

1 John 3:4 - 10

Pastoral Updates:

- Move up Sunday - Age breakouts mirror public school, (honor/encourage) - youth camp!
- Church in the park - San Gabriel, chairs, tents, baptisms, Evangelistic, splash pad (no food)
- Bring back baby bottles - (even if you didn't refill!) June 21st (Father's Day!) - still get bottles!

Please open to **1 John Chapter 3** (Need a Bible? ...)

- Last time: Abiding in Anticipation - Beloved children now... Living for His appearing!
- This Time: Now John looks back to the 1st advent, and what that means for His followers...

Message Title: "Why Jesus Came"

- Lawlessness Exposed (verses 4–6)
- Righteousness Displayed (verses 7–8)
- Belonging Revealed (verses 9–10)

A challenging & convicting passage. And it's *meant to be...* (repetitive... Chiasm!) - Not fluff / fun

- Don't panic. Grammar & syntax is the key to rightly understanding this passage (NIV, ESV)
- Main: Combating false teachers. Claiming could know Christ but be indifferent towards sin...

Lawlessness Exposed (verses 4–6)

V. 4 - Whoever commits sin...

- First notice, "Whoever" (pas) = "anyone, everyone" - a universal truth. No exceptions!
 - Sorry, super apostles... With your secret knowledge and elite privileged hall pass!
 - John will allow for no such distinction. No dual standard allowed (partiality denied)
- Sin is an offense to God. big or small. No matter what the world or heretics say...
- Now THE key for this whole passage is found in the verb tense for sins... (on repeat!)
- Commits (poieo) = to practice, produce, or perform (present, active = vitaly important!)
- Not dealing with the one who fails occasionally, but the one who lives a habitual life of sin
 - On repeat throughout this whole passage... (the present, active is the key)

V. 4 - Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness

- Lawlessness (anomia) = (a (without) + nomos (law) = "without [God's] law") because ignorant of, or wilfully violating it..." (iniquity/wickedness)
- He's connecting a big theological dot for us here *from God's perspective...*
 - Chata = "missing the mark" (sin) - carelessly broke something...
 - Pesha = "willful rebellion" (transgression) - looked dead in the eye and broke it...
 - Avon = "twisted & distorted" (iniquity/wickedness) - living in a state of brokenness...

V. 4 - And sin is lawlessness

- John gets raw and real for us. Not the results or consequences, but the essence of sin...
- Stuff we might even try to make light of... gossip, lies, jealousy, coveting, sloth, gluttony, lust.
- It's not just defilement, but defiance! It's wanting things "my way" and based on "how I feel"
- Genesis 11:4 - "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves..." Corporately as a society we fall into this (PRIDE MONTH)

- **Modern ideological systems encourage** it... *"It's who you are, follow your heart"*
- **Easy to point fingers**... But, John's point is to **you and me as individuals**... (*"whoever"*)
- We **excuse & rationalize sin** by **treating it casually**... *flaws, bad habits, personal preferences.*
 - **Adultery** = "having an affair" / **Murder of the unborn** = "reproductive choice" / **Fornication** = "hooking up" / **Theft** = "five finger discount" / **Gossip** = "venting" / **Anger** = "very passionate" / **Drunkenness** = "I was overserved..." John calls it **lawlessness**.
- **Story of a Methodist preacher** who often spoke on the subject of sin. Didn't mince words... someone in the congregation... *"call it something else, error, mistake, inhibition..."* - went to his desk and brought out a little bottle... *"This bottle," he said, "contains strychnine. You will see that the red label here reads 'Poison.' Would you suggest that I change the label, and paste one on that says, 'Wintergreen?'"* He made his point...
- It doesn't matter what you call it. **Here's what the Bible calls it. Anomia (against God's Law)**
- *"The first step towards holy living is to recognize the true nature and wickedness of sin." (John Stott)*

That's the **bad news**, here's the **good news**...

V. 5 - And you know that **He was manifested** (revealed / appeared)

- **First of two anchor references! Incarnation. 1st Advent. Missio Dei!**
- **And you know - not new revelation. Perfect tense** = *beyond a doubt / permanent possession*
 - *Why let these gnostics change the message?*

We know He appeared, but Why did Jesus appear?

V. 5 - To **take away our sins**

- AKA: **lawlessness. Anyone thankful for that?**
- **Take Away (airo)** = *"to lift up, bear, carry off, remove, take far away, cause to cease"*
- **Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16):** Two goats. One sacrificed. *One carrying sins away!*
- This is **Why Christ came!** To **pay our debt!**
 - *John 1:29 - "John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, 'Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'"*
- *In a few moments, the bread and cup remind us that Christ appeared to take away sins...*

V. 5 - And **in Him there is no sin**

- **Absolute negation! A righteous Messiah! without spot or blemish! Atoning sacrifice!**
- *Hebrews 4:15, CSB - "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin."*
- *Hebrews 7:26, NIV - "Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens."*
- **Only the sinless One could take our sin.** And **HE has done the work!** Therefore...

