GOD'S CHILDREN | 1 John 3:4-9 | Pastor Mark Bofill | 12/18/2022

I. Sin Defined (4,8a-B) | II. Sin Disabled (5,8c) | III. Sin Denounced (6-7,9)

**INTRO:** Last week we learned of the *Contemplations of God's Children*, i.e., their Position, Perception and Purification (1 John 3:1-3). However, (v.3) serves as a pivotal verse to dive into our next lesson re: **SIN AND GOD'S CHILDREN (1 John 3:4-9)**. John's mention of "*purity*", now turns to the subject of "*sin*."

- **This section is important for God's Children to KNOW**, as it teaches us how to regard sin? Is this something to be taken lightly? NO! – It also fits into **John's overall theme of combating the Gnostic-like influences** that were teaching that sinning did not affect one's relationship with God – *Baloney!* **READ (tt.1 John 3:4-9)**

**I. SIN DEFINED (4,8a-b)** – If you were to **survey people** as to the meaning of the word sin, you will find a variety of answers. Some might define sin as doing wrong or hurting other people or not fulfilling our potential. Others may claim that sin is a morality tale to control the "weak." **Too often, people think of sin only as a certain act.** But the true meaning of sin goes much further than that! So...

**A. What is SIN? (4b)** – The Greek word for "*SIN*" is {Gr. *Harmartia*}, which literally means "*to miss the mark*" – The term '*missing the mark*' comes from the old English game of shooting arrows through a hoop. If you missed one you were called a sinner, because you missed the mark. \***What then is the MARK? Righteousness is the Mark!** (Romans 3:21-23) says, *But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, <sup>22</sup> even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (i.e., God's Standard of Righteousness)

1. Simply put, John tells us that "**Sin is Lawlessness**" – i.e., breaking God's law, yes...but much more. **God tells us what is right and what is wrong in his Word, the Bible.** Whenever we do something that God tells us not to do it is disobedience and a wrong attitude in reference to the expressed will of God and His work. – Plainly spoken, it is **downright rebellion against God**, living as if there was no law or ignoring it, as (James 4:17), informs us "*to him who knows to do good, and does not do it, to him it has become sin.*" Also (1 Sam 15:22)

- It can be manifested in three ways: *Thought, Word, & Deed*. (i.e., What we Think, Say and Do!)

2. What does John mean by use of the phrase "**Whoever Commits Sin?**" (4a) – The Greek word is more accurately translated: "*does*" or "*doeth*," referring to **those who make sin a habitual practice**. – **This is NOT a reference to God's Children** because even though we may stumble in sin, **sin is no longer the general practice of our lives**. – Children of God walk in the Light (1:7-8), Children of God are born of God and do not PRACTICE sin (3:9), but "*he who sins is of the devil*" (3:8a) – i.e., SINNERS walk habitually in sin, it is their PRACTICE! (*Unregenerate*)

- So then, **Sin is basically a matter of the will.** For us to assert our will against God's will is REBELLION and **rebellion is the root of sin**. (Expond. e.g., like *the little girl who refused her father when asked to sit down while the car was in motion...ignored, ignored, then sternly chided, and she finally complied, but stated, "I'm sitting down on the outside... but I'm standing on the inside!"* – truly an attitude of rebellion against her father! – We often act the same way against our Heavenly Father!) – Where does this come from?...

**B. What is the ORIGIN of Sin? (8b)** ... John tells us plainly that "*The devil has sinned from the beginning...*" – **It is imperative that we KNOW that Sin originated with Lucifer, a.k.a. Satan**

1. The Bible tells us that **Satan was the anointed cherub** in heaven (**Ezk 28:11-16**): It prophesied about the king of Tyre; but then obviously Satan /two-fold application. (*Sin defiled & will destroy Satan!*)

2. Satan wanted to be God (c.f. Isa 14:12-17) – *The king of Tyre though he was a god* (c.f. Ezk 28:2)

3. Satan introduced mankind to **SIN, LAWLESSNESS, and REBELLION against God in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:1-7)** – (*Expound - Adam and Eve fell in thought, word and deed!*) – (**Rom 5:12 NLT**) *When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for all sinned.*

**C. WHY do God's Children Sin? (4a,)** *"Whoever commits Sin; He who Sins is of the devil..."* Failure to understand the true nature of "sin" is one reason why there is so much apathy toward it today. But every time we sin, we adversely affect our relationship with either God, others, or our own selves! – Re: the Adam and Eve's fall... *If man in his perfection was so readily deceived by sin, what do you think of yourself, fallen and inclined to evil as you are? Will not sin soon deceive you? – C.H. Spurgeon*

**CLOSING THOUGHT:** Are you fully aware of **what sin** is and how it affects You and Others? Even more so, how it affects God Almighty? Listen to this **definition** by Pastor John Piper: **What is sin...?**

- The Glory of God not honored
- The Holiness of God not revered
- The Greatness of God not admired
- The Power of God not praised
- The Truth of God not sought
- The Wisdom of God not esteemed
- The Beauty of God not treasured
- The Goodness of God not savored
- The Faithfulness of God not trusted
- The Commandments of God not obeyed
- The Justice of God not respected
- The Wrath of God not feared
- The Grace of God not cherished
- The Presence of God not prized
- **The Person of God not loved.... THAT IS SIN!**

**II. SIN DISABLED (5,8c)** – Since the fall of mankind, no human being can overcome sin by his own efforts! **Even though so many think they can get away with it!** (*They of play with it...Baby Gorilla illustration*) – **SIN MUST BE ERADICATED!** If sin was allowed to continue, it would have destroyed everything in God's Good Creation! **Something had to be done.** God accomplished this...

