



# DESERT VIEW BIBLE CHURCH

SERIES: GOSPEL TRUTH FOR LIFE TOGETHER •

1 JOHN 3:1-10 • 10/8/2023

## MAIN POINT

---

A result of spiritual rebirth is a hunger for righteousness.

## INTRODUCTION

---

What is one thing you've always felt like you were born to do?

What is something you have become passionate about in adulthood that you were not passionate about in your younger years?

On a typical Monday morning, what is something you desire? Is this the same thing you want on a typical Saturday morning? Why or why not?

People use phrases like, “Born to shop” or “Born to run” to express hobbies, attitudes, or interests. But just like our wants or plans change based on the day of the week and what we have to do, what we say we are “born to” do can change based upon our current interests. Spiritually speaking, when we experience new birth in Christ, the things we desire change, too. Rebirth results in a hunger for righteousness.

## UNDERSTANDING

---

**READ 1 JOHN 3:1-3.**

**What will our efforts to remain in Jesus look like if we don’t remember the love of Jesus?**

We remain in Christ because He has demonstrated His love for us at the cross. He did this not because we were righteous or deserving, but because He is good and loving Himself. Our effort to remain in unwavering relationship with Him is born out of this love which has transformed us into the children of God.

**In what sense has our identity not yet been revealed?**

**What is the difference between the way people currently see Christ and how they will view Him when He returns?**

**How is the identity of the child of God tied to the return of Christ?**

**How does having the hope of Christ's return change the way we live on a day to day basis?**

Because of His patience, God has not yet sent Jesus back to the earth. Because He has not yet returned, people have the luxury of viewing Jesus however their minds lead them. But when He returns, there will be no doubt as to His true identity and glory. Similarly, though Christians might suffer right now in seemingly unjust ways, when Jesus reveals His true self at His return, the children of God will be seen as they truly are—transformed and glorified coheirs along with Christ.

**READ 1 JOHN 3:4-10.**

**Generally speaking, do you think Christians take sin seriously enough? Why or why not?**

**What might be some reasons why indifference can creep into our view of sin in our lives? How do these verses speak to that temptation of indifference?**

**What is the difference between sin and a lifestyle characterized by sin? Is that an important distinction to draw? Why?**

Christians sin, but true Christians take an active stance, rather than an attitude of indifference, to the reality of sin. Christians choose to engage in the fight rather than lapse into a lifestyle of habitual sin. Though we will never live a sin-free life until we reach heaven, the true Christian will not grow weary of confronting, repenting, and trusting in the forgiveness of Jesus for daily sin.

**Do you think John was overstating things when he said that the one who commits sin is of the devil? Explain.**

**How do these verses reveal the depth of the change Jesus brings in us?**

**Why is the word “rebirth” appropriate when thinking about this change?**

When we are born again, we have a new nature that desires to follow and please God. John wanted his readers to know that it’s one thing to claim to be born again, but it’s another thing to offer evidence of the fact. Because we are so dramatically changed by the grace of God when we become Christians, our lives will always reflect that.

## **APPLICATION**

---

**Is the statement “Rebirth = Hunger for Righteousness” true in your life right now? Why or why not?**

**What are some practical ways we demonstrate that we hunger for Christ’s righteousness?**

**What are some reasons why a believer might not sense a real hunger for righteousness for a time? What should he or she do about it? How can we help each other continue to abide in Christ and hunger for His righteousness?**

## **PRAYER**

---

**Thank God for the rebirth He gives us in Christ. Invite Him to deepen our hunger for righteousness as we commit to reject worldly doctrine and abide in Him.**

# COMMENTARY

---

## 1 JOHN 3:1-10

In 3:1-3, the apostle breaks out in spontaneous wonder at the love of God in making us his children. A further wonder grasps him: that is what we are. The world does not know us, because it does not know our Father. To “know” in this context has the sense of “accept.” Just as the world did not accept Jesus, it will not accept us.

Even though we are children of God, we don’t grasp the full significance of what it means to be God’s children. We now have only a dim perception of who we are and what we will be (what we will be has not yet been made known). When we see Jesus, our understanding will expand, and we will see it all. If we begin to understand the unimaginable wonder of this fact, we will want to live pure and holy lives, for we will want to be pure as he is pure. Our weak commitment to absolute holiness stems in large measure from our dim perception of who Jesus is and who we have become in him. When we grasp more fully that we are now coheirs with Jesus (Rom. 8:17), we are destined to rule and reign in heaven with him. Slated for perfect holiness, united in spirit with the Creator-God of the universe, we will no longer want to fiddle around with the “mud pies” of this world. We will prefer the spotless beauty of a banquet table.

The opening statement in these verses appears obvious: When we sin, we break the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. This lawlessness is characteristic of the spirit of Antichrist, and sinners see no reason to concern themselves with God’s laws. But that doesn’t change the problem of sin, much as the false teachers might want it to. Sin is not removed from the world by simply creating a theology or philosophy that says we are above sin or incapable of sin. Sin has to be dealt with. God has dealt with our sin. You know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. Jesus dealt with sin in the only way suitable to God. He lived a sinless life, and then made the ultimate perfect sacrifice. His perfect life became the model, the new creature God wants to make of all His children.

The next statement is breathtaking: no one who lives in him keeps on sinning. This statement is followed by an even more absolute statement: no one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him. To put a cap on it, verse 9 says the person who has been born of God cannot go on sinning. These statements can be alarming; we know we have sinned. We may be wrestling with sin that keeps cropping up in our lives. If this letter intends to comfort us with the assurance of our salvation (5:13), statements like these can have just the opposite effect. So what do we do with these statements?

Christians do sin, as acknowledged elsewhere in this letter (1:8–2:1; 5:16–17). Repeated exhortations not to sin (2:1, 15, 29; 3:12, 18; 5:21) would be needless if we could not sin or if we did not sin. The kind of sin meant here is continual; it means we cannot adopt a lifestyle of willful, unrepentant sin. The verbs in these sentences are present tense, which means, as the NIV has translated it, don't "keep on sinning." We will sin. We may sin badly. But we will never settle down into a lifestyle that is characterized by sin. It's important, too, to remember the context. False teachers claimed that Christians do not sin, or cannot sin, or are free to sin, and that if they do sin, it is of no great consequence. It is an extreme situation that calls for extreme language, so Scripture dispels this groundless teaching.

Verse 7 warns us not to be led astray. This is probably a warning against the false teachers and antichrists who apparently felt free to sin, while denying that they were doing anything wrong. Our text counters with the bold assertion that the person who does what is right is righteous. Doing what is right does not make a person righteous. But the false teachers must recognize that if a person is righteous, he or she will do what is right. You cannot claim to be righteous, as did the antichrists, while living in open sin.

He who does what is sinful is of the devil makes it clear that the sinning antichrists were not righteous, but were of the devil. This does not mean that when a Christian sins, he suddenly loses his place as a child of God and takes his place as a child of the devil. Rather, it means that the antichrists—since they claim righteousness while living in sin—are children of the devil. To sin is to take part in the devil's plan, which automatically sets a person in opposition to God. Scripture takes seriously the nature of believers as born-again, Spirit-filled, new creatures in Christ. It will not tolerate any casual attitude toward sin. Sin and salvation are opposites. Wanting to sin is not part of being led by the Spirit or having Christ in us. Refusal to take this warning seriously should call us to reexamine our commitment to Christ.

