

## First Epistle of John VIII

Fred R. Coulter—November 5, 1994

This week we saw the tragedy unfold where the young mother confessed to killing her two children leaving them in the car, rolling the car into the lake with them strapped in the back seat because she wanted to have an affair with a new-found boyfriend who didn't want the children around—although he didn't cause her to do it as such. And then she pleaded as if someone had carjacked her car with the children in the back and then accused someone of doing it. Well, as the week went along, it got worse and worse and, as it turned out that she was the one who had done it. Now, I imagine that in this town of Union City, South Carolina—this is a good Baptist town—I imagine all the kids there go to Sunday school; and I imagine they are taught all of the Bible belt lessons that are there. However, that—believe it or not—is the first step which leads to things just like this; because they are living too many things that are not true. They are leading lives which are lies—and their religion are lies. So they are shocked when it comes!

Let's go here to Matthew 24:12 and let's read this. We are going to see how this ties right in with what John is talking about. "And because lawlessness shall be multiplied... [*Multiplied*—not just 'abounding' (*KJV*), but *multiplied*.] ...the love of many shall grow cold." And that's certainly true in this instance and other instance—and we're going to see things like this occur again and again and again.

Now let's go to 1-John, and let's look at one of the famous Scriptures—and we'll do this in the *King James*—one of the famous Scriptures. And as we go through 1-John, the third chapter, we're going to see how many of these things have been misconstrued. Here's one of the famous chapters that the religionists use today—1-John 3:9 (*KJV*): "Whosoever is born of God **does not commit sin...**" And it is taken literally in that sense by a lot of the Protestants, which means that: if you open your heart, you accept the Lord, you have been born again and **you cannot sin!**

I remember talking to a lady one time who had a friend who was a Baptist, and this Baptist told her friend (who was in the Church of God) she said, 'Well now,' she said, 'according to Scripture, I've been born of God and I cannot sin. And when the *rapture* comes, God has to take me.' So she looked at her and said, 'What if you were in the act of committing adultery when the call came? 'He would have to take me, because I cannot commit sin.'

Now, we're going to see, in this chapter, that it does not mean the *impossibility* of committing sin.

It means something else. But, it's just like in this society, the seeds, which now have grown into the plants in this generation, were planted because of this type of theology. So let's take a look here at, at 1-John, the third chapter, and let's just do a little review of the verses. So I've broken this down into basically nine different sections within this chapter. And we'll see them as we go along.

- First of all, we start out in verses one to three—that is God's love for us and that we are the children of God.
- Verse four tells us what sin is—and we'll analyze that quite a bit today.
- Then it talks about practicing righteousness, or practicing sin.
- Then it talks about the children of the devil and the children of God.
- Then it talks about loving the brethren, or having hatred.
- Then it talks about God's love for us again, in relationship to what we should do.
- Then it talks about love, commandment-keeping and the Holy Spirit.

And those are the things which come down through chapter three.

Now, what I want to do is, I want to go ahead and let's begin right here in, in 1-John 3:4, and in some of this we're going to use the *Interlinear* quite a bit. Let's read it first of all in the *King James*, which is one of the first verses that I am sure that you memorized or that sort of stuck in your memory when you were coming to the knowledge of the Truth—1-John 3:4 (*KJV*): "Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." Now, that's a pretty good translation overall. But it doesn't really give us the full account of it. Now, let's read it in the *Faithful Version*, which is translated directly from the Greek. It gives us an entirely different connotation. Now, if you want to, you can put in your margin there: Matt. 24:12; because 'iniquity' in Matt. 24:12 is 'lawlessness'—the same as it is here.

1-John 3:4: "Everyone who is practicing sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness." Now 'lawlessness' in this case means *against law*. And this is what our Protestant society has created—*against law*. 'Oh, you don't have to keep the commandments of God.' I just talked to a man yesterday (he stopped by to visit me) and he has a wife who is solidly Protestant. And they say, 'Well, if you have love in your heart then you automatically keep the commandments and you

don't have to keep them.' And so, she is against the Sabbath. She is against the Holy Days. But, boy does she *love* Christmas; and she believes in the trinity, and believes that anybody who doesn't believe in the trinity is committing blasphemy.

So here you've got all of this together. So it creates *lawlessness*. Now, if you will please turn the section in the *Interlinear*—1-John 3:4. Now the reason I have this here is so that

1. You'll be able to see the English in the *Interlinear*
2. The Greek will be there for us when we need it
3. For everyone to understand that when I do a study translation, I'm not trying to create a new official Scripture—but just to give us greater understanding.

Now, let's read 1-John 3:4 (*Int*): "Everyone that practices sin, also lawlessness practices, and sin is lawlessness." Let's come down and read v 9 (*FV*): "Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin..." You see that?—'does not practice.' It's the same word, the same verb in the Greek, which is pronounced: the Greek is right above, you don't have to know Greek to understand this. It is 'poieo'—*to practice*. So, when we're talking about lawlessness abounding, this is what we are talking about here in, in verse four. It is *abounding*! Now, let's see what it's talking about concerning *practicing sin*.

