

HHBC



1st John 3: 7-10

Children of God & Children of the Devil



I John 3: 7-10

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.



1st John 3: 7

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

Little children, make sure no one deceives you:

- One more once: “*little children*” is **teknia**. The verbal form **tiktō** means "to give birth to," thus the noun is "little born ones," "bairns" (Scotch). [Wuest]
- "make sure no one" = **mēdeis** No one, nobody (no how) "Deceive" is **planaō**, "to lead astray."
- One of the "ministries" of Satan is to deceive
 - a. Craftiness & deception: Gen. 3:1, 3:2- now Satan was more crafty than any beast in the field...
“Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’?”
 - b. 2 Cor. 11:3: **But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.**
 - c. Another “ministry” of Satan is counterfeit: false prophets, false teachings, counterfeit systems of doctrine, counterfeit churches; false christ (man of sin); false diety (Satan); false Holy Spirit (the Second Beast)



1st John 3: 7

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

The one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous

- “practices” is **poieō** = to do, carry out, execute in the PRES TENSE, ACTIVE VOICE
- ”righteousness” is **dikaiosynē** = faultless, guiltless, positive right-standing, +R, God’s very essence
- This is in our every day, hour by hour manner of walk, our condition. John uses “practices” **poieō**. Peter prefers “conversation” or behavior. (comportment, manner of life). Paul would use “walk” **peripateō**
- “just as”: the standard, the template, the mold is Christ’s righteousness. He is the standard by which to measure our daily walk of righteousness
- How do we carry out a +R manner of life? I Jn 2:**24** and 2:28: *‘let that which you have heard from the beginning (the Word concerning the Lord Jesus Christ) **ABIDE in you.**’* Also by abiding IN HIM, **menō**: *“And now little children, **abide in Him**”* v. 28
- *Let the word of Christ **richly dwell** within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.* Col. 3:16



1st John 3: 8(a)

the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning

- “practices” is again: ***poieō*** = *to do, carry out, execute in the PRES TENSE, ACTIVE VOICE*
- The one who carries sin in the present moment sin is out of the devil as a source (***ek***)
- Sin comes out from the devil contrasted to: righteousness is out from God as a source
- John gives the genesis of sin: the devil’s creation. Gen 3:1 to Eve, “has God really said...?” is the creation of the sin in man and the placing of the seed of the Sin Nature in mankind
- ”from the beginning”: which beginning? John uses quite a few... But this one is Satan’s beginning:

SATAN’S BEGINNING:

Isaiah 14:12-14 [L.S. Chafer; H. Molloy; Major Bible Themes Chap. 23; Dec. 15, 2002]

- **I will ascend to heaven**
- **I will raise my throne above the stars of God**
- **I will sit on the mount of assembly**
- **I will ascend above the heights of the clouds**
- **I will make myself like the Most High**



1st John 3: 8(b)

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.

SOME PURPOSES OF CHRIST'S COMING:

- Jesus Christ appeared- *phaneroō* again (was made manifest, visible) by His incarnation on Earth for (purpose) of destroying (*luō*) (loosening the bonds of the works of the devil, dissolving the chains/bonds)
- This purpose of Christ's appearance in human history is added to: John 3:16's **gift of eternal life to whosoever believes on Him;**
- Another statement of (several) purposes Dan. 9:24: *Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.*
- 2 Cor. 5:21's purpose: *He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so **that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.***
- And: Heb 2:14- *Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, **that** through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,*



1st John 3: 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

- ***Born of God*** = ***gennaō*** (born of, begotten) – *verb; perfect passive participle*. We are total recipients of this work of God. Also, at the moment new birth- totally unaware of this blessed event.
- Born (ek) of God; born out of God! Our Divine Source of Life is out of God
- AGAIN: “practices” is ***poieō*** = to do, carry out, execute in the PRES TENSE, ACTIVE VOICE
- Wuest: quotes Smith who defines ***poieō*** as continually doing sin as a business or vocation; doing it habitually
- Bob and Roy in our class however do not like this “habitual” sinning qualification. As the question arises: what constitutes habitual? 5-6 times? 12-16 times? Over a year? Ten years? What makes it a habit?
- Calvin-based interpretations, such as Reformed Theologians depend on the ‘habitual’ and continual Greek meaning of the present tense, and that is where they preach that if you are continually sinning, you have “old habits” from the Old Sin Nature (which by their doctrine is destroyed and utterly removed from the believer by the work of the cross); Therefore: they ask, ***“Were you really saved in the first place?”*** or ***“are you really one of the ‘elect’?”***



1st John 3: 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.

