

# So That You May Know

## An Expositional Study of the Epistle of **1 John**

### Chapter 13- The First Line **1John 3:4-10**

#### 108. Distinguishing Between Sin and Righteousness- Part 7

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WAOY Friday/Monday 10/26-29/07

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today I want to continue to look at what John taught about "The Distinction between Sin and Righteousness. So, let's read **1John 3:4-10** again together:

**4 Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.**

**5 You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.**

**6 No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.**

**7 Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous;**

**8 the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.**

**9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.**

**10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.**

Now on the last broadcast, I was showing you what John was talking about in verse 6- so let's read that verses again together:

**No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.**

Now I showed you last time that by going back to the original Greek language and looking at how John used the word, "Sin" in this verse- we can see that John was teaching here that whoever dwells in

Jesus, or in other words, whoever is saved (because saved people dwell in Jesus) John says here that these saved people do not continually dwell in sin on an ongoing basis.

And we saw last time that John was not teaching, and we must not believe that Salvation means sinless perfection- because it doesn't- the fact of the matter is that saved people sin.

But what John was teaching here is the proper relationship that saved people have with sin. John teaches here that saved people do not *dwell* in sin; they do not *remain continually* in sin like they did when they were lost. John taught that when saved people periodically sin- they know they have sinned; and they admit it and they despise it, and they quickly confess that sin and repent of that sin or turn from that sin and saved people do whatever it takes so they won't continually dwell in that sin.

So, the relationship of sin to the saved person has been changed by virtue of his Salvation. Salvation has made sin to be something that the saved soul does not want; does not seek after; does not dwell in; and will not remain in on an ongoing basis because they dwell or abide in Jesus Christ. And that is what John was saying here in verse 6.

And because that is true- then the opposite is also true. Lost people *do* dwell in sin because they do *not* dwell in Jesus. Lost people have no way to abide in Jesus- so they abide continually in sin; they enjoy sin; they may not like the *consequences* that sin brings into their lives- but they like the sin itself. In fact, the Bible teaches that lost people actually love sin. Look at what Jesus Himself said about this in **John 3:19:**

**This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.**

Sin to a lost man is like breathing. A lost person doesn't even have to think about it- sin is the natural and normal manifestation of his fallen and depraved nature. A lost person sins without any forethought because his own nature- the nature that he was conceived with- is corrupt. Therefore, Salvation is *not* the elimination of sin- it is the transformation of the nature.

You see, when Salvation comes to the human soul it transforms the old nature that is after the likeness of Adam into a new divine

nature- that is created in righteousness and true holiness. And this new nature is now the foundation of all that the saved person does.

You see, all of our decisions and all of our choices in life are based upon our nature. Lost people have the ability to choose and make decisions- but only in a limited way. Lost people can choose to marry a certain person; or they can choose to eat certain foods; or they can choose what color shirt to wear or what business to work at. They can make those kinds of free will decisions all day long- but the fallen nature of a lost person will never allow him to choose anything pertaining to God. That is why we call these people “lost”.

You see, lost people are not lost because they sin. Lost people sin because they are already lost. And what makes a lost person lost is because his nature is corrupt and fallen and he is totally and fully separated from God because of that fallen nature. And part of being fallen is not only did the Fall affect Man’s longevity- but it also affected his ability to freely choose to love and serve God.

Now I know that it is popular today to say that lost and unsaved people have a so-called “free will” and therefore they can choose freely of their own volition to serve or not to serve God. And that sounds logical, and it even sounds good. The only problem is the Bible doesn’t teach that. The Bible teaches that God chooses us- we do not choose God. The Bible teaches that we are dead in trespasses and sins and as lost sinners- as people who are dead to God- we *cannot* choose God. A lost man can no more choose to serve God than a dead man can choose to live.

So, what we need from God is not the freedom to choose- or a set of choices that we can pick from- what we need is to be resurrected. We don’t need to improve our condition before God- we need a brand new heart. We don’t need morality- we need to be born all over again. So, when we are saved- we are not an improved version of the same old man- we are a brand new creature! And only God can do that.

But when we are lost- we base all of our decisions and all of our choices on the limitations of our fallen nature- whose only interest is sin and self- what will be good for self. And that is why self- preservation is the most important and strongest urge that people have. Even those acts of nobility and kindness that lost people do are ultimately boiled down to being acts that serve to improve themselves- and are by nature- self- serving.