Now let's go a little bit further; let's come to the *Word Studies from the Greek* [from: Seven General Epistles, pg. 106], 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> John—I've laid out an explanation of all of the basics necessary for understanding this.

**Sin and Transgression:** Now there are many forms of sin. Lawlessness or against law—means that you are *resistant* against law. There is another sin, which is *missing the mark*. And, as we will see, there is "a sin not unto death." and there is a "sin unto death," as John explains.

The opposite of commandment-keeping is sin and transgression. And then we just read how that was translated. So, John is clearly defining what sin is: **it is commandment-breaking!** Right now I'm working on an article concerning Sabbath: *Which Day is the True Lord's Day of the New Testament*. And right in the article, I'm going to make it very clear that Sunday-keeping **is sin!** Needs to be labeled as such.

- Is murder sin? *Oh yes, all the Sunday-keepers are all mad because of this murder. Right?*
- Is stealing a sin? *Yes!*
- Is taking God's name in vain a sin? *Yes!*
- Is idolatry a sin? *Yes!*

- Is breaking the Sabbath a sin? *"No! Because we keep Sunday."*

And that's the kind of thinking that is generally proffered to justify Sunday-keeping. Sunday-keeping **is a SIN!** Sabbath-keeping **is righteousness!** Now in this verse, John uses the Greek word 'anomia'—which actually is defining sin in the strongest terms. And when you're practicing it, it is defining a lifestyle, the way you are living. And then it also shows that those who live that way are of the devil.

What we are going to find when we are going through all of this, we're going to find that we do sin, but we don't **practice** sin. And we'll see some very interesting things in the first chapter of 1-John.

1-John 3:4: "Everyone who is practicing sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness." Now, let's analyze these three verses in relationship to the common understanding that you cannot commit sin. And this is what makes some 'Christians' really so upset. Because if you cannot commit sin, why is it that you sin? And even in the Church of God, it creates some difficulties for people.

1-John 1:7: "However, if we are walking in the Light, as He is in the Light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His own Son is cleansing us from every sin." Now, notice "cleansing us from every sin." That is a present tense verb, which means: *it's constant cleansing—constant cleansing all the time*. What is it that we ask in the daily prayer—in Matt. 6 and Luke 11? What is it that we pray?

Our Father in heaven,  
Holy is Your name,  
Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven  
Give us this day our daily bread  
Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those *who trespass against us*.

—right?

That is part of the cleansing! Because we need our sins forgiven every day because we have the *law of sin and death*. So this one verse here, when you put it right alongside the *King James* translation: 'cannot sin'—then you have a great contradiction. But if it is: 'you cannot practice sin'—then that tells us the correct understanding of it. "If we say that **we do not have sin...**" (v 8). There it is, right there—that ties right in with, with the 1-John 3:9. There's the contradiction. Because if you read 1-John 3:9 and take it for what it says in the *King James*, where it says: "Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin..." Then you read 1-John 1:8,

which says: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us.”

So, we have two things here. 1-John 1:7: “...if we are walking in the Light [of God]...the blood of Christ...is cleansing us from every sin... [present tense] (v 8): ...If we say that we do not have sin, we’re deceiving ourselves and the Truth is not in us.” So when you compare that with 1-John 3:9, in the *King James Version*, you’ve got a contradiction that’s going head-on. One says *if you’re born of God you cannot commit sin*. The other one says *if you do not have sin, you’re deceiving yourself*. That’s why I have the *Interlinear* here.

Now, let’s go to the *Interlinear* and let’s again, look at 1-John 3:9, and I’m going to read the English right under the Greek. Now, again, very few people know Greek, but it is good to have the Greek *Interlinear* just for the English sake, because the English in the *Interlinear* is different than the *King James Version* and it gives us a whole different perspective on many of these things. And, I would have to say, that the English in the *Interlinear* is far superior to the translation of the *King James*—far superior.

Let’s read 1-John 3:9, *Int*: “Anyone that has been begotten of God, sin not practices... [now, you have to read those little numbers there, it says literally:] ...Anyone that has been begotten of God, practices not sin...” Now, let’s go back and read 1-John 3:9: “Everyone who has been begotten by God is not practicing sin...” Now, that’s as close to a literal translation as you can get, with the verbs and everything. So, what does it—if you are not practicing sin what does this say? *This says and means you are not living a life of breaking the commandments of God*. Doesn’t mean you don’t sin. Nowhere does it say it’s impossible for you to sin. It’s talking about you don’t *practice* sin.

Now, let’s come back to 1-John 1:9 and we will see it right here. Now, these agree, and they should agree. Why is it that we can live a life not practicing sin, and yet, we still sin? *Because, as we know, we have the ‘law of sin and death’ in us*. And there’s something else that takes place, the reason why we can’t practice sin, is because, as we will see, the Spirit of God in us *convicts* us of that sin, so that we will repent. And another thing that we will see, which is also true: when you have God’s Spirit, you become more aware of sin mentally, more-so with yourself than you ever have in your whole life—because *sin begins in the mind*. So then you start putting out that sin. That’s overcoming. But you have to confess it.

