

No Neutral Ground
I John 3:6-9

INTRO: The passage before us speaks of two distinct classes of people, of two distinct classes of humanity. You are either:

Saved or Lost
In Christ or Outside of Him
Free or bound
Redeemed or unredeemed
Righteous or unrighteous.

Because of the clear distinction given in scripture between these two groups, there is no room for a third, neutral, group. The Bible says: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth" (Lk 11:23).

You are either born again or you are not born again. Which group are you in? You cannot be neutral; you either believe the Gospel or you reject it.

I. VSS 6-7, THE PRACTICE OF THE CHILD OF GOD AND THE CHILD OF THE DEVIL

- A. Vs 6, Notice with me the absence of neutral ground in this verse. The distinguishing practice of the two distinct classes is stated strongly. Class one— "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not..." Class two— "Whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him."
1. "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not..." The verb for "sinneth" is in the present tense which denotes "continuous and habitual action." By habit the child of God abides in Christ.
 - a) "Whosoever," this means "everyone." All those who abide in Christ do not as a habit continue in sin.
 - (1) All of those abiding in Him, Christ, do not persist in sin.
 - (2) Christians do sin, but it is not their way of life. They do not persist in sin. Sin is the exception not the rule.
 - (3) "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not." "Whosoever" leaves no room for exceptions.
 - (4) It is not the habit of the child of God to go on in sin. He is in a distinct group; he is "in Christ." He is a new creation (II Cor 5:17).
 - b) Abiding in Christ is the sphere in which the Christian lives.
 2. "Whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him." Unsaved folks are in the habit of sinning. Sin is not an isolated thing to them; it is continuous.
 - a) Sinners are cradled in the arms of the Devil (I Jn 5:19).
 - b) I John 3:10 tells us that folks who continue in sin are of the Devil not of the Lord.
 - c) The practice of sin reveals that a person is of the Devil.
 - d) The lost sinner has not seen Christ with the eye of faith. He

has not known Him in personal experience (Eph 1:18; Heb 11:27).

- e) "To see and know the sinless Christ breaks the power of sin and makes the life of sin thereafter a moral impossibility" (Vaughn 78).
- B. Vs 7, The child of God does not practice sin. He practices righteousness.
- 1. The emphasis is on doing right because of a change within. "Doeth" is a present tense verb suggesting habitual practice.
 - a) A truly righteous person has righteousness as a principle of life. The law of sin and death have been overcome by the law of the Spirit (Rom 8:2).
 - b) The practice of righteousness is a product of the new birth (I Jn 2:29).
 - 2. The only way that any of us can be righteous is to have righteousness imputed to our account (II Cor 5:21).
 - a) The Bible says that "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness" (Gal 3:6).
 - b) Righteous living is the result of salvation (I Cor 1:30).
 - c) Salvation is of the Lord, not works (Rom 4:5-6).
 - d) Believers are declared righteous because of what Christ has done for us (Rom 8:1).

II. VS 8, THE SOURCE OF ALL SIN

- A. John says that sin is of the Devil, and those who make a business of sinning are of the Devil. The source of all sin is Satan, and those who continue to live in sin are of the Devil.
- 1. The lost man draws the principles he lives by from the Devil.
 - 2. It is a terrible thing for a person to have Satan as their father (Jn 8:44).
 - 3. "By neglecting and rejecting the moral requirements of God's Word, the sinner reveals that his priorities are rooted in the realm of 'the devil'" (Hiebert 145).
 - 4. The Devil is a slanderer, and those who are of him are very content to slander God's children.
- B. In verse 5, we saw that Jesus "was manifested to take away our sins.....," now we see that He was also manifested to "destroy the works of the devil."
- 1. To "destroy" means "to put an end to, to undo, to demolish."
 - 2. Deliverance is found in the incarnate Son of God.
 - a) Deliverance from sin vs 5.
 - b) Deliverance from Satan who will be incarcerated at Christ's return (Rev 20:13).
 - c) I've read the back of the book, and we win.
 - d) We have victory now and in the future (II Cor 10:4-5; Rom 6:1-2).

III. VS 9, A NEW NATURE

- A. In verse 4, we read about the nature of sin. Then in verses 5 and 8, we read

- about the nature of Christ's work.
- B. The practice of sin as a habit becomes an impossibility for the child of God because of what takes place at conversion.
 - C. The child of God does not practice sin because "his [God's] seed remaineth in him...."
 1. "Seed" speaks of spiritual offspring. We have been birthed by the Holy Spirit or the Word of God (I Pet 1:23).
 2. Sin is not natural to those who are born again. It is natural to the lost.
 3. It should be pointed out that when a person is saved he receives a new nature that does not and cannot sin. But the force of the passage is a cessation of the habit of sin.

CONCLUSION: To habitually live for sinful pleasure is an indication of being lost.