

# First John (11) - The Holiness Of God's Children

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] chapter 3, and this is the passage we're going to look at this evening, 1 John chapter 3, and verses 4 to 10. We'll just read from the beginning of the chapter through to verse 10.

See what kind of love the Father has given to us that we should be called children of God, and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is, and everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself, as he is pure. Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness. Sin is lawlessness. You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who abides in him keeps on sinning. No one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness as is righteous as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God and who are the children of the devil. Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. Now last time we looked at the first few verses of the chapter, chapter 3 verses 1 to 3, and we saw that as setting out the children of God, some of the teaching there in regard to children of God, as it followed on from an emphasis on the kind of love that the Father has given that we should be called and made the children of God.

And tonight we're looking at the holiness of God's children, as you find that described in the way it is in verses 4 to 10. And this passage in verses 4 to 10, if you can just imagine it in terms of two columns. Let me just think of a page with two columns, something like you have in your Bibles, for example. And in these two columns you find three points in each of these columns parallel to each other. And the first of the points in each column is a statement in regard to sin.

This chapter, verse 4, everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness. Sin is lawlessness. That's the first point in the column on your left. And move to the column to your right in your mind, as you think of these two columns. You find in verse 8, whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. There's the first two points. In each of these columns in parallel, it's a statement in regard to sin. Then there's a second point under that, and the second point has to do with the purpose of Christ's appearing. You know in verse 5, that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. And then in the second column, go across to what you find in the verses following, and you'll find that the reason the Son of God, verse 8, the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. So these are the first two points in each of these parallel columns. A statement with regard to sin, and then the reason or the purpose for Christ's appearing. And then the third point is a logical conclusion from each of these two points. In each of the columns, you find a logical conclusion, not just a conclusion, but a conclusion that you're driven to, or led to, by what's in the first two points. There's the conclusion in the first column. No one who abides in him keeps on sinning. No one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. In other words, it's the kind of lifestyle that follows on from the statement about sin and the purpose of Christ's appearance, or coming. You find the same in the second column, if you're still thinking of the columns.

[ 4 : 44 ] Here is the third point, the logical conclusion, that no one born of God makes a practice of sinning. Verse 9, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God, and so on. So that's the kind of structure you have in these two sections of this passage. If you think of them, I think it's helpful if you think of them in terms of these two columns that I've asked you just to think about in your mind, and these three points under each of those. So what we're going to look at tonight is looking at the whole passage under three headings, and two points under each of those. First point is, the first heading is the seriousness of sin, which takes in these two statements in each of the columns. The seriousness of sin. The second is the sin-destroying appearance of Christ, which takes in the second point in each of these two imaginary columns. And the third heading is the significant conclusion that we draw from these two points. The seriousness of sin.

And in the first column, you find the seriousness of sin in terms of its nature as lawlessness. In verse 4 there, whoever practices sinning also practices lawlessness. Sin is lawlessness.

And the seriousness of sin is seen in the nature of sin as it is lawlessness. And then secondly, the seriousness of sin is seen in the second column in its relation to the devil. It's serious because it is a particular relation to the devil himself. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil.

Now these are very serious points, and they're important points. Let's look at the seriousness of sin in its nature as lawlessness. You see verse 4 here, everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness. And John is under no illusions at all. He realizes and he projects this teaching that everyone in fact means everyone. He's not leaving anyone out because the false teaching that he's countering, that we've seen something of before, had the idea that those false teachers themselves belong to a kind of spiritual elite. And sometimes within the false teaching that came to be known as Gnosticism in later times, the beginnings of it you find it here, but in that there was an idea that actually it was really the soul that mattered. And whatever happened to the body was insignificant.

Whatever you did in terms of your bodily practices was insignificant. You really should concentrate on the soul. And John is countering all of that by giving us a proper biblical God-given view of sin and of the seriousness of sin. And he says here, it's actually of universal application. Everyone who makes a practice of sinning practices lawlessness for sin is lawlessness. Now that's really important in many respects. And it's important in regard to the fact that it applies to everyone.

[ 8 : 04 ] Because it's the same moral standard that applies to every human being. The law of God, the law of God that's given as the moral law, in its application, is applied to every human being, whether they accept it or not, whether they belong to another religion or not, whether they apply, whether they in fact belong to no religion at all or not. The Bible makes it clear that God gave his law for mankind, not just for a particular group of mankind. So if somebody comes to you and say, well that's all right for you, you're a Christian, you accept that. I'm not a Christian.

