Living in Sin does Not Match Who We Are

(God's Children practice righteousness)

1 John 3:4-10

11-18-2026

Introduction:

**** Persistent, habitual, continual sin is out of character for one who has been born again!***

I. Sin is <u>rebellion</u> against <u>God's authority in our lives</u> (v.4)

II. Sin is <u>incompatible</u> with Christ's mission and nature (v.5)

III. Sin is a <u>failure to abide in Christ</u> (v.6)

IV. Sin is a <u>deception that you can be one way and live another</u> (v.7)

V. Sin is <u>characteristic of those outside of God's family</u> (v.8-10)

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Having described (in 2:28-3:3) certain basic characteristics of one who has been born of God—such as . . .

God's Children should REMAIN CLOSE to their Heavenly Father(2:28)
God's Children should TAKE AFTER (IMITATE) their Heavenly Father (v.29)
God's Children should BE GRATEFUL to their Heavenly Father for adopting them (3:1a)
God's Children will be VIEWED AS STRANGE by the world which does not know our Heavenly Father (3:1b)
God's Children will be CHANGED BY CHRIST when He returns (3:2)
God's Children should be MOTIVATED BY THE BLESSED HOPE to live in moral purity (3:3)

. . . God now specifically gives us a description of how His "kids" live

1) God's children practice righteousness
(they avoid sin) (v. 4-10)

2) God's children love their brothers
(they avoid hate) (v. 11-18)

This message deals with a subject many preachers are afraid to touch (or at the most, tread lightly upon it).

Today's subject involves that dirty 3-letter word: SIN.

> Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman told of a distinguished minister, Dr. Howard, from Australia who preached very strongly on the subject of sin. After the service, one of the church officers came to counsel with him in the study. "Dr. Howard," he said, "we don't want you to talk as openly as you do about man's guilt and corruption, because if our boys and girls hear you discussing that subject they will more easily become sinners. Call it a mistake if you will, but do not speak so plainly about sin."The minister took down a small bottle and showing it to the visitor said, "You see that label? It says strychnine -- and underneath in bold, red letters the word 'Poison!' Do you know, man, what you are asking me to do? You are suggesting that I change the label. Suppose I do, and paste over it the words, 'Essence of Peppermint'; don't you see what might happen? Someone would use it, not knowing the danger involved, and would certainly die. So it is, too, with the matter of sin. The milder you make your label, the more dangerous you make your poison!"

All people have sinned, because all have a sin nature dwelling in them.

SIN NATURE
Sin, its effects:
How does a worm get inside an apple? Perhaps you think the worm burrows in from the outside. No, scientists have discovered that the worm comes from inside.
But how does he get in there? Simple! An insect lays an egg in the apple blossom. Sometime later, the worm hatches in the heart of the apple, then eats his way out. Sin, like the worn, begins in the heart and works out through a person's thoughts, words, and actions. Heaven and Home Hour Radio Bulletin

The false teachers John counters throughout this Epistle "seem to have held that knowledge was all-important and that their conduct did not really matter" (Hiebert, p. 141).

** Persistent, habitual, continual sin is out of character for one who has been born again!*

I. Sin is <u>rebellion</u> against <u>God's authority in our lives</u> (v.4)

"Committeth" - present tense, active, participle - to practice; to continually perform; to keep on living a lifestyle characterized (by sin).

[Note: The *eth* on the end of verbs in the KJV implies a continuity, a habitual practice.]

The verb *poieo* refers to "doing" (actions). The sinning John speaks of is evidently sinful actions.

"Sin is lawlessness" - Whenever you disregard God's moral law, you sin. To omit what He expects of us or to commit what He restricts us from is to act lawlessly.

--Sin is <u>not</u> a mere <u>mistake</u> - it is lawlessness.
--Sin is <u>not</u> a mere <u>sickness</u> - it is lawlessness.

To practice sin is to practice lawlessness.

Sin is any lack of conformity to the moral law of God in thought, word or action.

People sin due to <u>ignorance</u> (I Tim. 1:13) or <u>rebellion</u> (to rebel is to know the truth but to fight against it and to turn your back to it).