- **‘his seed abides in him’** : seed = *sperma* ; whatever possesses vital force or life-giving power: the Holy Spirit, the divine energy operating within the soul by which we are regenerated or made the τέκνα τοῦ Θεοῦ
- And: abides is our word *menō*. So the supernatural, implanted power of the Holy Spirit abides in us and gives us the supernatural power to keep from sin in the present moment. I like “moment by moment” “here and right now” present tense usage instead of “habitual, continuous”
- *So also it is written, “The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.” The last Adam became **a life-giving spirit**.* I Cor. 15:45
- Like Bob stressed last week: it’s a Life, and not a “how much and how so are you sinning” question.
- **We cannot sin** out of our New divine nature; absolutely impossible!
- However: WE CAN SIN HABITUALLY, CONTINUALLY: out of another source: the Adamic Nature, the Sin Nature, the Old Man. Yet, we are and always saved by grace, never to change. Paul would say, ‘you are carnal’ or **‘you are still fleshly’** I Cor. 3:3
- **Therefore**: in what source are we abiding? The Divine source or the old source the Sin Nature?
- And John’s point is 2:28’s- *Now, little children, **abide in Him**, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.* And: Col 3:4’s: *When **Christ, who is our life**, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory*



1st John 3: 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.

WHO is doing the sinning?

- *So now, no longer am I the one doing it, **but (The) sin which dwells in me.*** Rom 7:17
- Jesus answered them, *“Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.”* John 8:34

WHO in us is NOT doing the sinning?

- 1 Pet 1:23: ***for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God*** (McCalley)
- 2 Pet 1:4: *For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become **partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.*** (McCalley)

RE: *the ‘Habitual’ Pres. Tense interpretation: (Constable): Many English translations interpret the Greek present tense as saying no Christian habitually sins. However, the Greek present tense does not always indicate habitual action. Frequently it describes absolute action. Since earlier John wrote that the Christian does sin habitually (1:6-10; cf. 2:1) the idea that the Christian does not sin habitually seems inconsistent. **SEE also: ADDENDUM AT END OF PRESENTATION***



1st John 3: 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.

Children of God Vs. children of the devil contrasted

- Here again is our word *phaneros* (adj.) – obvious (in NAS), could also read: apparent: to make manifest, evident or plainly known
- One who does not do righteousness in their moment by moment walk is acting NOT (out of) *ek*, God. Or: out from God. The life-giving, energizing abiding Spirit of God, Whose very character and essence is infinite righteousness.
- The tree determines the type and quality of the fruit: is it out from The True Vine: Christ? Or the God's Tree of Life? Or: is the from the tree of the knowledge of good & evil, which has as its vinedresser, Satan, and which birthed the Sin Nature in us in the garden . . .
- A great sub-theme of I John: addressing the problem of outside agitators, false teachers, antichrists who are trying to deceive John's believers (3:7; 2:18-19; 4:1-4) with gnostic principles of sin and who Christ is. In this verse, I believe that John mirrors the Book of James: your present moment manner of life are made apparent to other men as proof of who you are a child of— and the agitators, false teachers & antichrists' manner of life is to be analyzed and judged by 1st John's believers to test whether or not these men are really born-again ones. (we will see in 1st Jn 4:1-3)



1st John 3: 7-10

Last Thoughts ...

The Ultimate Purpose for I Jn 3:8b's: *The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil:*

See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, [*compare to: I Jn 4:1-4; 2:18-19*] according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, [*I Jn 1:1-3*] and **in Him you have been made complete**, and He is the head over all rule and authority; and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, **in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism**, in which **you were also raised up with Him through faith** in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, **He made you alive together with Him**, [*all the identification truths here in a nutshell*] having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. **When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities**, [*Satan is their commander-in-chief*] **He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him**. COL 2: 8-15



Addendum: to I John 3:9

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.

More on the 'Habitual' sinning interpretation:

The reason one born of God does not sin is he has been born of God. John could say the Christian is sinless because a sinless Parent has begotten the Christian. The Christian becomes a partaker of God's divine sinless nature when he or she experiences the new birth. The Christian sins because he also has a sinful human nature. However in this verse John was looking only at the sinless nature of the indwelling Christ that we possess.¹²³

Again, if we were able to abide in Christ without interruption, we would never sin. The sinless nature of Christ controls the abiding Christian whereas the sinful human nature controls the non-abiding Christian.

"That is, sin is never the product of our abiding experience. It is never the act of the regenerate self per se. On the contrary, sin is the product of ignorance and blindness toward God [cf. 3:6b].

"To view sin as intrinsically foreign to what we are as regenerate people in Christ is to take the first step toward spiritual victory over it."¹²⁴

John was saying that when a Christian abides in God he will behave as his heavenly Father, and others will recognize that he is a child of God.¹²⁵

"If someone says, 'A priest cannot commit fornication,' one cannot deny that as a man he can commit it; but priests, functioning as priests, do not do those things. The Bible uses language in a similar way, 'A good tree cannot produce bad fruit' (Mt. 7:18). Of course a good tree can produce bad fruit, but not as a result of what it really is, a good tree. Also Jesus said, men 'cannot' fast while the bride groom is with them (Mk. 2:19). They can fast, but to do so is incongruous and unnatural..

[DR. CONSTABLE'S NOTES ON 1 JOHN; 2003 ED., PP 35,36]