**A. By The MANIFESTATION of Jesus (5)** *"He was manifested to take away our sins..."* – This is the **Gospel Message** that we must share with the world that is guilt-ridden because of sin. **What is it...?**

1. Jesus Christ was born into this fallen world (**1 Cor 15:3**), *For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that **Christ died for our sins** according to the Scriptures – (**1 Pet 3:18**) For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that **He might bring us to God**, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.* (c.f. 2 Cor 5:21)

2. C.H. Spurgeon expounds on Jesus's Manifestation: "And he was manifested to take away the power of thy sins; that is to say, to conquer thy reigning lusts, to take away thine evil imaginations to purify thee, and make thee like himself. Well, beloved, what a mercy it is that someone was manifested to take away our sins from us! For some of us have been striving a long, long while, to conquer our sins, and we cannot do it." Jesus manifested b/c Mankind needed a Savior! (John 14:6)

*Sin was also Disabled...*

B. **By The MISSION of Jesus (8c)** "that He might destroy the works of the devil..." – All the works of Satan are evil. But John tells us that **Jesus came to destroy them!** – To "destroy" means "to render inoperative," or to take away power! This is exactly what Jesus did. His life, His suffering, His death, and His resurrection was **the MISSION**, that God ordained to destroy Satan's evil work. (tt. Col 2:13-15)

- **At the Cross Jesus Disabled and Exposed everything that was against us!**
- **Jesus came and bound the Strong man** (expound)
- As Christians, we can rest in the truth that **Satan is a defeated enemy!** He may still win a couple battles here and there, but **Jesus Christ has already won the war!** (AMEN!)

**CLOSING THOUGHT:** Jesus' Manifestation and Mission was executed according to His Father's perfect will! **His Work Disabled Sin and it Empowers us** to be children of God who can likewise **overcome Sin, Satan, and Self!** (But we still must do our part!)

**III. SIN DENOUNCED (6-7,9)** – Having explained what sin is and its status of disablement John now announces **two simple tests** to determine who God's Children really are. *It all comes down to...*

A. **Our Decision (6)** – We all have a choice! "Whoever abides...whoever sins...." It's Abide or Glide!

1. John says whoever abides in him does not practice sin! – Similar to what was stated in (v.4), the idea is that God's Children do not live in sin habitually! **Why? Because have a New Nature**

- (Rom 6-8) tells us that Jesus Christ broke the power of sin principal in our lives.
- The whole work of the cross is denied when a professed Christian practices deliberate sin.
- **You cannot be living in sin and at the same time rightly claim to be a child of God!**
- Children of God choose daily to ABIDE in Christ (John 15:1-5)

2. A person who deliberately and habitually sins **PROVES** that HE DOES NOT KNOW CHRIST, and therefore, **is NOT abiding in Him.** (He glides into sin! – Let me inform you church, Counterfeit Christians exist!)

*We must make...*

B. **Our Determination (7)** – John goes on to say, "...let no one deceive you... He who practices..." – John did not want God's Children to be "lead stray" by the **various strange doctrines** or even **opinions** as to what sin is and what is allowed! (Expound Personal Liberties). – So many people are deceived on this very issue because they **choose to trust in a false hope.**

- Many trust in their own works rather than the finished work of Jesus Christ.
- Many trust in their parents faith to save them.
- Some even trust in the church to save them or in their infant baptism.

Remember church... Righteousness is the mark, the standard, the target. It can only be attained by faith Jesus Christ. But if we are truly children of God, then **we will be determined to Practice Righteousness always!** – Simple logic is provided here, **if a man claims to know, God, then he will obey God.** But if he belongs to the devil, he will always obey the devil, his flesh, or this world

*What then should be...*

**C. Our Disposition (9)** – This final verse provides **the reason** why God's Children cannot practice sin. **Because of our New Spiritual Nature.** *"Whoever has been born of God..."* – The phrase **"Born of God"** means that you are **BORN AGAIN.** – *To be Born Again, a person must believe that Jesus is the Christ and that He died for their personal sins, from which they repent, by confessing and accepting Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior.* (All this is done, BY FAITH)

- **THIS IS A WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (John 3:5-8)** *"...Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."*
- When this genuinely occurs in a person, they are **REGENERATE**...they become **ALIVE in the Spirit** and are **Given a New Nature** – (2 Cor 5:17), *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.* (Expound – New Life)
- 1. **He does not sin** – Once again, John is not suggesting that one "born of God" never sins, but that one truly "born of God" **does not continuously practice sin.** (John's repetition of this fact is for emphasis of its importance. However, he repeats it another time in **(1 John 5:18)** *We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.* **WHY?** Because...
- 2. **His seed remains in him** – The "seed" is that life-giving principle that makes one a child of God. (1 Pet 1:22-23) says, *Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, <sup>23</sup>having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever.*
- 3. **He has been born of God** – Because we have a new **"Spiritual Nature,"** change takes place. We grow as we walk in newness of life (Rom 6:4). **We become transformed in the renewing of our minds (Rom 12:2),** and this worked out into every area of our lives as we grow in Christ.

**If you are God's Child...there will be a real, observable change!**

#### CLOSING THOUGHTS:

- What is your attitude toward sin?
- Have you been born again through obedience to the Word of God *(the incorruptible seed)*?
- Are you letting that "seed" remain in you so that you do not continuously practice sin?
- How your answer can reveal whose "child" you really are!

**(3 John 1:11)** *Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.*