



The Good News About Our Sin Struggle
1 John 3:4-9

Our greatest sin struggle can be our doorway to a life of dependance upon and blessedness in Christ!

Text Message:

- This text is filled with key phrases as to sin. Some deal with the individual and sin, others deal with Christ and sin.
- The key phrases on the individual's relationship to sin:
 - ⁴ Everyone who **makes a practice of sinning**...
 - ⁶ No one who abides in him **keeps on sinning**... (twice)
 - ⁸ Whoever **makes a practice of sinning** is of the devil...
 - ^{9a} No one born of God **makes a practice of sinning**...
 - ^{9b} He cannot **keep on sinning**, because he has been born of God...
- Now notice the key phrases on Christ's relationship to sin:
 - ⁵ He appeared in order **to take away sins**...
 - ⁸ The... Son of God appeared... **to destroy the works of the devil**.
- If we go all the way back to the garden (Genesis 3), the foundation sin of humankind is to live life independent of God.
- Jesus restores us in relationship **and** dependency to God: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:3

Our wretchedness can lead us to our reward!

Text Message:

- We can identify with the universal experience in Romans 7 of wanting not to sin, only to fail time and time again:
 - ¹⁵ For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate... ^{18b} For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.
- This experience brings us to the crossroads of who/what we will depend on for deliverance from sin. Anything/anyone outside of Christ will eventually lead to failure and frustration!
- We cannot defeat the flesh by the flesh!
- Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Romans 7:24
- The flesh will fight to exhaustion and against itself to keep from being dependent upon God! This is why God doesn't redeem our flesh but crucifies it (Galatians 2:20)!
- Our wretchedness can lead us to our reward:
 - Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!
 - Romans 7:24-25

Any practice of sinning can be replaced by a practice of abiding in Christ!

⁶ No one who abides in him keeps on sinning...

Text Message:

- This is the promise of 1 John 3:6!
- **BUT** we must exchange the message of the world ("Depend on self") to the message of the Word ("Depend on Christ!").
- **AND** paradoxical to worldly thought that praises rugged independence, complete dependence upon Christ (abiding in Christ) **is** the pathway to joy-filled living!
- It's as if Christ restores us to the Genesis Garden picture of living in the bliss of God-dependence and total trust in Him rather than the whispers of the world which echo, "Has God said...?"