But when God transforms our nature- we no longer base our decisions and our choices on what is best for self, but we now base all our choices and all our decisions on what will give God Glory- even to the *detriment* of self. And this is true- not because we have become noble people- but it is true because we are making choices based upon our new nature and not the old nature.

So how you view Salvation depends on how fallen we really are. And there are only three views of lostness. And you already believe one of these three views. The first view says that lost people are not really lost at all. The second view says that lost people are spiritually “sick” and need some help. And the third view says that lost people are spiritually dead and need to be resurrected.

And if you believe the first view- you are a Humanist. And this is what modern Sociology teaches – that people are bad only because they do bad things. So, if they simply stop doing bad things and start doing good things then bad people will automatically become good people. And so, Humanism and Sociology teaches that all a bad person needs in order to become good is some information mixed in with some money added to a little encouragement from other people plus a little time and then presto- a bad person is now saved! And this is the foundational doctrine of Secular Humanism, and it is the most popular religion in the world.

Now the second view says that lost people are spiritually “sick”. This view acknowledges that there is something wrong with people- but they describe what is wrong as us being spiritually sick-rather than spiritually dead. And if you agree with this view- then you believe that all that lost people need to be saved is some spiritual medicine and some spiritual exercise to help him get rid of his spiritual sickness. And so, by that person freely and willingly choosing to cooperate with God by taking his spiritual medicine and performing his spiritual exercises- by that person applying to his own life those techniques that the spiritual doctor gives to him- then that lost person can cause himself to be saved.

And this is the view of many in the modern Church today. They view being lost as simply lacking information or lacking certain things that spiritual doctors can give to them. So, by giving these sick people what they need; and by showing them the proper secrets or techniques on how they can think better about themselves- these spiritually sick people can then choose to voluntarily begin to take the spiritual

medicine and get better or get saved. And sadly, this is how many people view Salvation today.

But then there is the remnant who believe what God said about Salvation in Scripture. And this Biblical view says that lost people are utterly and totally fallen; that they are spiritually dead; that they are blind and deaf and that they have lost all ability to see or hear or believe the Truth.

This third view says that the fallen condition of lost people is so radical and so total that unless and until God sovereignly moves upon that individual- then he has no hope. This third view says that unless God comes to where the lost person is- that because he is so fallen- he will never be saved- because he is unable and unwilling to ever come to God.

And this view says that before the foundation of the world- God chose His people- not based on anything that they did or did not do- but God chose to set His love upon them to save their souls. And Jesus died to guarantee that 100% of every single person that God chose would be saved. And God the Holy Spirit goes out into the world; down into the sin of where these people live; into the cesspool of their lives and God draws these people out- most of the time while they are kicking screaming- just like a fisherman draws fish out of the water into the boat. And God goes down inside the lost person's body and gives that sinful person eyes to see; ears to hear; and heart to believe. This third view says that God even has to provide that lost person with the gift of faith in order for him to believe- because his ability to believe was also ruined by the Fall.

And this third view says that after God has done all of that to the lost person and on behalf of that lost person- that the lost person hears the Gospel- with the new ears that God gave Him- and that person is then able to believe with the new heart that God gave him; and based upon the new nature that God has already given to him- that person then acts on that new nature and believes the Gospel and repents and God saves him.

And this third view is the only view which gives God all the Glory for Salvation. In both of the other two views- either Man gets all the Glory, or the Glory is shared between Man and God.

Now here is why all this matters. Remember that we are talking about the relationship that Sin has to those who are saved. John is not

teaching that saved people do not sin- he is teaching that because all men *do* sin- that God had to give Salvation to sinners or else no one could be saved. And so, the relationship that sin has to those who are redeemed is that we *do not*- and later on we will find that we *cannot*- remain or dwell or abide or continue in unrepentant sin- because God has Sovereignly changed our nature and our new nature cannot bear to dwell in sin.

In the first two views of lostness- it was the attempt to eliminate sin from our lives which *caused* our Salvation. But if that were true then only sinless people could be saved and that would mean that only sinless people could stay saved.

But when you acknowledge the harsh reality that all men sin- you quickly realize that if Salvation was only available to those who ceased from sin- then no one would be saved at all.

But in the third, Biblical view- because Salvation is achieved by what God alone did- and is not based upon what we have done- then we realize that we are saved by a Sovereign act of God- not because we eliminated sin from our lives. And this Truth doesn't give us license to go and sin with impunity- it gives us the hope that even when we do sin- God's Grace is greater than our sin.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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