I don't want Christ. I don't want the Bible. That doesn't mean the law doesn't apply to them. That doesn't mean something has actually happened where it's no longer relevant to speak of the law of God or the Ten Commandments, however we refer to it. This is of universal application. It's the same standard of morality that every single one of us has and that every human being has as God-given.

We tend to think perhaps that those who are ministers or elders or confessing Christians have a higher standard of morality set for them than other people who are not in those categories.

It's not the case. I'm not saying by that that as a minister or as an elder, when we practice something that's sinful or do something that's obviously wrong, that there aren't dimensions to the position we have that have a direct bearing on the seriousness of what we do if we do things that are wrong. But that doesn't remove the fact that it's the same basis of morality that I have as you have, that the elders here have as you have, that you have as everybody out there has whether they accept it or not. It is God's law, God's moral law, God's command as he has revealed it in the scriptures to us.

And that's why the definition of sin as lawlessness is important. That's not an easy thing to really grasp as to what he means by sin is lawlessness. But it's not just that sin is a breaking of God's law or a departure from God's law or a rejection of God's law. What he's saying is this is the nature of sin itself, a wrongdoing at the heart of our being. There's something called lawlessness. There's no logic to it. There's no structure to it. It doesn't have a law. It doesn't have something that really keeps it as it were consistent. It's lawlessness. And it rebels against the law of God because there is a structure. There's a particular pattern to that that reflects what God himself is in himself.

[ 10 : 55 ] Let me just remind you of Romans chapter 8. Romans 8 verses 7 to 8 where you find Paul writing as follows, for the mind that is set on the flesh or the the fleshly mind, the mind of sin, mind dominated by sin. The mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God for it does not submit to God's law. Indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh therefore cannot please God. It does not submit to God's law.

Indeed, it cannot. It's not just lawlessness in itself, but it has a very pronounced antipathy and hatred to the law of God. And while it remains the fleshly mind, the mind of sin, it cannot be subject to the law of God. It rejects that. And it follows if you reject God's law, then you're actually then rejecting the whole concept of sin. That's why the world we live in is as it is. It's not new in every sense, of course, but as you know very well, around you you find an emphasis on things which the Bible denounces. You find people actually coming to live by their own standard and insisting on their own standard contrary to what anyone else might want to say to them or advise them. And especially you find a propensity on the part of people to reject God's law as a standard. They don't want that.

People will say, I have no time for the Bible. I just want to live by human standards. I make up my own laws. Or I follow a group of people who've rejected religion altogether and therefore we have our own standards. Well, here is God saying, if you deny the law of God, if you reject the law of God, if you deny its reality and its relevance, then you're really in a sense denying the reality of sin.

You can only define sin in relation to God's law. That's what sin is. Your catechism, you remember, very well, I'm sure most of you will remember that definition of the catechism. Sin is any want or lack of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God. In other words, sin is failing to match up to the law of God or to deliberately break the law of God. You can't define sin without taking account of the law of God. That's why you find so much in our society. Sadly, we need to bear this in mind as we present the gospel and as we seek to live out our lives as Christian lives. That's why you find so much of a redefining of people's behavior so that the concept of sin is not actually mentioned. For example, you might find somebody who's committed adultery. Maybe it's somebody well known, some celebrity or other. Adultery is not described there necessarily or often as adultery.

They've had a fling. They've done something which really isn't all that serious as part of human nature. The Bible calls it sin. And you'll find the same with all kinds of deviations from the standard of God that our society and people by nature and we ourselves are in that as well. Our tendency is not to call sin, sin. Not to call sin a transgression of God's law. Not to define behavior by its relation to God's law. But that's what we have to do. That's what the Bible constrains us to do. That's what in preaching the gospel we must do. Can you imagine what it would be like if I as a preacher, if Kenny as a preacher was to decide tomorrow, I'm not going to really mention sin anymore. If I am, I'm going to actually mention it in different terms to what the Bible calls it. Where would we then be? How would we know then what was right and wrong? Where would we see the mind and the will of God? That's the kind of situation that we live in in this world, in this society of ours. People will say to you, were you to tell me what law to live by. That's just your opinion. I've got my own opinion. Well, this is God's opinion. And whether we accept it or not, it applies to us universally. Whoever practices sin practices lawlessness. And that's so important to remember. What's the first step? Let me ask the question. What is the first step towards holiness? What is the first step towards holiness?