1-John 1:9: “If we are confessing our own sins... [which means that we do have sins] ...He is

faithful and righteous, that He may forgive us our sins, and that He may purify us from all unrighteousness.” Now, that in itself is a tremendous promise. So, *if* you find yourself sinning—which you will—then what you do is *confess* your sin and God will forgive it. Therefore, you are not living a life of *practicing* sin. It’s far different. Now, let’s turn the coin on the other side. If you are constantly keeping Sunday and breaking the Sabbath, are you *practicing* sin? *Yes!* Every single week—two ways:

1. you’re breaking the Sabbath
2. you’re trying to keep Holy a day that God *never, never* made Holy

So, you have two sins. So that’s why we need to go through and really understand this as deeply as we can.

Now, let’s come here to 1-John 2:2: “And He is *the* propitiation for our sins... [Now, ‘propitiation’ means: *continual source of forgiveness and reconciliation*. ‘Propitiation’ is different than a one-time forgiveness. A one-time forgiveness is called *expiation*. ‘Propitiation’ is: You can *continually* come to Christ. He is *continually* there to *continually* cleanse you of every sin, to *continually* forgive every sin that you confess, to grant you of His Spirit to grow and overcome. Now then, He adds this—lest we get all conceited.] ...and not only for our sins, but also for *the sins of the whole world*.” Which then will be in God’s time and plan of salvation to bring it to the whole world.

Now, v 12: “I am writing to you, little children, because *your sins have been forgiven* you through His name.” So what we have all the way through: either practicing sin or not practicing sin. As we will see, there’s *practicing righteousness*—which is what we are doing. We are *practicing righteousness* by living God’s way.

Now, let’s come here to 1-John 3:5: “And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and **in Him is no sin**.” Now, that becomes profound and very important. And as we get down to the Passover time we’ll understand a little bit more about the whole life of Christ and how He became a human being and carrying the ‘law of sin and death’ and all of that.

Let’s come down to v 8: “The one who is practicing sin is of the devil... [Now, we’re going to see how profound this is when we go back—we’re going through this now so we will go back and go through mostly the *Interlinear* when we finish this section.] ...because the devil *has been* sinning from *the beginning*. For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil.”

Now, let's come down to 1-John 4:10: "In this *act*... [that's talking about the crucifixion] ...is THE LOVE—not that we loved God... [that is, we can boast how great we are] ...rather, that He loved us and sent His Son as a propitiation for our sins."

Now, here's something very interesting, the next one—1-John 5:16: "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin... [There you go. If it's impossible to sin, once you have been 'born again' so-to-speak, how is that you can see your brother sinning? *Wouldn't be!*] (But he clearly says): ...If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death, he shall ask, and He will give him life for those who are not sinning unto death. There is a sin unto death; concerning that *sin*, I do not say that he should make any supplication to God."

- A "sin unto death" is the *unpardonable sin*.
- A "sin not unto death" is a sin *that can be repented of*.

Now notice, it does not say if you see your brother sinning, run and tell the minister as fast as you can. It says: *pray for him*. Verse 17: "All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death." So he repeats it again.

Now, let's go to 1-John 3:6: "Everyone who dwells in Him does not *practice* sin; anyone who is *practicing* sin has not seen Him, neither has known Him.... (v 8): The one who is practicing sin is of the devil... [Why? *Because practicing sin then is a way of life*.] ...because the devil *has been* sinning from the beginning.... [Is that way his way of life? *Yes!*] ...For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil. Everyone who has been begotten by God is not practicing sin because His seed *of begettal* is dwelling within him, and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God" (vs 6, 8-9).

Let's ask the question: Why does the translator here use the term 'begettal' in the *Interlinear*? Let's go back to the *Interlinear*, chapter three, and let's answer this question. This is a little bit in addition to what we've covered on 'born again.' Why is it 'begotten'? Some of the current thinking is: As soon as you receive the Spirit of God you are *born again*. That means that if it's so, then you should be a *spirit* being. Because Jesus said, 'That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.' That's what you are. So that is not correct. And the translator here, when he was translating this understood it.

Now, 1-John 3:9, *Int.*: "Anyone that has been begotten of God, sin not practices..." And he uses *begotten*—and (as we will see) all the way through he uses *begotten* in 1-John. Why? What are

some of the proofs that we have that we are not *born again* now at this present time, other than the fact that we are not a spirit being. That's plenty enough proof. But what are some others? Let's look at a couple.

Let's go to Galatians 4. You've heard it said that we are growing in grace and knowledge and understanding and spiritual character. And, at the resurrection, we will be *born again*—changed from flesh to spirit. And that is the correct understanding. ***Christ is being formed in us***. Which means that you are spiritually developing. So the analogy, which is perfectly true, that if you've been *begotten* then you have to grow to that full spiritual maturity, and at the resurrection you will be *born again*. Just like Christ was *born again* from the dead, as it says there in Rom. 8.

