

That You May Know

The Dividing Line — 1 John 3:4-10

March 31, 2019

Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. - 1 John 3:7

I. NOT A TRIVIAL MATTER

- Sin is a defiance of God's commands; it is an act of faithlessness. The word "practice" is important in this section (Rom. 14:23; James 4:17; 1 John 2:4).
- Sin is a serious matter. Jesus died to free us from sin, while remaining sinless in the process (vs. 5; Gen. 4:6-7; John 8:34; Rom. 6:23).
- Sin is the work of the devil. Those who make a practice of sinning are his offspring. Jesus also came to destroy those works (vs. 8; John 10:10; 1 Peter 5:8).
- Since sin is the work of the devil, no one who abides in Christ is marked by consistent, non-repentant sin (vs. 6, 9; John 5:14; 8:31; 1 Cor. 15:34).

II. SIMPLE LOGIC LIGHTS THE WAY

- Those who practice righteousness are righteous. They demonstrate that they are "born of God." They are the offspring of the Father and therefore act like the Father (John 1:12-13; Rom. 8:29-30).
- Some are children of God; others are children of the devil. Actions distinguish them (vs. 10; Matt. 3:7-10; 7:15-20; 25:31-46; John 8:23-24, 42-47).
- God calls us to righteous and holy living. Love for others is a distinguishing mark of a holy life (vs. 10; 1 Pet. 1:13-16, 22-23).

KNOW: Christians are marked by a life of repentance and hatred of sin. They are not perfect, but they do not look at ongoing sin nonchalantly. Jesus came to destroy the devil's work—how can Christians abide in that which Christ came to destroy?

DO: Do not make a practice of sinning. Make a practice of repenting.

Suggested Reading:

The Mark of the Christian by Francis Schaeffer (LifePoint Library #284.4)

**The Mortification of Sin* by John Owen (LifePoint Library #248.4)

*Advanced reading.

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please Read 1 John 3:4-10

1. What is the overall theme of this section of John's letter?
2. Why does John continue to say "makes a practice" or "keeps on" when he talks of sin here?
3. What is sin?
4. According to John, why did Jesus come?
5. How do we distinguish true believers from false believers according to John?
6. What marks a genuine Christian?
7. What steps can you take in order to not be deceived, either by yourself or by others, when it comes to claims to know Christ?