

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 12



SONS OF GOD

Scripture Text: 1 John 3:1-10

We have seen that God's salvation redeems us from the curse which sin brought upon man. Many and varied are the teachings concerning sin and its removal. As in every consideration, the Bible answer is the final one. Today we look into man's position in regards to sin, God, and the devil.

If God saves us without our works, does it mean we can go on sinning and still be saved? No! Since God supplies power to live holy lives, He requires that kind of living. God's people are holy. Sinners are the devil's children. There is a plain line of division between the two. Let us see what the Bible plainly states as to the difference between God's children and the devil's children.

MEMORY VERSE: *Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.—Galatians 4:7*

Two Kinds of People

1 John 3:1 Behold, what manner of love – Such love we cannot comprehend, we can only behold, taste, and accept. What has it done? It has made us to be **called the sons of God**, made of His family. **The world** (unsaved people) **knoweth us not**, which probably explains the reason for the many ideas concerning what a child of God is and should be like. **The world knew him not** – knew not God – and so cannot understand His people, for they are like God. The world and sons of God are different, separate.

1 John 3:2 Now are we – in this life – here we must be made children of God, if at all. The next life holds even greater blessings of which we are not now fully told. Read **Romans 8:17**. What a precious privilege!

1 John 3:3 This hope of Heaven's blessings causes one to purify himself, or to throw away the filthy habits of life which he has picked up along the way. Why? Because only the pure can enter there. (See **Matthew 5:8**). How pure? **Even as He is pure.**

1 John 3:4-5 Sin is anything contrary to God's Law. **He was manifested**, or Christ came to **take away our sins**. Not to leave us in them, nor gloss over, nor sweep them under a rug, nor shut His eyes to them, but to **take them away**. God never requires anything but that He, by His grace, makes it possible. Christ provided for the removal of sin.

One of the facts standing out plainly here is that there are two kinds of people – saints and sinners, children of God and children of the devil. The children of God **shall be like him, are pure even as he is pure, are righteous even as he is righteous, do not commit sin, and are born of God**. The children of the devil sin, are of the devil, are not of God, and love not their brothers. Each kind of person is known by his life, whether or not it is righteous. The dividing line is definite. The reason the dividing lines are laid so plainly before us is to show us where we are standing, and to let us know a crossing is necessary if we are to be in God's family, the Church of God.

This is God's statement. It tells us not that God's people SHOULD BE holy, but that His people ARE holy. If it has not appeared so to us, it may be that we have been confusing church membership with the experience of rebirth – heart purity.

Righteousness Is of God

1 John 3:6 Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth son – No question as to the meaning of this. Our part is to abide, to remain in Him. He will keep us from sinning. This is one part of purifying oneself (**verse 3**). Sinners have not seen or known Him.

1 John 3:7 Even as he is righteous – That is the true Bible standard. Holiness is a reasonable standard. The world expects it, although probably not conscious that it is holiness. That is why they criticize sinning church

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members. They never excuse a sin in these members as the one to be allowed. Why not? They believe that those professing righteousness should be holy.

The Seed of God

1 John 3:8 He that committeth sin is of the devil. No sinful person or organization belongs to God. **The Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil.** Either Christ has the victory over sin in man, or His coming was a failure. It was no failure. What good news for all captive souls!

1 John 3:9 Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin. A clear statement as in **verse 8**, but on the other side of the question. This draws a definite and wide line between God's people and Satan's. **Cannot sin** – not that anyone in the world gets where it is impossible to sin. Experience shows that anyone choosing to sin can do so. Sometimes it is the one who has been a child of God for a number of years. But no one can sin while the **seed of God remaineth in him.** God and sin cannot be in a person at the same time. When God comes in, sin goes out; when sin comes in, God goes out. Life's greatest tragedy is for God to **leave a heart** and life for sin to take over.

1 John 3:10 Again, that clear separation between the **children of God ... and the children of the devil.** This shows the falsity of Modernism's claim that all people are brothers, all children of God. What is the difference in them? In whether or not they do **righteousness** and have love, the love of God. Right actions are the difference which marks them outwardly to the eyes of their fellowmen. The inner difference lies in whether or not they are born of God, made alive in Christ Jesus, have the seed of God within.

Settle the Question

1 John 1:8 and 10 are sometimes used to object to the possibility of holy living. Remember **verse 9** is between them and solves the problem, if there be a problem. **If we say that we have no sin** – to be cleansed from, **or that we have not sinned**, we are not saying or acting according to truth. We are making God a liar, for He has declared that **all have sinned (Romans 3:23)**. Such a one is trying to cover his sins, and of such, God says that he shall not prosper – not meaning financially, but in spiritual prosperity. We must acknowledge our sin, but we must not remain in it. Frank confession brings forgiveness and cleansing from God. This makes one holy.

Do not argue for sin or seek to excuse it or to avoid its removal. Sin brought every sorrow this world has ever known. Its cure is the greatest blessing ever given to the world. Christ is the cure. He is coming again. **Be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless (2 Peter 3:14).**

JUST A THOUGHT

**Store your mind with Scripture.
It is food for your soul.**

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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