But right now, Galatians 4:19: "My little children, for whom I am again laboring in pain until Christ has been formed in you..." So, in other words, he's not, he's going through labor pains here with them, they haven't been born. It's what's he's saying, ***Christ has to be formed in you first***. So there is, there is a very clear one right there.

Now, let's look at another one because this becomes very important. Let's come back to 1-John 3:9, *Int.*: "...Anyone that has been begotten of God, sin not practices, **because** seed... [Very interesting. Now, the actual Greek word for *seed* is "sperma."] ...seed his in him abides..." Now then, when there is a begettal of a child, it's an exact, perfect comparison. When a child has been *begotten* it hasn't been born—right? *Right!* Been *begotten*. And we have God's seed **in** us. Now, how do we know that we haven't been born again and it is a *begettal*? Because it says, *His seed remains in us*.

Now, we have some other Scriptures to go along with this—don't we? What does it say of the Spirit of God? That we have, that we have all of the Spirit of God, or the 'earnest'? It is the *earnest* of the Spirit (Eph. 1:14), which is the *begettal*. So, with God's Spirit, which is called 'seed'—and this is the seed to eternal life. Now this is why, this is why we know God is re-creating Himself. Now, with our own children, we are not creating something unequal to us. That's why we're called *the children of God*. First, we have to be *begotten*. And 'His seed abides' [or dwells] in us. Then it says: "... and he not able to sin..." But what does this refer back to? This is something in the Greek that is understood in the Greek. It refers back to *practicing*—'He is not able to *practice* sin.' That's why in my translation, I added the word, to give clarity, 'not able to practice sin.' And you can't. When you sin you get a guilty conscience. When I sin I get a guilty conscience. And you can't live with yourself. Now, you may try. You may try to put it out of your mind and live with

yourself for a while. But you can't. Why? *Because God's Spirit is there to convict you!* So you are not able to practice sin. Do you think that you could walk into—what I read here with this New Age worship thing—and live that way of life? Do you think that you, that you could live a life where you knew that Sunday-keeping was a sin? And every week you would walk into that Sunday-keeping church and practice it? *No, you couldn't. No, you couldn't.* Because God's Spirit is there to convict you.

Now, let's go to Romans seven, and let's see why this is so important. So important to understand. Some people get so discouraged because they are told, '*You overcome the sin.*' That's true, we need to overcome sin—that's absolutely true! Without a doubt, we need to overcome sin. But how do you overcome sin? With your own effort? *No, you need the cleansing of the blood of Christ.* You need the confessing of the sin and you need God's Spirit and God's love so you can overcome it. And you will find, in some cases, the harder, the harder, harder you try to overcome sin, by *your own power*—and how many people have thought, 'Well, I know I've sinned but I'm going to wait till I get right with God before I go pray again.' I've said that. That's a dumb statement. Because you can't get right with God if you don't repent of sin, right? That's contradictory. But there are a lot of people who go out there and say, 'Oh boy, I've sinned and I know I shouldn't sin. Well, I can't pray to God because I know that I shouldn't have sinned.' Well, that in itself is a contradictory statement because he says, 'I will cleanse you of every unrighteousness.... If you confess it, He is faithful and just to forgive.' So here is the dilemma. And we've covered this before, but we need to, we need to go over it again so we can fully understand it. Now here's what's going to happen when you try and do it *yourself, alone!*

Romans 7:9—Paul is talking about when he comes to the full awareness of sin internally, mentally, spiritually. We can look out and see crimes going on in the world: Oh yes, yes, we can recognize that. But it's the 'ole self that's the tough one. And here's what every Christian goes through. Romans 7:9: "For I was once alive without law; but after the commandment came, sin revived, and I died... [Now, that is a different way of explaining baptism, because we know in Rom. 6, when you're baptized, you're baptized into His death.] ... And the commandment, which *was meant to result in life, was found to be unto death for me*" (vs 9-10). Why? *Because he couldn't get rid of the sin in his mind.* Sin in your mind, sometimes, is just like a commercial. And it's happened to you and it's happened to me. That's why I turn a lot of commercials off on the radio. Who's this guy on

Motel 6 that does Motel 6? What's his name? Huh, you all know it. Yes, Tom Bodett. But anyway, here I am walking down the hall in the house the other day and I start singing that stupid song. Boom! And I thought, "Why is that there?" Have you had that happen with a commercial? Have you had that happen to you? It's just like sin. It comes back on you—'unto death.' The law says you shall not lust. Now what happens when you lust? The law says you shall not hate. What happens when you hate?

"...which *was meant to result in life, was found to be unto death for me; because sin, having taken opportunity by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me.* Therefore, the law *is* indeed Holy, and the commandment Holy and righteous and good.... [But Protestants, because they can't cope with this, then they have to say, 'there is no sin.' So they walk along, well, nothing's sin. So therefore, nothing phases them.] ...Now then, did that which *is* good become death to me? MAY IT NEVER BE! But sin, in order that it might truly be exposed as sin in me by that which *is* good... [and that's what happens when you're converted. And the longer you are converted, the more you understand that sin is sin!] ...was working out death; so that, by means of the commandment, sin might become exceedingly sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, having been sold *as a slave* under sin" (vs 10-14). And that is the whole thing that we need to understand. Of and by ourselves, our own human nature, we are "sold unto sin."