[ 15 : 38 ] You might say, well, it's faith in Christ, isn't it? Or you might say, it's repentance. Well, that's certainly very near the beginning of that journey towards holiness. But the first step in towards holiness is an acceptance of the nature of sin. An acceptance of sin as sin, as God defines it. Because when you accept it as God defines it, when it comes to convict you as sin, when God defines it as sin, then you know you need to do something about it. Then you realize it's much bigger than you can handle yourself. Then you realize your need of Christ and what Christ has done to deal with sin, as we'll see later in the chapter, that he has come to destroy the works of the devil and he has come to take away our sins.

How do you realize your need of Christ? By realizing that you're a sinner. And you're a sinner in need of his forgiveness. And you're a sinner in need of salvation. And by realizing your sin is serious, that you can't just pass it off as something that's not got its own seriousness or doesn't have an impact on your relation to God or to eternity. Friends, here is John actually telling us in contrast, contrast to what you often hear in the world around you in regard to sin. When John speaks about sin, he speaks about sin.

When John presents sin to us as the Bible elsewhere, then it presents to us as God defines it, as God sees it. And it would be utter foolishness for us to take account of our behavior in any other way than that God defines it. Because that's the way to salvation. That's the way to peace. That's the way to holiness. You take it as God describes it and you deal with it as God counsels you.

So the seriousness of sin is in its nature as lawlessness. But we need to move on quickly. It's also serious in its relation to the devil. Look at verse 8, the first point in the second column as we pictured it. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil. We'll see in the next part of the study that practicing sinning is more than just an occasional sin or actually sinning in a way that then regrets and repents of it. Practicing sinning is in a way that just goes on under the dominance of sin and doesn't really do anything about it. Whoever practices sin, whoever makes a practice, whoever is in a course of sin is of the devil. That's the kind of language that's very hard to accept even for ourselves. Many people in the world don't believe in the devil. Don't believe he exists. That he's an invention of the church in the past. Or that it's just a figment of religious consciousness down through the ages. A kind of bogeyman figure to keep children away from doing things that are not right. That's not how the Bible presents it. Here is the devil, the arch sinner, if you like, that entices and encourages human beings to sin. That heads up the rebellion against God that we became part of when we fell in Adam and Eve.

And here he is saying, sin, whoever goes on sinning, practices sinning, is of the devil. You see at the beginning of the chapter as we saw, he's talking about being like Jesus or being like God.

[ 19 : 22 ] We're being like him, we're like him as we're made as children under his love and through his love. We come to be born again. We come to be made children of God. And we come to bear the likeness of God our Father or the likeness indeed of Jesus himself as our Savior.

But it's important also that we remind ourselves that to go on sinning is to be more like the devil than we are like God. To resemble Satan more than we resemble God.

Isn't that really serious? Isn't that solemn? That anyone who goes on sinning without coming to repentance, without really dealing with sin seriously or treating the seriousness of sin as the Bible does, he is of the devil.

He has more to do with the likeness of God's archenemy than with God's Son. And that's very solemn for us tonight, isn't it?

That this in fact is what we come to be like. You remember Jesus, and again it's in John's writings and John's Gospel this time, when he spoke to the Jews, the leaders of the Jews especially, in John chapter 8 where he there demonstrated that they didn't know God, though they claimed to be the children of Abraham and the children of God.

[ 20 : 49 ] And John 8 verses 39 to 45, this is what that passage is dealing with. They said to him, Abraham is our father. Jesus said, if you were Abraham's children, you would be doing what Abraham did.

But now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. That is not what Abraham did. You are doing what your father did. And they said to him, we were not born of sexual immorality.

We have one father, even God. Jesus said to them, if God were your father, you would love me. For I came from God and I am here.

You see, they are convinced that they are the children of God, that they are the spiritual descendants of Abraham. They haven't at all reckoned with the fact that they are not. They haven't even contemplated the possibility that they are not.

So he goes on to say, you are of your father, the devil. And your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and has nothing to do with the truth.

[ 21 : 50 ] Because there is no truth in him. So there is the first point, and it's a serious point. The seriousness of sin has lawlessness.

And it's a transgression of God's law. And it's also from the point of view of its relation to the devil. Second heading we have is the sin-destroying appearance of Christ.

There's verse 5. Second point in the left-hand column. You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. Now when it says here that Jesus appeared, it's Jesus he means, obviously, as he goes on in the second part to speak about the Son of God.

