

## Message #12

## I John 3:4-10a

Sin is not a light matter in the mind of God and any believer who views sin as a light matter does not have fellowship with God.

**THE BELIEVER WHO HAS TRULY BEEN BORN OF GOD AND WHO TRULY HAS FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD IS ONE WHO DOES NOT CONTINUALLY PRACTICE A LIFESTYLE OF SIN, BUT DOES CONTINUALLY PRACTICE A LIFESTYLE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

The word that shows up at least six times in these verses is the word “practice” (v. 4-twice, 7-10). The present tense indicates a continual and habitual action.

The actual word “practice” means to design something and then proceed to make or produce it. In other words, one comes up with a plan and then executes or carries out the plan (Smith, p. 369). The point John is making here is that one who has fellowship with God will not have a continual lifestyle pattern that devises some sin and then purposes to carry it out. One will have a continual lifestyle pattern that thinks about and purposes to carry out righteousness.

**POINT #1** – You need to know that any person who continually practices sin practices lawlessness. 3:4

There are lots of things that are identified as sin in the Scriptures:

- 1) Whatever is not of faith is sin (Rom. 14:23).
- 2) The devising of folly or foolishness is sin (Prov. 24:9).
- 3) To one who knows to do good and blatantly doesn’t do it is sin (James 4:17).
- 4) Any form of unrighteousness is sin (I John 5:17).

But John takes it further right here—sin is lawlessness. The word “lawless” is one that means wicked, without law (Smith, p. 41).

Gnostics were indifferent to sin. John says that sin is blatant revolt against God. Any person who continually thinks about and pursues a life that misses the mark of God’s standard is one that is practicing a wicked life that will not submit to God’s law.

Listen, choosing to sin is not just a failure to measure up to the standards of God; it is a purposeful disregard of the righteous standards and laws of God. One who continually chooses to sin is continually choosing a life that says I will not submit to the authority and law of God.

**POINT #2** – You do know that the Person and work of Jesus Christ is about righteousness, not sinfulness. 3:5

**Fact #1** - Truth about His purpose.

Christ came in order to take away sins. Notice the plural “sins,” not sin.

Jesus Christ came into our life not just to positionally deliver us from positional sin that condemns us, but also to deliver us from the practical sins that conquer us.

**Fact #2** - Truth about His Person.

The truth of the Person of Jesus Christ is that there is no sin in Him. This is very emphatic in Greek.

**POINT #3** – You need to know who really has fellowship with God. **3:6**

No one who is in fellowship with Jesus Christ persists in a continual lifestyle of sin. Such a person has not really seen Jesus Christ and doesn't know Jesus Christ.

**POINT #4** – You need to know who is of God and who is of the devil. **3:7-10**

**Observation #1** - The one who continually practices righteousness is righteous. **3:7**

**Observation #2** - The one who continually practices sin is of the devil. **3:8**

**Observation #3** - The one who is born of God cannot continually practice sin. **3:9**

Here is an eye-opening verse. God will not permit one who has truly been born of Him to continually practice sin. Because He has been born of God, God's Spirit continually remains in that believer and he cannot continually and habitually practice sin.

Let me say this in another way. If one has truly been born of God, he may get into the pigpen, but he will get out of the pigpen. If a person has a continual life of pursuing that which is sinful, that person has not truly been born of God. If the person were truly born of God, God would either get that person out of the sin or He would take that person home to be with Him. No one truly born of God can continue to persist in a lifestyle pattern of open and blatant rebellion. One truly born of God will not ever be permitted by God to continually persist in a life of sin. Why? Because that one has been given a divine nature, the Holy Spirit which will always bring a true child out of the pigpen.

**Observation #4** - Those who are children of the devil will continually practice sin. **3:10**

Listen to me. Just because one goes to church or is on a committee or board or just because one is in public ministry or teaches or is active does not mean one is right with God. The determining factor is what does one continually practice? If one continually pursues an understanding of God's Word so that he/she may apply it, one is righteous. If one continually pursues a lifestyle of sin, that one is of the devil. Pure and simple.