

**EPISTLE OF 1 JOHN**  
**WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A BELIEVER SINS?**  
**1 JOHN 1:6–2:2**

**Introduction**

It is a definite and undeniable fact that **ALL Believers do sin!** Thank God that **we have been perfected in Christ** and **our standing before God is that we are justified in Christ Jesus!** (i.e. **DECLARED RIGHTEOUS!**)

However, there is a difference between our **STANDING** before God and the **STATE** we find ourselves in!

**Romans 3:23** is clear that: 1) we all have sinned and 2) we continue to fall short of God's glory—even after we are saved.

Our text here in *verse 8* is also clear that **if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves!** Also, *verse 10* says that **if we say that we have not sinned, we make God a liar!**

So, just exactly **WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A BELIEVER SINS?**  
That's the title of the message! And, as Believers, **WHAT ARE WE TO DO ABOUT IT WHEN WE HAVE SINNED?**

There are many Believers who have become **dominated, discouraged, and defeated by sin in their lives.**

Sometimes they are **so ashamed because of their sin, they no longer profess to be saved** (i.e. They can't bear being the hypocrites they know they have become!)

**Some Believers are so confused by the sin in their lives that they no longer even KNOW if they are saved!** They have lost the **ASSURANCE of their salvation!** (*Cf. 2 Peter 1:3-12*)

Tonight, I want us to consider what happens when a Believer sins. I believe it will help us immensely as we learn to battle sin's presence in our lives!

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**I. LET'S SEE AND UNDERSTAND WHAT CANNOT HAPPEN!**

**A. We Can Never Be Disowned By God!**

*John 6:37 – “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”*

**Oh what a blessed truth this is!**

*2 Timothy 2:13–“If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.”*

**1. When a person is saved, he or she becomes a child of God by a supernatural Spiritual birth on the inside!**

*John 1:12-13 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

*1 Peter 1:23–“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”*

**2. Just as nothing can change the fact that a child was born into his or her PHYSICAL family, nothing can change the fact that we are God's child if we have been spiritually born again! (i.e. We can't be unborn!)**

**We have eternal life and we are secured for heaven! That is settled!**

*Ephesians 2:5-6 – Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:*

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*Revelation 21:27 “And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.”*

According to God’s word He said in *Hebrews 13:5*–“*I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*”

*We Can Never Be Disowned By God!*

**B. We Can Never Be Damned By God!**

*John 5:24*–“*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*”

God has written “**PAID IN FULL**” all over every act and thought that a child of God has ever committed, or ever will commit!

Nevertheless, even though 1) our sins have been paid for and 2) we who are Believers will never be disowned or condemned for our sins, we still need to understand that the sins we commit in our daily lives after we are saved DO have consequences!

That is why we need to fear God, and change our attitude towards sin in our lives!

Far too many Believers take sin in their lives all too lightly!

*What Cannot Happen...We Cannot Be Disowned Or Damned!*

**II. LET’S SEE AND UNDERSTAND WHAT DOES HAPPEN!**

**A. Our Closeness To God Suffers! (1 John 1:6)**

Oh how we need to learn this as children of God!

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1. **Although our children are still our children, we don't get along very well with them when they have been disobedient or when they have done something to displease us!** The same is true with our fellowship with God! It is hindered when we sin!
2. **Sweet fellowship can almost become nonexistent, which can make the person feel that he is not even part of God's family!**
3. **Not only do we feel it, but God is grieved, as well!** *Ephesians 4:30*–“*And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God...*”
4. **Our closeness to God is connected with how much sin we hold on to!**  
No longer does sin hold on to us! Sin’s power has died! But we can hold on to sin!
5. **That’s why God’s Word loses its attraction – the small voice can’t be heard from a distance – you have to be close to the heart of God!**

*Our Closeness To God Suffers...*

**B. Our Calmness Of Spirit Suffers!**

*Isaiah 26:3*–“*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*”

*Isaiah 57:21*–“*There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.*” (About the lost, but sin will rob the saved of their peace too!)

Restlessness in our souls is often a result of spiritual rebellion. A Believer who doesn't live for God will not have the same peace of mind as an obedient Believer!

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1. Maybe people don't understand just what a Child of God is! He's a new person! He's different than ever before! (*2 Corinthians 5:17*)
2. A follower of Jesus Christ has a new desire and yearns to be obedient to God's Word!
3. A Child of God loves the calmness of God's presence and grace in his or her life. When we only have anger, and restlessness, that's a pretty good indication that we have sin we haven't dealt with!

*Our Closeness To God Suffers. . . Our Calmness Of Spirit Suffers. . .*

**C. Our Cheerfulness In Jesus Suffers!**

*Psalm 51:12—"Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."*

When a Believer sins, he will begin losing the joy of going to Church, Bible reading, witnessing, praying, and other Christian activities.

Some may finally even lose the joy of living. Sad!  
Have you ever heard it said of some Christian:

1. He used to witness!
2. He used to be faithful to all the services!
3. He used to love Church!
4. What changed? The problem is SIN! Sin has crept between that person and God! And it shows on their faces and in their lives when it happens!