Everytime a person sins he/she stiff-arms God's Law and says, "Get out of my way; I'm doing what I want and I don't care about what you say."

II. Sin is <u>incompatible</u> with Christ's mission and nature (v.5)

"Manifested" - implies Christ's <u>pre-existence</u>.

"He was manifested" - Jesus (the antecedent to the pronoun) appeared on the earth's scene in a Body that He might remove sin's penalty, power, and one day, sin's very presence from our lives.

Ultimately, there will be (eschatalogically) a total elimination of sin from the world's scene, but Christ died that this (to a degree) would be the experience of the believer, here and now (cp. Hiebert, p. 142).

"Take away our sins" - Jesus lifted up and completely carried our sins away by bearing them on Calvary.

The point here is that Jesus died that we might experience personal victory over sin's dominating power in our lives. Yes, He died to remove sin's penalty. But He also died to remove sin's power over our lives. The believer does not have to be dominated by sin.

Jesus "bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should <u>live unto righteousness</u>." (I Peter 2:24).

"In Him is no sin" - There is <u>no</u> "missing the mark" in Jesus. He is and was perfectly sinless.

Jesus . . .
"committed no sin" (I Pet. 2:22)
"no unrighteousness in Him" (Jn. 7:18)
He is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26)
"without spot" (Heb. 9:14)
"knew no sin" (Ii Cor. 5:21)

It is not Jesus' fault when we sin. No one related to Him could blame Him for their sin, because He—unlike the false, pagan gods—did not share in the people's wickedness.

III. Sin is a <u>failure to abide in Christ</u> (v.6)

"Abideth" - to <u>remain</u> in close fellowship with Christ. The key to victory over sin is to stay in close fellowship with Christ (to be spending daily time ith Him in 2-way communication is the key to victory. He speaks to you through His Word, the Bible; you speak to Him in consistent, daily prayer).

The degree of closeness you have with Christ will determine the degree of distance you will have from sin! Because where He is, sin cannot co-exist. When He comes to live in the house the demons must flee!

"Whosoever sinneth" - Anyone who practices a sinful lifestyle (regardless of who they are) has not "seen" Him (by faith) and therefore has not come to "know" Him as personal Savior!

"Know Jesus . . . know righteousness"
"No Jesus . . . no righteousness"

IV. Sin is a deception that you can be one way and live another (v.7)

"Let no man deceive you" - Many deceivers (even well-meaning deceivers) abound, who state that one's lifestyle may or may not manifest the relationship they have with Christ. They, in effect, teach that one can be saved and still abound in sin, and that such enslavement should not lead you to doubt your salvation.

"He that doeth righteousness is righteous" - to manifest practical righteousness is to manifest positional righteousness.

You don't become justified (right with God - positionally) by doing right, but your doing right will show that you have been justified.

"By their fruits ye shall know them" (Mt. 7:16).

ILLUS: Old engine cleaned up --

> If I had a car with the engine that was ready for the grave, I'd have a new engine put in. I'd take the car into a mechanic who would put it in for me. If when I got that car back, it ran just as poorly, I'd begin to wonder if the old really had been replaced or just cleaned up. It is not different with our new lives in Christ.
> Christian Personal Ethics, C.F.H. Henry, Eerdmans, 1957, p. 383ff

"Even as He is righteous" - "Like Father, like son" is true of our relationship with Christ.

If our Heavenly Father is righteous, His children will also reflect, imitate, mimic, follow His righteousness.

V. Sin is <u>characteristic of those outside of God's family</u> (v.8-10)

v. 8

"Committeth sin" - the present tense implies a continual, habitual sinful lifestyle.

What specifically would God be referring to?

Note Paul's list of sinful behavior in I Cor. 6:9-10 -

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

And Gal. 5:19-21 -

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God

Does Christ have anything to do with a "gay church"? Impossible!

"Of the devil" - belongs to the devil; he/she is still in the devil's family (Jn. 8:44).

The devil is the originator of sin; he spawned it in the beginning. Before Lucifer sinned, sin did not exist.

"**For this purpose" -** Jesus came <u>not</u> merely so that we would be forgiven of our diabolical sin, but that we would be <u>delivered</u> from that diabolical sin!