V. 6 - Whoever abides in Him **does not sin**

- *If you remain in Jesus, you do not sin. Does that worry any of you?* Let's be reminded...
- *1 John 1:8, 10, ESV - "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us... If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us..."*
- **Contradiction? How do we reconcile those verses with this? Verb tense!**
 - *Previous usages = aorist & perfect tense (past) - This is continual...*

- **Sins (Hamartanon)** (from **Hamartia**) = (present, active) = “**continues to sin**”
- Again, the issue is not our occasional failings, but **a pattern of life, a settled direction**
- For someone **abiding (living) in Christ**, you will see the **orientation of their life change!**
- **Romans 6:1-6 (reduced)** - “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin... certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ...knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, **that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin...**”
- **Sin is no longer your master.**
 - **Nile river flows south to north** - makes a couple bends elsewhere, but **continues north!**
 - **Whoever is alive in Christ** - **General direction** is **away from sin & towards holiness**
 - **When the river bends**, there is **grief, conviction, repentance!** **Sin = war, not peace!**
 - **That itself is evidence of abiding!**

Of course, **John states it both ways in this chiastic structure... (opposite of abiding!)**

V. 6 - **Whoever (continues in) sins has neither seen Him nor known Him**

- This is **the big inconsistency** John is **confronting with the false teachings** of his day...
- **They're teaching**, “**you can know God and live however you want**” (**body vs soul**)
- John is **proclaiming serious reality** - to **live in habitual lawlessness** is **not to Know Christ.**
- **Perfect tense** = **absolutely is not a genuine follower of Christ, and never have been.**
 - This is why **today's denominational deceptions** are so **destructive. False security!**
- Here's a **solid cross reference** to **close out this section** and **lead us into the next...**
- **1 Peter 2:24** - “...who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, **having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.**” - **Makes sense!**

Righteousness Displayed (verses 7–8)

V. 7 - **Little children**

- “**My dear born ones**” = one might say this is **a letter for little kids!** Certainly not “**child's play**”
- **A tender reminder** that John is speaking **a word of love (gators mouth!) - hear God's heart!**

V. 7 - **Let no one deceive you (lead you astray) (planao)**

- We've **already been talking about** the **issue of gnosticism**... John says, **don't believe it!**
- **Beware of any message (inside or outside the church)** that **treats holiness as optional.**
- **To be redundant... You cannot claim Christ without resembling Christ!**

V. 7 - **He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous**

- **Righteousness (dikaiosyne)** = **the condition or state acceptable to God; integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness, correctness of thinking, feeling, and acting...** - **Christ is, we should practice!**
- **Fruit doesn't make the tree** something. **Fruit reveals what the tree is. Practice reveals identity.**
 - **Luke 19 - Think of Zaccheaus! A repentant life!**

Chiastic opposite...

V. 8 - **He who sins is of the devil**

- **Simple logic** - A righteous life **follows the life of Christ.** A sinful life **follows the life of the devil...**

- **Devil (diabolos)** (*dia* = through/across + *ballo* = throw) = “false accuser; slanderer; hurling opposition to the cause of God; to side with or act the part of the devil” (here: **ek ho diabolos** = “out of, THE Devil”)
- Notice definite article: **THE devil** = Satan, serpent, dragon, accuser, destroyer...
- Also, notice the preposition (**ek**) = **of** - this is **their source**. ...source/prototype of sin

V. 8 - For the devil has **sinned from the beginning**

- **Beginning** of the Gospel? Humanity? Further? (Isaiah 14 & Ezek. 28) = **before the Garden!?**
- John is just **remembering and restating** the **eyewitness words of Jesus...**
- **John 8:42-44** - “Jesus said to them, ‘If God were your Father, you would love Me... [but] 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...’”

That’s the **bad news**, but we once again have it paired with **good news!**

V. 8 - **For this purpose** the Son of God was manifested (revealed / appeared)

- **Second of two anchor references!** **Incarnation. 1st Advent. Missio Dei!**
- **Son of God!** (first of many references in this letter). And, **why did He come?**