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**End of Part 1**

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**Beginning of PART 2**

**D. Our Capability Of Witnessing Suffers! (*Matthew 5:11-16*)**

It is true that no Believer is perfect, but a Believer who lives with unconfessed sin is not likely to be very convincing when he tries to tell someone how to be saved or how to live. (*"bushel"*)

**A sinning Believer is powerless to bear fruit!** Because the power to do so comes from the indwelling Holy Spirit which we must be full of to be effective witnesses!

**E. Our Confidence In Prayer Suffers!**

*Psalm 66:18—"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the LORD will not hear me:"*

*Isaiah 59:2—"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."*

When fellowship is broken between us and God, we lose the confidence and the willingness to talk to Him.

**F. Our Companions In The Church Suffer!**

*1 Corinthians 12:26—"And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it."*

Because no one of us lives our lives alone – we affect others!  
*Romans 14:7—"For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself."*

Oh that we would be burdened to affect each other for good!

*Cf. Hebrews 10:24-25*

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**G. Our Crowns (or Rewards) In Heaven Suffer!**

*(Hebrews 11:24-26)*

*Revelation 3:11–“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”*

Salvation is a free gift! However, the Bible teaches that in heaven REWARDS, or crowns, are given out, which are based on SERVICE, and our efforts for the Lord!

God's gift of eternal life cannot be lost, but rewards CAN be lost, to the shame of the believer who sacrifices *“heavenly praise and privileges”* for earthly pleasure!

*(Cf. 1 Corinthians 3:12-15)*

**H. Chastisement Is Experienced!**

*Hebrews 12:5 “And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:”*

God chastises His disobedient children, **every one of them!**  
No true believer who does wrong *“gets by”* with it.

If a person can harbor sin in their life without chastisement, then that is a very good indication that they were never saved to begin with!

And, let me tell you, GOD knows how to chastise His children!

We need to examine ourselves and see if maybe some of OUR troubles are the chastisement of God!

So, we've seen *What Cannot Happen. . . What Does Happen. . .* now let's see:

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**III. LET'S SEE AND UNDERSTAND WHAT WE ARE TO DO!**

Are you a Believer who has gotten away from God?

Are you out of fellowship with God right now due to some sin?

**A. Here's What People Normally Do:**

1. **They get mad** – at the preacher, their spouse, their kids, their boss, some person in another car on the road with them – usually every one and every thing except themselves!
2. **They get out** – I'm talking about getting out of Church. They decide that they would rather not deal with the sin in their own life and so they just point to the sins in everyone else's life trying to justify themselves!
3. **They just get harder and harder as their life crumbles around them!** Sin will harden you if you don't deal with it properly!

**B. Here Is What We Should Do:**

1. **Confront.**

*Proverbs 28:13–“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”*

We shouldn't try to cover up our sin! We shouldn't try to deny it!

We need to realize we have a problem: a SIN problem!

Even if it is only in our heart – which is one of the most painful places to work on!

If we don't sense our sinful desires and thoughts, then there are only two possibilities

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- a. Either they aren't there.
- b. Or we are blind and hardened towards them.

It is time to pray *Psalm 139:23-24*, and then  
“*batten down the hatches!*”

*Confront*

**2. Confess. (1 John 1:9)**

To *confess* our sin means to **agree with God about our sin.**

It means that we recognize that what we have done is rebellion against God!

To confess is **NOT** to tell God that we want to get right **IF** we have sinned!

It means that we name what we have done wrong, and accept responsibility for it!

- a. When was the last time you NAMED some sin in your life?
- b. When have you seen a wicked WAY (maybe a sinful habit that you hold on to) in your life and realize just how filthy that habit must be in God's sight?
- c. Today is a good day to do some heart searching, and pouring out of our hearts in sorrow for the sins that are in there!

**3. Consecrate (Proverbs 28:13; Psalm 51:12,13)**

- a. **Confess your sin, forsake it, and begin immediately working to do right!**

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Replace the sin with righteousness!

If you're saved, that means such things as: getting baptized; joining the Church; attending Church at every service you possibly can; tithing; reading your Bible; praying; telling others about Jesus; and other such activities.

- b. **When you stumble again, (and you can count on it, you will!) then go through these steps again!**

Don't ever stay down. Keep getting up!

*Proverbs 24:16–“For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.”*

This matter of *consecration* is **a Godly determination to do right!**

**Conclusion**

If you are not saved, then none of these great truths are for you!

But, don't walk away from this service still lost – still damned!

- 1. You need to heed the command to be born again!
- 2. You **MUST** see your goodness as nothing compared to the perfect life of Christ!  
Religion has blinded most people into worrying only about bad sins. God says you better worry about all sin!
- 3. You must repent of those good acts just as much as you might repent of sinful acts!
- 4. You must ask to be saved – ask and ye shall receive, (thank God!)

If you are saved, is there something in your life that God has shown you that you need to **Confront, Confess**, and some area that you need to **Consecrate**? If so, do that right now!