Jesus appeared means more than just the very fact of his appearance. His incarnation is coming to take our nature. He means here the whole of his earthly ministry.

All that he actually did by way of dealing with sin. In Romans chapter 8 again, what the law could not do, and that it was weak through the flesh, our sinfulness. God sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin.

[ 22 : 59 ] Condemned sin in the flesh. He dealt with sin. And here is John saying, this is why he appeared. This is why he lived the life he lived. This is why he died the death he died.

This is why he rose from the dead. This is why everything you read about him is in fact what was true of him. He appeared to take away sins.

And to take away the same word that John the Baptist used in John chapter 1, the gospel, where he says, Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Who lifts away the sin of the world.

He's treating, looking at sin, describing sin as a great burden that's placed upon us. That we have placed upon ourselves a burden that's crushing us. A burden that will crush us to hell if it's not actually taken away.

How is it taken away? It's taken away by the Lamb of God. God. It's Jesus who takes away the burden of your sin. You can never unburden yourself of it. Though you can unburden in the sense of confessing it to Jesus.

[ 23 : 59 ] Confessing it to God. But what you're confessing to God as you confess your sin is you want forgiveness. You want this burden to be taken off you. You want Jesus to lift away your sins. To do away with them.

To deposit them where they will not condemn you anymore. In his righteousness. That's why he came into the world. He came into the world to take away sin.

How does he take away our sin? By taking it to himself. Why did Jesus die? Why was there such a cry of agony from the cross?

My God, my God. Why have you forsaken me? What is that forsakenness? Though we cannot possibly understand it in all its depth and in all its comprehensiveness. But we can understand it from the point of at least to the point of saying it is the cry of the Son of God in our nature experiencing what it meant to bear the weight of our sin.

The condemning weight of our sin. Our guilt. That's where God deposited it. As Isaiah 53 put it. He has laid upon him the iniquity of us all.

[ 25 : 13 ] That's how the burden of sin was dealt with by God. God didn't just make a pronouncement from heaven in such a way as would say well if you come to me and if you accept that you're a sinner I'll make a declaration.

I'll make a pronouncement and that'll be it. There'll be a new relationship. Sin had to be dealt with. Sin itself needed to be dealt with. Sin itself. And Jesus took it to himself.

He appeared to take away his sin by taking it to himself first and dying the death that we deserve. The death that a broken law the law of God demanded.

And you see he adds then and in him is no sin. Isn't that interesting compared to what he says of the devil? The devil has been sinning from the beginning.

Or John chapter 8 as we read a minute ago. The passage there saying where Jesus said to the Jews about the devil there is no truth in him. You see the very opposite of that with Jesus where it says here that there is no sin in him.

[ 26 : 22 ] The sinlessness of Jesus himself is absolutely crucial to our salvation. He took the sin of his people to himself. He bore that.

The weight of it was laid upon him. But he himself personally in his person remained absolutely spotless and pure.

The sinlessness of Jesus is a very necessary aspect of his saving person or the saving grace of God in the person of his son.

in him is no sin. So the sin destroying appearance of Christ he came to take away our sins. And the second point in the sin destroying appearance of Christ in the second column is that he came to destroy the works of the devil.

The son of God appeared. The reason he appeared the purpose was to destroy the works of the devil. So you see he's equating there our sins with the works of the devil because it's the devil that's really essentially behind him.

[ 27 : 30 ] It doesn't mean we just blame the devil when we find ourselves sinning. When we have sinned to confess we can't go to the Lord and say it's the devil that made me do it because the Lord will turn around and say no you did it.

You did it. That's what David confessed in Psalm 51 when he came to God. He didn't come to God knowing that God had caught him out that his sin was known that the guilt of it was lying on his mind.

He didn't come to God and say Lord I couldn't help it or Lord it was the devil that made me do it. Against you you only I have sinned.

I have done it. I'm responsible. I'm guilty for it. That's what we confess. We don't blame the devil for it though we know that there's an influence of the devil behind us as Paul wrote to the Corinthians.

Those whose minds are blinded. The God of this world the devil has blinded their minds. He has an influence over people and he continues to have an influence over people to continue to reject Christ and to reject the truth of the gospel.

[ 28 : 42 ] But you see he's saying here the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. Now that word destroy it actually means to loose or set loose the works of the devil because the image that you have in the Bible is the devil is a great tyrant and he is.