Question: Can sin overcome sin? *No!* It's like saying: Can gasoline put out a fire? *No!* That's why it takes God's Spirit to change that—and it takes the cleansing of the blood of Christ. It takes something separate from you to accomplish that within you because within you, you do not have the ability. Because here's the battle that went on—v 15: "Because what I am working out myself... [which means: he doesn't want to do it.] ...I do not know. For what I do not desire to do, this I do; moreover, what I hate, this *is what* I do." He's just explaining the ordinary life. You're doing things you hate. Did you do something this week that you hate? *Yes, I did! Yes!* And I've also found this: I found this that—and it just seems to happen that way—that when I know that God has really been with me to do something, He just kind of let's me stand alone some time and just let's me fall into it. Just to let me know, just to let me know.

The comment was made: that with Protestantism, people agree that sin is not sin. That's exactly what psychology does.

(go to the next track)

That's exactly what psychology does. Psychology says: All your evil thoughts are normal, just accept them. Now, they're normal in as much

that we have sinful nature, but we are not to accept them—*we're to repent of them*. And psychology gives you a way to live *with* your sin and not condemn yourself. And Protestantism does the same thing. It gives you a way to live with your sin so you don't condemn yourself and you're really not going to Christ to be cleansed. You're trying to do it yourself. So therefore, the only way a sinful nature can exist is to deny that sin is sin. So therefore, they end up by searing their conscience. So they agree that sin is not sin. They keep Sunday, they believe in a trinity, and all of these sort of things, sure.

Are we going to blame God for this? Because you do something you hid, are you going to blame God? 'God, You made me do this. God, if You didn't have that law there.' That's why they do away with the law, because they don't like the law there. Precisely right. And if, he says, v 16: "But if I am doing what I do not desire to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good." The law is good. Nothing wrong with the law.

Now, we're talking about two famous murder cases now: the two kids down in South Carolina and O.J. Simpson. They don't want the law to say murder is wrong. They want to say, 'Well, I was victimized.' Or whatever the case may be. Perfect justification of trying to square evil in your mind. But you can't!

Paul, the apostle, said, 'I consent to the law that it is good.' It is good which says, 'you shall not murder.' It is good which says 'you shall not steal.' It is good that says, 'you shall not commit adultery.' It is good when it says, 'remember the Sabbath day to keep it Holy.' It is good to 'honor your father and mother.' It is good to have 'no other gods before you.' ***The law is good!*** People turn it around and ***blame*** the law. 'Well, I can have my idol here if it weren't for the law. The law is bad. Oh, we'll do away with the law. I go my idol, that's wonderful.' See, that's the way human nature is.

But, he labels the source of it: "So then, I am no longer working it out myself; rather, ***it is sin that is dwelling within me***" (v 17). The biggest thing that we need to understand concerning Christianity is this: even though you have God's Spirit, you still have—as we have understood—the 'law of sin and death' in us. That's the source of sin. Now, with God's Spirit in us, it begins to deliver us from that because it convicts us of sin:

- so we will repent
- so that you won't be practicing sin
- so that you will not be loving sin
- so that you will be hating sin
- and confessing and repenting

He says, "Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me..." (v 18). Now that's obviously compared to God. It's good to have a heart that works—right? It's good to have hands that work. It's good to have a mind that works, and eyes that see. But spiritually speaking, character-wise speaking, no human being can say he's good. Now, we may do good things. Now, they're going to take this big lie of Christmas and we're going to see it from now on: Christmas, Christmas, Christmas, Christmas—'all the good we're going to do,' and all the sanctimonious stuff that is done, you'll see it. They're trying to compensate for their evil by doing good externally, but it doesn't change the inside.

"...there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good.... [Everyone desires to do good—and I imagine, even those who are murderers *desire* that they still be accepted, except for this one little mistake.] ...For the desire to do good is present within me; but how to work out that which is good, I do not find. For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is* dwelling within me. Consequently, I find this law *in my members*, that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me.... [That's why we have to confess our sins daily. That's why we have to keep going to Christ.] ...For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man; but I see another law within my own members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin that is within my own members" (vs 18–23).

Have you ever had it where you were inadvertently, you've been around people who swear and curse and then it happens to you; you're walking down the hall and guess what, it pops into your mind—right? You didn't mean to. You didn't want to. But now you've got to be delivered from this—correct? *Yes*. "O *what a* wretched man I am! Who shall save me from the body of this death? I thank God *for His salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of this, on the one hand, I myself serve the law of God with *my* mind; but on the other hand, with the flesh, *I serve* the law of sin" (vs 24–25). That's why we have the confession of sins. That's why when you receive the Holy Spirit, and the begettal from the Father, ***you cannot live in sin. You cannot practice sin.***

Now, let's go back to 1-John 3. This becomes so very important, if we understand this: The *law of sin and death* is within us, and it's received by inheritance. If you don't believe it, put two sweet nine-month-old babies in a room by themselves with one toy. And you will see the operation of sin very quickly—because someone's

going to take it. And if one of them takes it, the other one's going to steal it back: 'It's mine!' It's inherited! That's why God has to give His Spirit, so we can overcome it. Now, let's go back and study through, with the *Interlinear* this time—all the way through.