"That He might destroy the works of the devil" - Jesus releases people from the enslavement of Satan.

"He breaks the bonds (chains) of cancelled sin and sets the prisoner free!"

According to Jesus, the devil has this purpose: "to steal and to kill and to destroy" (Jn. 10:10).

He tempts people to sin so that they will become enslaved to sin, so that they will die!

Radio personality Paul Harvey tells the story of how an Eskimo kills a wolf. The account is grisly, yet it offers fresh insight into the consuming, self-destructive nature of sin.
"First, the Eskimo coats his knife blade with animal blood and allows it to freeze. Then he adds another layer of blood, and another, until the blade is completely concealed by frozen blood.
"Next, the hunter fixes his knife in the ground with the blade up. When a wolf follows his sensitive nose to the source of the scent and discovers the bait, he licks it, tasting the fresh frozen blood. He begins to lick faster, more and more vigorously, lapping the blade until the keen edge is bare. Feverishly now, harder and harder the wolf licks the blade in the arctic night.
So great becomes his craving for blood that the wolf does not notice the razor-sharp sting of the naked blade on his own tongue, nor does he recognize the instant at which his insatiable thirst is being satisfied by his OWN warm blood. His carnivorous appetite just craves more--until the dawn finds him dead in the snow!"
It is a fearful thing that people can be "consumed by their own lusts." Only God's grace keeps us from the wolf's fate.
Chris T. Zwingelberg

v. 9

"Where there is <u>birth</u>, there is <u>life</u>". Anyone who is truly born again will manifest that they are no longer "dead in trespasses and sins" but they will show forth a newness of life because inside of them dwells the living Christ!

"Doth not commit sin" - lit. does not practice sin.

The word "commit" is the same term and tense as in v. 4.

The reason why believers will not practice sin is because **"His seed"** (Jesus'seed) abides in Him.

--We were born (physically) sinners because of the corrupt seed of our earthly father (through which we inherited a sin nature)..

--We were born (spiritually) saints into the family of God because of the incorruptible seed of the Holy Spirit who imparted to us the new birth and a new nature.

The Spirit will never leave us! **"His seed remaineth"** We have eternal security.

ILLUS: New nature that comes into us at salvation.

> Once there was a brier growing in a ditch and there came along a gardener with his spade. As he dug around it and lifted it up the brier said to itself, "What is he doing? Doesn't he know I am a worthless brier?" But the gardener took it into his garden and planted it amid his flowers, while the brier said, "What a mistake he has made planting me among these beautiful roses." Then the gardener came once more and made a slit in the brier with his sharp knife. He grafted it with a rose and when summer came lovely roses were blooming on that old brier. Then the gardener said, "Your beauty is not due to what came out but to what I put in."

"Cannot sin" - is <u>not able</u> to sin (as a way of life) via the new nature.

God won't allow His children to live a wicked lifestyle.

He is faithful to <u>spank</u> His kids (II Cor. 12); however, He does not spank the devil's kids!

"Is born of God" - perfect tense - he has been born in the past and remains so in the present (this is why God's seed remains in him).

John is certainly <u>not</u> teaching sinless perfection. He is not denying the existence of our old sin nature, nor the existence of sinful thoughts, words, or actions in our lives (as Christians). Such a denial would be to contradict what he said in I John 1:10 - "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

"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 clear-cut. While they are to be understood in the context of his letter and of the situation which is 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." (Hiebert citing F.F. Bruce, on p. 148-49.)

v. 10

Verse 10 gives us the practical line of demarcation between a believer and a non-believer.

Only two classes (or categories) of people exist. (there are no “in-betweeners”)

ILLUS: A man who ignores all the signs and symptoms of stomach cancer (indigestion, pain, spitting up blood, lump, etc.) is a fool not to check it out.

Does your life bear the symptoms of an unbeliever? It’s better to question your salvation now than to merrily skip you way right into hell, passing by all the warning signs.

Conclusion:

Sin should <u>not</u> seem normal but abnormal, not comfortable but irritating, not fully enjoyable but grievous, not leaving us full and satisfied but empty.

How compatible are you with sin?