And the works of the devil are really essentially spiritual chains in which he keeps people captive. And the reason Jesus came the purpose of his coming the reason he died the death of the cross and rose from the dead was so that these chains might be broke.

that you might no longer be held under the works of the devil and chained to him as the tyrant that dominates your life. You see he's very clever the devil he doesn't let you see the chains.

It doesn't make you think you're enchained at all you think you're free when you're actually enchained. It's only when God enlightens your mind as to what sin is and what he requires and why Jesus died that you then realize the condition that you thought of was freedom was actually bondage.

The wonderful open fields of human life without God is actually a prison. And it's when you come to know the Lord and know sin and then know the Lord's forgiveness then you realize that actually as an unforgiven sinner as someone who's been at enmity with God since I was born I'm not free at all.

[ 30 : 10 ] I'm enchained. I am of the devil and I need that to be broken. And Jesus came to smash the works of the devil to destroy the works of the devil to loose the works of the devil to set people free.

free. Is there anyone here tonight who doesn't yet know the freedom that Christ makes us free with? Have you come yourself to realize that what the world tells you what your own natural mind tells you is freedom is actually not that that it's the opposite of that?

Have you come to see your need of Jesus in terms of the enslaving power of sin and the enslaving influence of the devil? Isn't that what Jesus himself said in Matthew 12 that he had come to tie up the strong man so as to take over his house?

There was the picture he was making of the devil having this house and all the people that lived under his influence in that house with him and he had come to tie up the strong man and once he's tied him up then those that were enslaved can be set free.

Same in Romans chapter 6 verses 20 to 22 now that you've been made free from sin you've become servants of God or bonded to God and you have your fruit unto eternal life.

[ 31 : 39 ] Read that passage when you go home please and see it in relation to that you can see how Paul deals away with the enslaving power of sin and now Christ sets us free from that and brings us into the wonderful liberty of being the sons of God.

So there's the seriousness of sin there's the sin destroying appearance of Christ and there's the significant conclusion from each of those and there are two points there as well I have to be very brief just to see how the logical conclusion that John comes to is so important.

The significant conclusion first of all is in verse 6 and column 1 no one who abides in him keeps on sinning. No one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.

The grammar and the tense here of these verbs is very important. Very important that we see that this translation in fact the translation here is very good we feel in bringing out the sense of the meaning of the words and the tenses of these verbs especially because you'll see there no one who abides in him keeps on sinning.

No one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him and the same in the second column where you find in verse 9 no one who is born of God makes a practice of sinning. What John is dealing with is not occasional sin.

[ 33 : 01 ] We all sin occasionally. What John is dealing with is the practice of sinning. Being involved in a course of sinning. Heading on in the life of sinning that does not actually have an element of repentance or of forgiveness in it at all.

What he is saying is whoever abides in him in Christ does not sin, does not keep on sinning.

No one who abides in him keeps on sinning. No one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. If we sin deliberately, knowingly, habitually, we follow a pattern or a path of sin, whatever sin or sins they might be in our lives and just keep on following that without actually dealing with it, without having it confessed to God and repenting of it.

Whatever we call ourselves, we have neither seen him nor known him. You see, it is not in what we confess to be so much as what we actually are in our behavior that shows up what we are in our relation to God.

There are many people that might confess themselves to be Christians, but if their lifestyle is a course of sinning, they have never known God. They have never actually come to see him and know him in the way that John here is dealing with.

[ 34 : 34 ] And John is really dealing with it as it is, isn't he? No one who abides in him keeps on sinning. No one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. You see how strong John is.

Again, people might find this kind of thing extremely difficult to accept. People might even, in some cases today in churches, even might take this sort of thing out of the Bible altogether and say it's no longer relevant.

I'm sure there are places, and I'm sure there are places where if I were to preach this sermon tonight on this theme with these and all I'm doing is basically taking out what's in the Bible there, but people will say that's not the kind of preaching we want.

That's not the kind of thing the gospel is. That's not the kind of God that we believe in. That's the kind of God John knew. And there was no one in the world of the time, or indeed anyone since probably, who knew Jesus as well as John did, who had such familiarity with him, such an intimate knowledge of him.

But John does not hesitate at all to describe sin for what it is, to describe a course of sinning for what it is. He calls a spade a spade.

[ 35 : 52 ] That's what we need to do lovingly, tactfully, patiently, but in a God-honoring way, because that's the truth that God is setting out before us.