1-John 3:4 (*Int*): "Everyone that practices sin..." Now, I want to stop right here for just a minute. You see the little 'ó' above the English word 'that'—it's the second word in—it's a little 'ó' and it looks like there's a little tail or comma above it, apostrophe. That should be 'who' instead of 'that.' "Everyone who is practicing..." Now, I translated it: "is practicing" because that is a present tense Greek participle. Now, I know this is getting a little deep. But it's present tense. Wherever you see that little 'ó' and then the word immediately following it, you should read: "the one who is."

"The one who is practicing a sin, also lawlessness practices [is practicing], **and sin is lawlessness**. And ye know that he was manifested, that sins our he might take away; and sin in him is not" (vs 4-5, *Int*). Now that's very important. Let's think about this for a minute. Why can't you overcome your own sins, of and by yourself with your own effort? Now, you may overcome one sin for one while, but then you can't overcome every sin.

- You may be able to quit smoking, but you might not be able to quit drinking.
- You may be able to quit drinking, but you may not be able to quit lying.
- You may be able to quit lying, but then you may not be able to quit cheating.
- You may be able to be nice to some people, and always lose your temper to other people.

Question: Why can't you overcome your own sin?—partakers of flesh and blood, the answer is simple. *You have a sinful nature. A sinful nature cannot overcome a sinful nature.* So this sentence is put in here for us to understand something. Who is the only one that can really take away sin? *Someone who has never sinned!*—right? *Yes!* That's why it says: "... and in Him [Christ]..." He came to take away our sins. But a sinful person can't take away sins. That's why, "in Him is not any sin." He's perfect. Now, does that make any sense? Now, here is the big mistake that we made years ago in childrearing. This is true confession time, as well. We were told that children are sinful because they learn it. So therefore, if you correct them and discipline them they won't be sinful. So we all dutifully disciplined, corrected, spanked, punished—right? *Yes!* Did it drive it out? *No!*—because it was *inherent within*. We could have done so much better had we not done that. **Only Christ can take away sin**

**because there was not any sin in Him.** And if we all understand that children, as well as all adults—from birth until death—have "the law of sin and death" in them, then I think we can all understand why we need to look to Christ to do things and help us overcome. Therefore, that's why a church organization cannot bring salvation. It can't! Christ alone can!

Now, let's read on here, v 6 (*Int*): "Anyone that in him abides [is not sinning] not sins... [Now, we're talking about what? To practice sin, or to practice lawlessness. So, if you are dwelling in Christ, you are not practicing sin. So you can just insert the word practice, because the Greek verb "of practice" follows right along with this structure.] ...anyone... [who is sinning, who is sinning—that means, *practicing and living sin*] ...that sins not has seen him, not has known him." Now, why is that important? Since we're in the *Interlinear*, let's just turn back to chapter two, because there are people going around saying: 'I know the Lord.' Now, don't we have a lot of Protestants saying:

- I know the Lord
- Do you know the Lord, brother?
- Do you know the Lord?
- Have you given your heart to Him?
- Come to church on Sunday

Aha! 1-John 2:3 (*Int*), it says: "And by this we know that we have known him, if his commandments we keep. He that says, I have known him, and his commandments is not keeping, a liar is, and in him the truth is not" (vs 3-4). So, if Sunday-keeping is sin, perpetually. If Sunday-keeping is practicing sin, **they don't know the Lord**. They may use His name. They may treat their lawlessness as grace. **But they don't know Him!** That's why He says back here in chapter three again—let's go back there: "...anyone who is practicing sin has not seen Him nor knows Him."

1-John 3:7, *Int*: "Little children, no one let lead astray you; he [who is practicing] that practices righteousness, righteous is, even as he righteous is." Now, that's quite a statement—isn't it? *Yes!* What does that mean? We know we're not as righteous as Christ, because in Him is no sin. But the righteousness that we are practicing—if it is Christ in us, motivating us—then we are righteous as He is righteous.

- That's why it's so important that you love God first.
- That's why it's so important that you look to Christ.
- That you ask Him to **motivate** you.
- That you ask Him to **inspire** you.
- **That Christ be formed in you.**

But there are people going around saying: ‘I am righteous. What my sinful way of life is, is righteous.’ So what is he saying? If he’s not doing the righteousness of Christ, he’s leading you astray. Because he’s saying, don’t let anyone mislead you. The one “who’s practicing righteousness is righteous even as He is righteous.” In other words, we’ll keep the same commandments of God. We’ll keep it in an attitude of love and so forth.

