

# Sin And The Child Of God

## 1 John 3:4-9

Study #10

(Not entirely original with me)

### INTRODUCTION:

1. The true child of God purifies himself because of the hope of seeing Jesus on day - cf. **1 Jn 3:2-3**
2. In thinking about “purity”, the subject of “sin” naturally arises...
3. How shall the true child of God regard sin? Is it something to be taken lightly?

### I. THE DEFINITION OF SIN (4)

#### A. AS UNDERSTOOD BY SOME...

1. Sin is nothing more than a violation of human relationships
2. Which can be easily resolved by correcting relationship problems
  - While **some** sins may be a violation of “human” relationships, the true meaning of sin goes much farther than that

#### B. THE LITERAL MEANING OF THE WORD “SIN”...

1. The Greek word for “sin” is **hamartia**, and it literally means “to miss the mark”
2. E.g., as when an archer fails to hit the center of the target
3. So “sin” is some kind of action (or lack of it) in which one fails to meet the goal intended by God - cf. **Ro 3:23**

#### C. AS DEFINED BY JOHN...

1. Sin is “lawlessness” (NKJV), or “transgression of the law” (KJV)
2. The word for lawlessness (transgression) is **anomia**, which means “illegality, i.e. violation of law”
  - a. I.e., to break or violate a law, such as the law of God
  - b. E.g., to steal when the law says “Thou shalt not steal”
3. So sin occurs when you do what is forbidden (commonly called “**a sin of commission**”)

#### D. AS DEFINED BY JAMES...

1. James describes another kind of sin - cf. **Ja 4:17**

2. So sin is also committed when you fail to do what is good or commanded (often called “**a sin of omission**”)
  - a. E.g., failing to love your brother
  - b. While you may not do ill toward your brother, failure to do good is just as much a sin!

#### **E. IN BOTH OF THESE DEFINITIONS OF SIN...**

1. One has failed to meet a certain standard (they have “missed the mark”)
2. In this case, the standard is the “law of God”
  - a. Which, when carefully noted, is designed to help us in our relationships with...
    - 1) God
    - 2) Other people
    - 3) Even self
  - b. Every command of God, both negative and positive, affect these relationships in one way or the other

[Failure to understand the true nature of “sin” is one reason why there is so much apathy toward it today. But every time we sin, we are adversely affecting our relationship with either God, others, or our own selves!]

## **II. THE ORIGIN OF SIN (8a)**

### **A. SIN IS OF THE DEVIL...!**

1. “He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning.”
2. This statement of John is reminiscent of one made by Jesus in **Jn 8:44**
3. From the beginning the devil has been the “father” or origin of sin (“he is a liar and the father of it”)

### **B. THOSE WHO SIN ARE OF THE DEVIL...!**

1. Since he is the “father” of sin, those who practice sin are his children
2. “You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do” - cf. **Jn 8:44a**
3. So when we “miss the mark” by either...
  - a. Doing what is forbidden
  - b. Failing to do what is commanded...we demonstrate the influences of the devil in our lives!

(If sin can make one to be “the children of the devil”, that ought to tell us something about the terribleness of sin! )

### III. THE DEFEAT OF SIN (5a, 8b)

#### A. THIS WAS THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S COMING...

1. "He was manifested to take away our sins" - **1 Jn 3:5a**
2. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."
3. As John the Baptist declared: "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" - **Jn 1:29**

( To continue to walk in sin, therefore, is to undermine the purpose of our Lord's coming!)

#### B. CONSIDER WHAT IT COST JESUS TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PURPOSE...

1. Nothing less than His own death! - cf. **1 Co 15:3**
2. Nothing less than His precious blood! - cf. **Ac 20:28; 1 Pe 1:18-19**  
-- Does not this tell us something about the terribleness of sin?

(When we properly understand what sin is, and how terrible it must be in God's sight, then for the "child of God")

### IV. THE REFRAINMENT OF SIN (6-7, 9)

#### A. WHOEVER "ABIDES IN HIM" DOES NOT SIN... (6)

1. The phrase "does not sin" is present tense in the Greek, suggesting a practice of not sinning
  - a. John has already affirmed that Christians sin - cf. **Jn 1:8,10**
  - b. To say we have no sin is to lie, and to make God a liar
  - c. So John is talking about one who does not "continuously practice sin"
2. Such is true of those who "abide in Him"
  - a. Those who "abide in Jesus" do not continuously engage in sin
  - b. That is because they...
    - 1) Let that which they have heard from the beginning abide in them (i.e., the words of Jesus) - cf. **1 Jn 2:24**
    - 2) Strive to walk even as Jesus walked - cf. **1 Jn 2:6**
3. But the one who continuously practices sin has neither seen Jesus nor known him (despite any claims to the contrary!)

#### B. WHOEVER "HAS BEEN BORN OF GOD" DOES NOT SIN... (9)

1. Again, John uses the present tense when he says "does not sin"
  - a. He is not suggesting that one "born of God" never sins
  - b. But that one truly "born of God" does not continuously practice sin
2. And why is that? Because "His seed remains in Him"
  - a. The "seed" is that life-giving principle that makes one a child of God
  - b. Which clearly involves the Word of God - cf. **Ja 1:18; 1 Pe 1:22-23**

3. As long as one allows the “seed” (the Word of God) to remain in him, he is “born of God”
  - a. As such he does not continuously practice sin
  - b. Nor can he continuously practice sin, if the “seed” is remaining in him
  - c. Instead, he continuously practices righteousness! - **1 Jn 3:7**

## CONCLUSION:

1. John is dealing with precursors to Gnosticism, and the idea that one can claim to be “born of God” and not be concerned about sin in their life
2. But when we are aware of:
  - a. The **definition** of sin
  - b. The **origin** of sin
  - c. The **defeat** of sin
  - d. The **refrainment** of sin...our attitude toward sin will certainly be different than those John was having to combat!
3. What is your attitude toward sin?
  - a. Have you been born again through obedience to the Word of God (the incorruptible seed)?
  - b. Are you letting that “seed” remain in you so that you do not continuously practice sin?
    - How your answer can reveal whose “child” you really are!

(Material from Mark A. Copeland)