No one who abides in him keeps on sinning. You've probably heard of Thomas Chalmers, one of the great leaders of the disruption in 1843, and around that time became one of the great leaders, if not the leader of the free church up to the time of his death.

And he describes his own conversion in different ways. And he was, of course, a preacher of the gospel, but he didn't preach the gospel. He wasn't even converted then. But after he was converted, he then described the change that had come over him.

And one of the ways he put it was this. There was, he said, the expulsive power of a new affection. That's what God had done in his life.

He came into his life and changed him in his heart. And that's what he said. This was the expulsive power of a new affection. I came to love God the way I'd never loved him before. But you see, he described it as the expulsive power of a new affection.

[ 37 : 03 ] He didn't just say, I came to a new affection. I came to a new appreciation of God. I came to love God, this affection, this new affection. He called it an expulsive power.

Why was it expulsive? Because when it came into his life, he then said, sin, you've got to move out of here. You don't belong here anymore.

You can't share my heart with Jesus. You can't share my heart with love for God. Expulsive power of a new affection.

What's your view of sin tonight? How do you see the defects of your own life? Every one of us has them. How have you dealt with your sinfulness and your sin?

Are you still short of bringing them to God? Expressing them to God? Just describing to him the way he himself describes your sin?

[ 38 : 09 ] You come to know the power, the expulsive power of a new affection. Have you come to say to sin in your own heart, you can live here no more.

You have to move out. I have a new resident. I now have Christ in my heart. Christ has no rivals to my affection.

The same in verse 9, just to summarize it. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning. You see, he's not just now dealing with the way that we abide in Christ, the Christian abiding in Christ.

He's not talking about rebirth and new birth and the seed of God. It has to do with the life that God implants in those that he changes, those that he's converted, those that he's born, that are born again by his power, by his spirit.

It's a radical inward change. It's new life created. And where that is, that person cannot keep on sinning because he's been born of God.

[ 39 : 16 ] I don't want anyone here to come to be disillusioned or to come to a sense of lack of assurance thinking that this means because you find sin in your life that you can't be a Christian, that you can't be born again.

Remember what I'm saying. Remember what this is saying. He's not talking about sin as you find yourself doing something you know has been wrong, you come and repent of it, you seek God's forgiveness.

He's talking here about a course of sin, a going on in a sinful lifestyle. What he's saying is, those who abide in God, they can't do that.

They've stopped doing that. That doesn't mark their life any longer. There is new life. God's seed abides in him and he cannot keep on sinning because he's been born of God.

He's got a new power with which he deals with sin and she deals with sin compared to what was. So, let's summarize just to conclude. As you look to the law of God, as you realize the law of God highlights your sin and indeed condemns you as it declares that you need to meet the standard of that law itself, what do you do?

[ 40 : 35 ] Well, you turn to Jesus. You turn to Christ who fulfilled that law for us, who is himself the great law keeper as he is the law giver.

And as you look to him, you say, Lord, be my righteousness. Let me hide myself in you. And as you look as to why Jesus came into the world, these are the two points that we began with.

The seriousness of sin in terms of the law of God, the sin-destroying appearance of Christ. As you think about why Christ came into the world, what was the purpose of his appearing?

Why did he die the death he died? Then you conclude, I can't let sin live in my heart anymore. Surely. Surely that's for you too.

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, as Paul said to the Romans, that you should obey it in the lusts hereof.

[ 41 : 42 ] Friends, we're all sinners. We're all sinners more than we realize. But Jesus, as John Newton put it, is a great Savior.

Let's look to him. Let's conclude now by singing again to God's praise this time. We're singing in Psalm 84. Psalm number 84.

That's in the Scottish Psalter. Verses 8 to 12. Lord God of hosts, my prayer here. O Jacob's God, give ear. See God our shield.

Look on the face of thine anointed dear. Psalm 84, page 339. Lord God of hosts, my prayer here. Lord God of hosts, my prayer here.

O Jesus, God give ear. See God our shield.

[ 42 : 55 ] See God our shield. Look on the face of thine anointed dear.

For in thy hope one day excels, A thousand brethren.

Lord God will find angels. Lord God of hosts, my prayer here.

God our shield. May God faithful. All Philipppines. For God the Lord has sun and shield, in grace and glory give, And will they hold no good from them, that a bright need to live.

O how thou art the Lord of hosts, that man is truly blessed, Who by assured confidence, on thee alone doth rest.

[ 45 : 00 ] I'll go to the side door to my right this evening. Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, And the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you now and always. Amen.