So then he draws a distinction. The one who’s leading you astray, v 8 (*Int*): “He that practices sin, of the devil is...” John is really laying this out clear. It is *of the devil* if you are living a life of sin God is not your God, the devil is. Who is called what? *The god of this world*—correct? Who is what? “*The prince of the power of the air, that spirit that works within the children of disobedience*” (2-Cor. 4:4)—correct? *Yes!*

Now, why? “... because from {the} beginning the devil sins” (v 8, *Int*). Now, that’s quite a statement in itself—isn’t it? In other words, it’s also telling us this. Let me suggest you go back and review: *Evil Good, Good Evil*—we did a series of four on that. Because not everything that appears good is good. Some things that appear good are actually evil. Now, I’ve got this wonderful publication I’ve shown you and referred to several times here. It is very well done. It is a high-gloss cover. It is gold-embossed. It is bound. It is printed nice. It’s got illustrations in it. But it tells all about Christmas, and how to make Christmas a family affair. There is no good that can come out of Christmas. The good that is apparent in Christmas is not true good. Why? *Because it is a sin and a lie.* ‘Let us do evil that good may abound.’ I remember, and I’ve told this several times, when I found out that my mom lied to me and there was no Santa Claus, boy, I was really angry because I got all those spankings for lying. But, I learned it was a ‘good lie.’ Satan the devil is sinning from the beginning.

- There is no doctrine we need of him.
- There is no inspiration we need of him.
- There is no teaching we need from him, because everything he does is sinning.

Let’s continue on here in v 8, *Int*: “... For this [cause] was manifested the Son of God, that he might undo [loose or destroy] the works of the devil.” Now, that’s why on Trumpets I preached that Babylon is going to be destroyed. He’s not going to modify it. He’s not going to adjust it. He’s not going to take what looks good to the world and incorporate that into the Kingdom of God—*no way!* Because it is of the devil and it is sin! Can any good come from sin? *No!*

Now that we have it in context here, on the other hand, compared to those who are following Satan the devil—v 8 (*Int*): “...he that is practicing sin, because the devil is sinning from the beginning and for this cause was the Son of God manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil. Anyone that... [on the other hand, notice again how John is writing this: Truth and error, light and darkness, commandment-keeping, sin, Satan, God, here we go:] ...has been begotten of God, sin not practices, because seed his in him abides, and he is not able to sin, **because of God he has been begotten**” (vs 8-9).

God’s Spirit will *convict* you of it and will cause you to do this: let’s go to 2-Corinthians 10. Here is the whole life-long goal. Here’s what God’s Spirit will cause you to do *when* it convicts you of sin. Now, you go back and study the whole episode of David and Bathsheba. Perfect example of sin and enticing. Bathsheba was not innocent because where she put her bath. David was not innocent because he leaned over the edge. And the servant was not innocent because he didn’t say: ‘My lord’—who’s going to say ‘no’ to the king. Have we heard of things like that before? But when ‘he came to himself’ he repented. So, same way with us, because of God’s Spirit.

2-Corinthians 10:4: “For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal... [Didn’t we just cover that? **You cannot overcome carnal nature with carnal nature.** You cannot put a fire out with gas! **You cannot overcome sin with a lie.**] ...but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds... [Then he names the strongholds.] ...Casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ...” (vs 4-5). That’s why we’re convicted of sin: mentally, spiritually. When we begin to think of it, then if we carry it out and do it like David, then when we come to the point when we repent and we understand how sinful sin is. All of that is that you can’t live in sin. Whereas you take a hardened criminal, that’s all they can do is live in sin. Once they start robbing and stealing, that’s all they can do. Once these serial killers start killing that’s all they can do. They live in it. They are obsessed by it.

But we, on the other hand, are “...bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ; and having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your obedience has been fulfilled. Are you looking at things according to their appearance? If anyone is persuaded in his *own* mind that he is Christ’s, let him reconsider this concerning himself; for exactly as he *is* Christ’s, so also *are* we Christ’s” (vs 5-7).



Let's come back to 1-John 3, the *Interlinear* again. That's why you cannot—God's Spirit is there. The begetting of God's Spirit is to bring us the mind of Christ. We covered the section there in John 14 quite a few times—about 'if you love Me keep My commandments' and so forth, all the way through. All right, let's come back here.

Now notice, then he summarizes this section very clearly—1-John 3:10: "By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil..." Now, that's a pretty profound statement—isn't it?

1-John 3:10, *Int.*: "In this manifest are the children of God... [Why? *Because we have the Spirit of God.*] ...and the children of the devil... [Why? *Because they're practicing sin.* That's how you know. So he gives it right here]: ...Anyone that not practices righteousness not is of God... [Now, what is *righteousness*? 'All Your commandments are righteousness' and you could do a whole Bible study on 'righteousness': the righteousness of Christ; Christ in you; and all of that, you see. Then he carries it another step further]: ...and he that loves not his brother his." Have you seen it when doctrines of Satan are introduced into a church and are beginning to be accepted, what happens? *There's a division of the brethren*—correct? And you got a little group over here, and you've got another little group over here, and you've got another little group over there, and they're supposed to be brethren in Christ that love each other. But the lying spirit has entered in and they don't love each other and they don't trust each other and everything goes 'to hell in a hand-basket.' That's literally true, that has happened.