V. 8 - That He might **destroy the works (ways) of the devil**

- The **lion from the tribe of Judah** roared **against that slithering snake!**
 - **Protoevangelium** - The **promised Seed** would come to confront...
 - **Genesis 3:15, NIV** - “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; **he will crush your head**, and you will strike his heel...” (**cross!**)
 - **John announces and reminds us** that **Jesus was the fulfillment** of that ancient promise.
- **The point and purpose...?**
 - **Destroy (lyo)** = “to loose, dissolve, break apart, overthrow, declare unlawful”
- **This is why Jesus came!** Now we’re **not yet to the end of age** and **the lake of fire...**
- But, **it’s true for the believer!** (the devil’s “**works**” **no longer have power over you...**)
- He may **win a battle here or there** (**sin, sickness, seduction**) but **he’s already lost the war.**
- **Luke 11:21-22, NIV** - “When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, **he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up his plunder.**”
- **Satan is the strong man**, but **Christ is stronger!**
- Christ “**disarmed**” and **bound him** at the cross. **Still plundering from Satan this very day!**

Today, **at the table**, we’re not only reminded of **our sins taken away**, but also of **Christ’s victory over the devil**. The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy, **but Christ came to give life in the fullest!**

Belonging Revealed (verses 9–10)

John now drives the same point he’s been making, **by that of belonging**. **Family Resemblance!**

- **Live somewhere long enough... you begin to take on the accent!**

V. 9 - Whoever has been **born of God** does not sin

- **Born of God**. John returns to the **doctrine of regeneration**. **New birth. New life. New identity.**

- **Perfect & Present!** If you have been (past) born of God you will not continue in a life of sin

How come?

V. 9 - For His seed (life) remains in him

- This references the **new life given to us in Christ! Seed = kernel or offspring!**
- **No longer I who lives but Christ who lives in me! (Galatians 2:20) = new nature!**
- **Ezekiel 36:26-27, CSB - "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will place my Spirit within you and cause you to follow my statutes and carefully observe my ordinances..." - O.T. Promised!**
- **2 Peter 1:3-4, ESV - "His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire." - N.T. Received!**

And, because of this truth...

V. 9 - And he cannot sin (keep on sinning), because he has been born of God

- **To remind us again,** John is **not** talking about **sinless perfectionism**.
- **1 John 2:1, ESV - "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous..."**
- **Based on that verse,** John is **not denying the possibility** that a born again believer might **sin**.
 - Moral vs venial? Voluntary vs involuntary? Occasional vs habitual? Idealism to come?
- Remember, **grammar and syntax** is everything in this challenging passage...
- **Sins (Hamartanon (verb)) (from Hamartia (noun)) = (present, active) = "continues to sin"**
- **Don't listen to the false teaching, ideologies and world views** that are leading you astray.
- You have been born of God, and therefore **live a changed life! (not a "life of sin")**
 - **The Spirit convicts... The new nature resists... The will repents....**
 - Throw a **pig and sheep into a mudhole**, the pig wallows in it, the sheep scrambles out
 - **Think of the prodigal son. He was a son. He didn't belong.... Nature creates conflict**

V. 10 - In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest (become obvious)

- Well this is **both bold and clear**. Look at **someone's general direction** of life, and you can tell.
- Now, **only God truly knows the heart (false Pharisees... converted Heathens...)**
- But **don't listen to trash theology** that says you can just remain in sin... children of the devil.
- **Matthew 13:37-39 - "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world; and the good seed—these are the children of the kingdom. The weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil..."**
- **Only two groups. Not one, not three. Which are you?**
 - **The end of the age will determine. Reapers will sort the harvest...**
 - **But John makes a point, visibility (manifest) is seen here and now; Jesus agrees...**
- **Matthew 7:17-20, NLT - "A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions."**

V. 10 - Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of (does not belong to) God

- **True to John's form** throughout this passage, he states it in the opposite form to be sure...
- But he **adds an element** that we will pick up on next week...
- *V. 10 - ...nor is he who **does not love his brother...***
- John gives **two evidences** of those belonging to God. Living righteously & loving neighbor.
- This is **The Great Commandment!** Vertical and horizontal. God & Man!

Long lost child? Not sure if he is your child? DNA test: Here's the swab test! Two of them...

- **Live somewhere long enough, you begin to take on the accent...**

Closing:

Some might take today's passage as **harsh**. I call it **love**. It's the kindness of God that leads us to repentance.

- It would be **unloving to say nothing** and let you drink poison. Or worse, label it mouthwash!
- **Love would sound an alarm.** That's what you've heard today...

Jesus came to take away our sins and crush the works of the devil. **It begins with Him!**

- He is the righteous one in whom there is no sin. And, He did **all the work necessary**.
- All that's left is for you to respond.
 - **Unbeliever:** Repentance (Born of God)
 - **Believer:** Repentance (Continual righteousness)

The table is for those who have the seed of Christ in them. **Born again!**

- Bread and Cup. Body and Blood. A means of grace!
- We are to examine ourselves... Not a time for pretending, but confessing...
- 1 Cor. 11:28, NIV - "Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup."

Pass out the elements...

1 Cor. 11:23-24, NIV - "For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.'"

1 Cor. 11:25-26, NIV - "In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

PRAY