So that's why he's saying, it happened back here when John was writing this: "... and the one who is—neither is he that is not loving his brother (paraphrased) "Because this is the message which ye heard from {the} beginning; that we should love one another" (v 11, *Int.*). And I'll tell you, one thing we have learned down through the years, and this is something that many of the brethren are writing in now and we're getting calls and letters and things, and people, and it's all I can do to keep up with it. So whenever these doctrines come in, you are not loving each other. And we have learned through the years, and the whole lesson that God is putting us through is that. You've got to love God first! With all your heart, mind, soul and being, and then these things don't take a root. I mean, you have your human nature to overcome. You have your own difficulties and problems to work with. But God is there. Christ is there. He will help you. But look what happens here.

"...[and] not as Cain {who} of the wicked {one} was, and slew brother his; and on account of

what slew he him?... [We're having the same thing today. You could say the same thing of this woman who slew her children. Now, why did he kill him?] ...Because his works wicked were, and those of his brother righteous" (v 12, *Int.*). That's what Satan likes to do. He likes to come at people who are serving God, who are living righteous lives, who are trying to overcome and to turn their love away from God and to turn people to come into them and to hate them and to slay them spiritually. You take and analyze everyone of these things that that went on with these, with these two children that were killed down in South Carolina. There was a divorce that was going on or just completed. She was going out with another man, committing adultery. One sin led to another sin, which led to another sin, and now it came to it's ultimate conclusion of killing her own children.

Now then, we come to another whole section here, which we will, which we'll begin to cover next time. I realize that we have, we still have little bit left but if I start getting into this, if I start getting into this, then it's, it's going to be just little over-much. Let's go back and let's just cover into, so we'll have into the records—we'll just use the *Interlinear* here. Let's go back to the first verse in chapter three. This also shows us by way of summary and review that we are not yet the full-born spiritual children of God. We have the begetting. God's seed is in us. Let's pick it up here in verse one: 1-John 3:1, *Int.*: "See what love has given to us the Father, that children of God we should be called. On account of this the world knows not us, because it knew not him. Beloved now children of God are we... [now notice, it's not a completed process yet] ...and not yet was it manifested **what we shall be...**" We're not saved completely yet. What are the three steps to salvation? Anybody remember the three steps to salvation. The three steps are:

1. Ephesians 2: You **have been saved** from your sins and Satan the devil
2. 1-Corinthians 15:2: "If you remain in the Gospel wherein you are standing, **you are being saved**"—process.
3. Romans 5: That "**we shall be saved**" because of His life—which then is when? *At the resurrection.*

So, that's what he's talking about here. "It is not yet manifest what we **shall be**, but we know that if he be manifested, **like him** we shall be... [And the word means *like*—just exactly like when children say: 'When I grow up I want to be dada, dada, dada'—whatever. Like, whatever. Means the same thing.] ...we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And everyone that has this hope in him, purifies himself, even as he pure is" (vs 2-3, *Int.*). Now, how do you 'purify' yourself? That's not taking a bath

every day. That is not using the right deodorant. This is, ***you purify yourself by confessing your sins***. So that you won't be what? *Practicing sin*. You won't be living in lawlessness. And you will be practicing righteousness.

Now there are some other and more tremendous things in the Epistles of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> John—and I hope I will go fast enough to get through it, but slow enough so you won't get lost when we're going from page to page. So if you don't have the, the *Interlinear* and if you don't have the 1-John translation that goes with it, let me know and I'll be sure and get it to you. And just keep it in a notebook so when we go through it you can follow right along with it.

- 1-John Scriptures from *The Seven General Epistles* translation by Fred R. Coulter—except where noted

All other Scriptures from: *The New Testament in Its Original Order—A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter—except where noted  
*Interlinear Greek-English New Testament*, by George Ricker Berry.

- Article: *Which Day is the True Lord's Day of the New Testament* by Fred R. Coulter
- Sermon Series: *Evil Good, Good Evil* by Fred R. Coulter

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#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 24:12
- 2) 1-John 3:4, 9
- 3) 1-John 1:7-9
- 4) 1-John 3:9
- 5) 1-John 1:9
- 6) 1-John 2:2, 12
- 7) 1-John 3:5, 8
- 8) 1-John 4:10
- 9) 1-John 5:16-17
- 10) 1-John 3:6, 8-9
- 11) Galatians 4:19
- 12) 1-John 3:9
- 13) Romans 7:9-25
- 14) 1-John 3:4-6
- 15) 1-John 2:3-4
- 16) 1-John 3:7-9
- 17) 2-Corinthians 10:4-7
- 18) 1-John 3:4, 10-12
- 19) 1-John 3:1-3

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 6
- Luke 11
- Romans 8
- Ephesians 1:14
- Romans 6
- 2-Corinthians 4:4
- John 14
- Ephesians 2
- 1-Corinthians 15:2
- Romans 5

#### Also referenced:

- *Word Studies from the Greek*—from: *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter