

## Seven Confirming Signs of Salvation

(Understanding the First Epistle of John)

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Many years ago, my evangelism teacher was giving his own personal testimony to our college class. I will never forget what he said as he came to the end of his testimony. He exclaimed with a tear in his eye, "Never the same!" He declared that God had so touched his life with grace, that he could never again be the same person that he used to be. This is what John is teaching his first epistle. Although Christians will fail God, sin, and need to be restored to fellowship with God (1 John 1:7, 9; 2:1), John reiterates over and over again that they will not live in a constant state of rebellion against God, deny the deity of Jesus Christ, forever disavow having any relationship with Him, apostatize, habitually hate the brethren, and only reflect the nature and likeness of the devil's children.

John in his first epistle provides us with many statements related to obedience and transformation of living which gives proof and confirmation of a person's salvation. They might be termed "the signs of salvation." However, none of John's statements are presented as the WAY of salvation, since salvation is by grace alone (Eph. 2:8-9). John is dealing with the PROOF of one's salvation. In these verses, John speaks of the *characteristics* of all true Christians and the *confirmation* of a person's salvation through their transformation of living.

The *primary confirmation* of one's salvation comes through believing God's promise of everlasting life (John 3:15-16; 6:47). When we place simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection, we can know that we are saved beyond a shadow of a doubt. This is because our faith is resting in Christ alone and His saving grace for our salvation (Eph. 2:8-9). In 1 John 5:13, the author presents the primary assurance of our salvation, as he finishes the epistle: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." John stated in his Gospel that believing in Christ is receiving Christ and receiving Christ is believing in Christ (John 1:12). In other words, upon simple faith in the Son of God and His saving work on my behalf, I can know that I am saved and possess eternal life.

In the greater part of John's epistle, he is dealing with the *secondary confirmation* of one's salvation through a change of life and new behavior patterns. In other words, we can know that we are saved by faith alone, in Christ alone, by grace alone (Gal. 3:26). But John gives some secondary signs of what accompanies genuine faith in Christ alone. The old adage is true: "Faith alone saves, but the faith that saves is not alone." In other words, there will be a certain amount of fruitfulness and transformation in a person's life to confirm and authenticate one's salvation (2 Pet. 1:10).

Of course, we should never base our salvation on our change of behavior and conduct. If we did this, we would never know how much change is necessary for our salvation and what percentage of transformation is needed to save our soul. We could never be sure of our salvation since we would view our salvation as a game of percentages based upon good versus bad living. However, basing our salvation and primary assurance on reformation is not what John is teaching. He is teaching that, as a general rule, Christians are transformed people. They will not continually live like the devil's children and fail to manifest the new nature and life of God in connection with their own lives.

John is creating a dichotomy between God's children and the devil's children, as Jesus did (John 8:44).

1 John 3:10

"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

It seems impossible to view John's epistle as "tests of fellowship" between the believer and God. There is too much language that contrasts the unregenerate way of life (children of the devil) versus the regenerate lifestyle (children of God) which reflects the new birth (1 John 3:6-9, 10-12; 5:18-20). The expressions of passing from death unto life and abiding in death (1 John 3:14) lend further support for this understanding of John's Gospel. Furthermore, if someone is "of the devil" (1 John 3:8), who sinned at the beginning of his fall to the present time, they are not of God and cannot be saved, since (like the devil) their life is only characterized by sin. If someone is like Cain, "who was of that wicked one" (1 Jn. 3:12), then they cannot be "of God" (1 Jn. 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18).

David Allen gives the clear sense of what John is teaching in his epistle:

“You are either a child of God or of Satan. Every person who has not been born into the family of God is a member of the family of Satan. The new birth determines what family you are in today. If you have not repented of your sin and believed on Jesus Christ as your Savior, you are still in the family of Satan. At the risk of being too culturally colloquial, in essence John is asking us a crucial question: ‘Who’s your daddy?’”

Let’s be honest with these texts. John is not talking about “tests of fellowship” but “tests of true Christianity.” Dwight Pentecost calls 1 John 3:10 a “test of sonship.” We see in John’s epistle contrasts between those who live in darkness and light (1 John 1:6-7; 2:8-11), spiritual life and death (1 John 3:14), antichrist’s and the true Christ (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:2-3; 5:5), God’s children and the devil’s children (John 3:10), a change in pronouns (“they and “us” - 1 John 2:19-20), those who are born of God while others are not (1 John 3:9; 4:7-8; 5:18), and a distinction between those who are “of God” and “in him” while others are not (1 John 2:5; 3:24; 4:6, 16; 5:19-20). All of these contrasts indicate there is a great divide that John is creating between the saved and unsaved, the true and the false, the spirit of truth and error (1 John 4:6), and those who know God and don’t know God (1 John 3:1, 6; 4:6, 8; John 1:10; 1 Cor. 1:21; 1 Thess. 1:8-9; 4:5).

Ray Stedman summarizes John’s dichotomy very well:

“Characteristically throughout this letter, John draws the extremes of black and white, but these are not simply his ideas. These reflect the actual situation. Truth is truth and error is error. We have seen this before. John says there is no fellowship between them, no possible blending. There are no gray areas of truth -- it is either white or its opposite, black. There are no shades or degrees of truth. So it is in this matter of mankind -- we either belong to the children of God, or we are children of the devil, one or the other. There are not three classes.”

Here is John’s point. There will be a discernible difference between the devil’s children and God’s children. God’s children will always bear some fruit, lasting fruit, and life-changing fruit after they are saved (Matt. 13:8). John is talking about the *fruit* of salvation which follows *faith* (Eph. 2:8-10) and which gives evidence and confirmation that a person is saved, possesses eternal life, and is in God’s family.

He is talking about some change, gradual change, a pattern of change, and a sanctifying transformation that progressively occurs in the life of a genuine child of God. Christians always bear fruit (John 15:1-6) while unbelievers are “without fruit” (Jude 12).

Like the epistle of James (James 2:23), John does not doubt that “faith alone in Christ” is the way of salvation (1 John 5:13). James was teaching that a certain kind of faith, a spurious faith, which does not translate into eventual sanctification or transformation of living, is not the type of “faith alone in Christ” that saves (James 2:17, 21-24). Similarly, John is teaching that when a person’s lifestyle does not bear any genuine fruitfulness or transformation, then they cannot be saved. Living an unregenerate lifestyle gives proof that a person has never placed “faith alone in Christ” for his or her salvation.

Again, we must understand that salvation itself is not based upon transformation or change. This would be legalism (Matt. 19:16; Acts 15:1; Gal. 3:3). Our salvation is based upon the finished work of Jesus Christ (John 19:30). Neither can we be sure of our salvation if we look to ourselves instead of to Christ alone (John 3:14-15; Isa. 45:22). In many statements found in the First Epistle of John, the writer John is not addressing the ROOT of our salvation (salvation by grace) but the FRUIT of salvation (what comes after salvation). If we remember this, the Epistle of John will come alive to us.

When you are on a trip, you will eventually come to different sign markers along the road. They tell you how far to your destination, where the next fuel stop might be, and most importantly, where to get food. These road markers or signs are helpful in that they provide certain information to you along the way. In a similar way, there are various signs presented in John’s epistle, which provide the believer with information and confirmation regarding his salvation experience. These road markers given by John, enable the believer, who has already placed faith in Christ, to confirm that their faith in Christ is genuine and that Jesus Christ is their Savior.

In short, the signs of new life and transformation serve as secondary road markers along the way, which reassure a person that they are saved and part of the family of God. John’s Gospel reveals that Jesus Christ is the only way to Heaven (John 14:6), but John’s epistles conclude that those who are going to Heaven, through faith in Jesus Christ alone, are people who manifest both an inward and outward

change in their lives. The change does not get us into Heaven but confirms the fact that we are going there!

There are seven confirmation signs related to a believer's salvation.

1. The CONFIRMATION of a person's salvation through their fellowship with God (1 John 1:6-10).

There are two classes of people represented in the following verses. John is drawing a distinction between God's children and the devil's children, between those who walk with God and don't want anything to do with God.

1 John 1:6-10 addresses the heretics claims:

"If we (like the unsaved Gnostics) say (talking but not walking) that we have fellowship with him, and walk (characteristically and consistently) in darkness (falsehood and sin), we lie (about our relationship with God), and do not the truth (are consistently and habitually not living according to God's standard of holy and righteousness living): But if we (who are genuine Christians) walk in the light (predominately seek to live according to God's holiness and standard), as he is in the light (dwells in holiness), we have fellowship one with another (the believer with God), and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin (the blood of Jesus restores and maintains our fellowship with God when we do confess our sins).

"If we say (like the unsaved Gnostics) that we have no sin (denying that we have a sinful nature and live without sin, possessing no guilt over our sin, never admitting that we are a sinner), we deceive ourselves (we are living out a lie regarding the true nature of our life – we are *not one of God's children*), and the truth is not in us (do not acknowledge the truth about ourselves – what God says about us – that we are a sinner and do sin). If we confess our sins (acknowledging our sins before God *as all Christians do*), he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins (as God's children), and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

"If we say (like the unsaved Gnostics) that we have not sinned (denying the existence of a sin nature and deceiving ourselves about sin in our life), we make him a liar (make God out to be a liar who says that we do sin and need confession and cleansing), and his word is not in us" (the truth of God's Word, what He says

about us, is not part of our hearts, and we don't give it a proper place in our lives, *confirming our unsaved status* before God).

John's main point is that a genuine Christian does not habitually walk in darkness and reject the light of God's revelation and holiness. A man who says he has fellowship with God and habitually walks in darkness was never saved at all. By contrast, a true believer walks in the light (2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:8; Col. 1:12, 13; 1 Pet. 2:9) and in this relationship with God, cleansing from sin naturally and continually occurs (1 John 1:7, 9). This is because genuine believers will admit their sins and confess them to God. These words are spoken by John while reflecting upon the Gnostic false teachers who made many false claims of their spirituality and walk with God. They lived a pseudo-spiritual life but claimed to be the super-duper saints. They were imposters. Their *talk* did not match their *walk*. What they said did not measure up with the way they lived.

A saved person cannot and will not continually "live a lie" in relation to his walk and fellowship with God. A born again Christian will not persistently and characteristically refuse to confess his sins before God, and live in defiance against God's truth, while at the same time pretend to be spiritual and possess a relationship with God (1 John 1:7-9). This is not the pattern of living that a believer in Christ, who possesses God's life and nature, manifests before God and others. When a person does not genuinely acknowledge their sins before God, continues to sin and live in open rebellion against God, and fails to walk with God, it proves that they are not a genuine believer. Their commitment to a life of sin, without genuine confession of sin, gives proof that they have never been saved, even though they (the "if we say-group") might claim to be in fellowship with God ("if we say") and that they love God ("If a man say, I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar" - 1 John 4:20). Saying is one thing; doing is another thing! Saying does not give the proof of one's salvation – living does (James 2:17-22).

1 John 1:8

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

1 John 1:10

"If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

John repeatedly states in his epistle that the "truth" (what God says about a Christian's sinfulness and true nature, their need for restoration, the truth of God's

commandments, and loving the brethren - 1 John 1:6, 8; 2:4; 3:19) is not evidenced in the heart and life of an unsaved person. Also, the “word” (what the Bible teaches concerning all true or genuine Christians - 1 John 1:10; 1 John 2:5, 14; 3:8) is not evidenced in the lifestyle of a person who makes these repeated false claims of spirituality and sinlessness (“the if we sayers group” of 1 John 1:8 - the Gnostic unbelievers). Since this group utterly rejects and fails to practice the truth and word that God teaches, this actually confirms that they are not saved. When the truth and Word of God have no part in someone’s life, this means the truth has no relevance, importance, and impact upon their lives (1 Cor. 2:14), which once again proves that they are not born again.

On the other hand, those who are saved do walk with God (the “if we doers” of 1 John 1:7), admit when they do sin, confess their sins (1 John 1:9), seek to do what is right, and therefore give evidence or proof that they are saved. The natural and overall practice and lifestyle of the Christian is to walk in God’s holiness, admit their sinfulness before God, and confess their sins. The habitual lifestyle of an unbeliever is to walk in darkness, neglect spiritual living, deny their sinfulness before God, and fail to confess their sins. This is what John is teaching in the first chapter of his epistle.

This whole chapter and epistle does not teach the message of earning or losing one’s salvation but the dichotomy or distinction between those who were NEVER saved and those who ARE saved. Lying about one’s spiritual condition, living a life of hypocrisy, is repeatedly mentioned in John’s epistle, and becomes the acid test and confirmation that a person is not saved (1 John 1:6, 10; 2:4; 4:20). People that habitually lie about their relationship with God, fail to obey God, and who do not possess love for the brethren, gives plenty of outward evidence that they are not saved and that God has never known them as His own child (“I never knew you” - Matt. 7:23).

Titus 1:16 is another case in point:

“They (unbelievers without God’s life and nature) profess that they know God (pose as Christian believers); but in works (fruits of transformed living) they deny *him* (their *practice* does not match their *profession*), being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”

Remember the old saying:

“There are many professors but few possessors.”

This means that many people might profess to be God’s child, saved, and going to Heaven. However, many do not possess actual regeneration, since their depraved fruit and lifestyle gives evidence that they are still “without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12). If there is no real fruit on the tree, the tree is dead! James concludes that their faith in Christ is also “dead” or disingenuous (James 2:26).

George Zeller correctly observes:

“How can one have life without there being any signs of that life being present? If someone is dead, there are absolutely no signs of actual life present. But if someone is alive, regardless of how bad a shape he is in (e.g., someone in a comatose state), there is always some sign of life of some kind!”

1 John 3:6 reveals another truth about fellowshiping with God:

“Whosoever (every one) abideth in him sinneth not (does not continually and habitually practice sin): whosoever sinneth (continually practices sin as a pattern and way of life) hath not seen him, neither known him” (has no saving relationship with God).

Once again, two distinct classes of people are being presented here, the saved and unsaved, or those who have born again and those who have not experienced the new birth. Abiding (staying where you are) in Christ speaks of the believer’s fellowship with the Lord, which coincides with his obedience to Him (John 15:10), rather than following his own will. We abide in Christ by spending time in prayer, reading and obeying His Word, and being continually conscious of our union with Him. This verse is teaching that a genuine believer will not continue to live a habitual life of open rebellion against God. God’s children will experience newfound fellowship with Him. This is a new pattern of living that all God’s children experience.

Instead of living in constant rebellion and sin, avoiding communion and fellowship with God, they now find themselves walking with God, wanting to stay connected with Him in their regenerate lifestyle. There is a new pull to commune with God instead of to constantly live for themselves, completely ignore God, and live in such a calloused manner, that they want nothing to do with Him. They are “without



Christ” and “without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12). In the words of John, the second group who are unbelievers “hath not seen him, neither known him.” They have never had this life-changing relationship with God.

John has already indicated that the believer cannot make the claim, like the Gnostics taught, to never commit an act of sin (1 John 1: 8–9; 2:1). Sin may enter the believer’s experience but sin in 1 John 1:9 can be viewed more as an exception, which calls for immediate confession and cleansing, while “sinneth” in 1 John 3:6 is referencing a habitual pattern of living, whereby a person wants nothing to do with God, including fellowshiping with Him. How different life is for the believer who is exhorted to keep drawing near or close to God (James 4:8).

“What a fellowship, what a joy divine,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms;  
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.”

## 2. The CONFIRMATION of a person’s salvation through their obedience and love for God (1 John 2:3-5; 5:1-2; 3:24).

1 John 2:3-5

“And hereby we do know (possess confidence) that we know him (in a saving and relational way), if we keep his commandments (as a pattern and way of life). He that saith (like the unsaved Gnostics), I know him (possess a saving relationship with God), and keepeth not his commandments (as a pattern and way of life), is a liar (by claiming to be something he is not and possessing something he does not have), and the truth is not in him (the truth about himself, his sin, and relationship with God). But whoso keepeth his word (the true believer who seeks to obey God), in him verily is the love of God perfected (reaches its goal in a person’s life): hereby know we that we are in him” (we can have confidence that we possess a saving union and relationship with God, through Jesus Christ, when we are obedient and manifesting love in our hearts toward God).

“I would not work my soul to save;  
For that my Lord has done;  
But I would work like any slave;  
For love of God's Dear Son.”

Obedience is not the WAY of salvation but the EVIDENCE of one's salvation. This is the repeated emphasis by John in all of his books.

John mentions in Revelation 22:14:

“Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”

This Bible verse reveals that following or doing His commandments can reassure a person that they will enter Heaven someday and have access to the tree of life. Is this verse teaching that we can earn our way into Heaven? Since our inheritance in Heaven is already confirmed and unconditional (Phil. 3:20; 1 Peter 1:4) by God's promise and grace, this is NOT referring to conditional salvation (entering Heaven on the basis of our good works). What this verse is revealing is that only those who give evidence of their salvation, by manifesting a change of life and conduct, will one day enter Heaven. We do not earn or merit our entrance into Heaven based upon our goodness and obedience (John 14:6) but we do give evidence that we are Heaven-bound by the transformation of our living. John is once again saying that works are the *proof* of our salvation – not the *way* of salvation.

Hebrews 12:14 is another similar verse:

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”

This verse also reveals that a person's entrance into Heaven and seeing the Lord someday is CONFIRMED by their conduct or transformation of living. Again, it cannot be referring to the CONDITION for salvation but the CHARACTER of those who are saved and who will one day enter Heaven.

1 John 5:1-2 continues by revealing this important truth:

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him (loves God) that begat (brought new birth and life into his spirit) loveth him also (the brethren) that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments” (as an overall pattern of living).

John has previously taught in his gospel that keeping God's commandments is proof that one loves God (John 14:15, 23; 15:10). The main point is this. Our obedience and love for God proves the validity and genuine nature of our saving relationship

with God. Elsewhere, John states that “If any man love the world (as a consistent pattern and way of life – habitually), the love of the Father is not in him” (he lacks God’s love which is the sign of regenerating life). We can know that we are “in him” (1 John 2:5), or possess a genuine saving relationship with Jesus Christ, when our life is characterized by obedience and love for the Lord. Obedience and love for God is the sure sign and clear road marker that we are saved. If a person’s life is only characterized by disobedience and defiance against God and His ways, it demonstrates that this person was NEVER saved. Unserved people are termed elsewhere as “children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2).

1 John 3:24 adds:

“And he that keepeth his commandments (as a pattern of living and habitual practice) dwelleth in, and he in him (possesses a saving union between the believer and Christ – “ye in me, and I in you” - John 14:20). And hereby we (those who are truly saved and born again) know that he (God) abideth in us (dwells in our hearts and lives), by the Spirit which he hath given us” (by the Holy Spirit who lives within us to transform our lives).

John is very clear about his repeated statements regarding obedience. Obedience is not the WAY of salvation but the CONFIRMATION of one’s salvation and new birth. The very fact that the Holy Spirit is communicating God’s life to us and transforming us into the likeness of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 3:18), producing new desires, virtues, goals, and working out obedience in our hearts and lives, “both to will and to do of his good pleasure” (Phil.2:13), means that we are God’s children. It the outward sign that we are a child of God. In fact, the children’s song brings this out in a very clear fashion.

"Obedience is the very best way  
To show that you believe:  
Doing exactly what the Lord commands,  
Doing it happily.  
Action is the key--do it immediately,  
The joy you will receive!

Obedience is the very best way  
To show that you believe.  
O-B-E-D-I-E-N-C-E (Yes, sir!)  
Obedience is the very best way  
To show that you believe."

3. The CONFIRMATION of a person's salvation through their love for the family of God (1 John 2:9-11; 3:14-15, 20-21; 4:7-8).

1 John 2:9-11

“He that saith (like the Gnostics) he is in the light (walking in holiness), and hateth his brother (as a pattern and mark of one's life), is in darkness (controlled by sin, unbelief, and blindness – *description of an unsaved person*) even until now (this man continues to be what he always was, namely, unsaved). He that loveth his brother (in an ongoing and habitual manner) abideth in the light (of God's holiness), and there is none occasion of stumbling in him (as it relates to *himself* = when one loves the brethren hatred will not result in an internal stumbling block which can lead to other disastrous spiritual pitfalls in his own life – as it relates to *others* = no person will stumble because of a discrepancy between the believer's profession and practice). But he that hateth his brother (as a characteristic mark of one's life) is in darkness (under the control and dominance of sin in an unsaved, lost estate), and walketh in darkness (sinfulness as a consistent pattern or characteristic way of life), and knoweth not whither he goeth (has no idea of his own waywardness and sin), because that darkness (sin of hatred) hath blinded his eyes.”

1 John 3:10 is similar:

“In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.”

1 John 3:14-15 provides adds more:

“We know that we have passed from death (spiritual death) unto life (spiritual life), because we love the brethren (as a pattern and characteristic of living). He that loveth not (as a pattern and mark of one's life) *his* brother abideth in death (the realm of spiritual death and separation from God). Whosoever hateth his brother (as a characteristic of one's life) is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.”

In all these verses, John is clearly talking about unsaved people hating the brethren, who do not possess eternal life, while God's children, who are born again, express love toward God's people and want to dwell together with them in fellowship (Heb. 10:25). If a person passionately and persistently demonstrates hatred toward the brethren, it gives evidence that this person has never been saved and part of the brethren. However, if one shows new love toward the saints it gives the evidence

that they have been born again. The word “darkness” (1 John 2:11) refers to an individual who has never been delivered from the evil nature and blindness of sin (1 John 1:6; Col. 1:13). A person proves that they are also abiding (remaining) in the realm of spiritual death (1 John 3:14-15) if he hates the brethren.

In other words, they were NEVER saved and demonstrate this by their repeated actions of hatred or animosity toward the family of God. Hatred and disapproval for God’s family proves that a person does not have eternal life abiding in him (1 John 4:8). However, John repeatedly reaffirms that loving the brethren and reaching out to meet their needs proves that they are one of God’s children (1 John 3:17-18, 4:16). Our love for the brethren testifies of our salvation.

1 John 4:16

“And we (God’s children) have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love (expresses love toward others) dwelleth in God, and God in him” (possesses a saving relationship with God).

1 John 4:7-8

“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God (possesses God’s life and nature), and knoweth God (in a saving and relational way). He that loveth not (as a pattern or way of life) knoweth not God (does not have a saving relationship with God); for God is love.”

1 John 5:1-2 applies to loving the brethren as well:

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him (loves God) that begat (brought new birth and life into his spirit) loveth him also (the brethren) that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments” (as an overall pattern of living).

All of these verses clearly teach a dichotomy between the saved and unsaved. There is presented here the characteristic of the saved who are born of God (born again) and know God relationally. The saints who are “beloved” possess a genuine love for other brethren (those of like-precious faith!). This fact is set in contrast to another group of people that “loveth not” and “knoweth not God” (1 John 4:8) which is an expression for unbelievers who have no relationship with God. This is a clear-cut reference to a person that does not know God in a saving and personal

way. Only believers can know God in a relational way (Phil. 3:10) and possess genuine fellowship with Him (1 John 5:20). The fact that a person does not know God certainly means that God never knew him (Matt. 7:23).

George Zeller observes:

“There is no such thing in Scripture as a true believer who at times knows God and at other times does not know God.”

As we finish this portion of our study, we must remember that it's a wonderful blessing to be part of the family of God and continue to have a deepening love for God's people and the truth. A genuine believer does not turn away from God's people forever. Only unbelievers do this (“they went out from us, but they were not of us” - 1 John 2:19). Only unbelievers burn their bridges behind them and leave the fellowship and company of God's family, never wanting to connect with God's people again, love them, and communicate with them. The true believer in Christ will possess a different attitude toward the saints and family of God. They will conclude:

“I'm so glad I'm a part of the Family of God,  
I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His blood!  
Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod,  
For I'm part of the family,  
The Family of God.”

#### 4. The CONFIRMATION of a person's salvation through their hope of eternal life (1 John 2:15-17).

Following the context of this chapter and the entire book, John is once again making a contrast between the saved and unsaved. This dichotomy is once again reiterated.

1 John 2:15

“Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world (as a consistent pattern and way of life – habitually), the love of the Father is not in him” (he lacks God's love and the sign of regenerating life – as in 1 John 2:5).

1 John 2:17 goes on to say:

“And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth (habitually and characteristically, as a consistent pattern of life) the will of God (a Christian does practice God’s will as opposed to an unbeliever who rejects God’s will over his life) abideth for ever.”

John is speaking about His children following God’s will (1 John 2:15-16) and experiencing eternal life with God in Heaven. This is the hope that every child of God possesses. The promise of eternal life is ours through belief in what Jesus said regarding Himself as the only means of salvation and eternal life (John 6:47; 14:6). However, John in this epistle is giving a secondary confirmation and verification of a person’s salvation and hope of eternal life. He promises that those who practice doing God’s will as a pattern or way of life, expressing regeneration in their lives, will one day meet God in Heaven. The promise of abiding with God in Heaven is reassuring and comforting to the believer. This was actually D. L. Moody’s favorite verse. It’s inscribed on his tombstone!

John and other writers elsewhere confirm that it is characteristic for Christians to follow God’s will (John 10:27-28; Matt. 7:21-22). The true or genuine Christian is contrasted with those who do not obey (1 John 2:3-5), hate the brethren (1 John 2:9-12), and the antichrists (1 John 2:18-19). In a similar way, only the believer who is saved truly loves the Father and follows God’s will (1 John 2:15-16) with the end result of abiding forever with God in Heaven, possessing eternal life (1 John 2:17) and experiencing the wonderful blessings of His companionship and privileges of reward throughout eternity (Rev. 21-22).

The text says, “he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” John is NOT saying we attain (earn or merit) eternal life by our obedience, but SINCE all Christians in some measure do practice God’s will (Matt. 7:21), they can therefore claim the promise that is given in this verse of dwelling with God in Heaven. Their transformation of living *confirms* what is already true (they possess salvation and eternal life). As a result, they can therefore look forward to this great future blessing of dwelling with God in Heaven.

Once again, John is contrasting the true (saved) from the false (unsaved) in this chapter and throughout various sections of the book (1 John 2:3, 5, 9-12, 18). This is John’s promise. All Christians will not only have an eternal relationship with God

that lasts forever (Rev. 21:1-5) but we will also possess great reward or spiritual riches that accompany this saving relationship with God (Rev. 2:17; 3:12; 22:12).

1 John 5:20 declares this wonderful truth about our eternal life:

“And we know that the Son of God is come (the incarnation of Christ), and hath given us an understanding (about the deity of Christ and the promise of eternal life through Him), that we may know him (in a saving and relational way) that is true (John 14:6), and we are in him (a saving union) that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God (Christ’s person), and eternal life” (Christ’s promise).

John reveals that genuine believers know, by the understanding or spiritual illumination provided to them from the Holy Spirit, that they possess eternal life through Jesus Christ, who has come in the flesh, and that they will one-day experience the full blessings of this promise of eternal life when dwelling with God in Heaven (1 John 2:17).

Again, our primary assurance of eternal life (abiding forever with God in Heaven) is rooted in Jesus Christ alone (1 John 5:13, 20) and the secondary confirmation of our assurance is realized in our transformation of living, mainly, following God’s will for our life (1 John 2:15-16). God’s children are going to Heaven someday, not because they do God’s will, but because they have believed on the Son of God and have proven this to be true, by their conformity to God’s purpose and will throughout their lifetime.

John reminds us once again of the blessed hope of eternal life in God’s presence.

1 John 2:25

“And this is the promise that he hath promised us, *even* eternal life.”

“What a day that will be,  
When my Jesus I shall see,  
And I look upon His face,  
The One who saved me by His grace;  
When He takes me by the hand,  
And leads me through the Promised Land,  
What a day, glorious day that will be.”



5. The CONFIRMATION of a person's salvation through their perseverance in the truth of God (1 John 2:18-24).

The Bible teaches that genuine Christians never fully and finally turn away from Jesus Christ, abandoning their relationship, walk, and faith in His person and work on their behalf.

1 John 2:18-24

“Little children (God's saved people and children in the family of God), it is the last time (we are living in the last days before Christ's return): and as ye have heard that antichrist (the Antichrist of the Book of Revelation) shall come, even now are there many antichrists (those who are against Christ and His ways); whereby we know that it is the last time (the time prior to Christ's return). They went out from us (leaving true Christian fellowships), but they were not of us (part of the true family of God); for if they had been of us (the true Christian fellowship), they would *no doubt* have continued with us (perseverance in Christian truth and living): but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest (openly revealed as unbelievers and imposters) that they were not all of us (they were tares among the wheat – Matt. 13:25).

“But ye (all genuine Christians) have an unction (special endowment) from the Holy One (Holy Spirit), and ye know all things (not in absolute sense, but a general capacity to know the truth and what is false, the ability to possess discernment and not be led astray into errors about the doctrine of Christ). I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth (they were not ignorant about the truth), but because ye know it (to confirm the truth they already know), and that no lie is of the truth (when a person teaches something contrary to God's Word, it's a lie, and the primary lie is denying Christ's deity – that Jesus was God in the flesh).

“Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? (that the Jesus of the New Testament is the Messiah, the revelation of Jehovah Himself, who came in the flesh to die for sin and rise from the dead). He is antichrist (against Christ), that denieth the Father and the Son (that both the Father and Son share God's existence together). Whosoever denieth the Son (His deity – that He is God – Jehovah Himself), the same hath not the Father (no saving relationship with the Father): *(but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also*. Let that therefore abide

in you (the truth that Jesus Christ is the revelation of Jehovah – God’s existence), which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you (possess a home in your heart), ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father” (maintain and persevere in the truth that both the Son and Father share God’s existence together).

The reason why a person leaves the family of God (“they went out from us” – 1 John 2:19) and rejects the great doctrines of the Bible (“he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?” – 1 John 2:22) is because of apostasy (Heb. 10:38-39). Apostasy involves departure from the true family of God and key doctrines of the Bible (“some shall depart from the faith - 1 Tim 4:1), such as the deity of Christ or virgin birth and resurrection of Christ. This departure proves that a person is against Christ, that he is an imposter, and one who was NEVER saved. On the other hand, those who continue to remain in fellowship with the family of God and embrace the key doctrines of Scripture (the death, deity, virgin-birth, and Second Coming of Christ) proves that they are saved.

Whenever another spirit (an evil spirit) speaks through someone and denies the deity of Christ (1 John 4:1; 1 Tim. 4:1), we can be sure that this person is not saved and that “they are of the world” (1 John 4:2-6). The true children of God will not be lead astray into heresies related to the doctrine of Christ, since they “know” the difference between “the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error” (1 John 4:6) and “have overcome them” (1 John 4:4 – the apostates or antichrists who possess demonic messages) because of the life of God within them. God’s indwelling life keeps all genuine believer’s from denying and overriding the major doctrines related to Christ and Christianity. In other words, they will not apostatize into the errors and “damnable heresies” (2 Pet. 2:1) related to denying Christ’s death, resurrection, deity, virgin birth, and salvation through Jesus Christ.

1 John 4:15 declares:

“Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God (declaring His deity – John 5:18), God dwelleth in him, and he in God” (that person possesses a saving union and relationship with God).

1 John 5:1 adds:

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ (that the Jesus of the New Testament is the Messiah, the revelation of Jehovah Himself, who came in the flesh to die for

sin and rise from the dead) is born of God (possesses the life of God within them) ...”

Here is John’s point. Continuing to embrace the truth that Jesus Christ is God’s Son, the Messiah, that Jesus Christ is God who entered the world in a fleshly body, proves the genuineness of a person’s salvation and regeneration. Remaining loyal to key doctrines regarding Christ’s person and work is the telltale sign or indication of one’s regeneration. Christians are not perfect, but they are Christological.

Hebrews 10:38-39

“Now the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we (genuine believers in Christ) are not of them (unsaved apostates) who draw back (apostasy) unto perdition (damnation in hell); but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”

The Bible teaches that all Christians press on or persevere in the basic truths of Christianity (Jude 3; Acts 9:2) and transformation of living, to some degree, and that they will not apostatize, deny the faith, and live like the devil’s children the rest of their lives. In other words, all Christians will continue to believe in cardinal doctrinal truths regarding Christ’s person and work.

Hebrews 3:6

“But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.”

Hebrews 3:14

“For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.”

This is not the “if” related to legalism and doubt, but an “if” that reassures all genuine believers will not totally and forever abandon the truth about Jesus Christ and their salvation through Him. This is something we can be sure about. Genuine believers will not jump ship, reject and disown Christ, and curse God and die. Neither will genuine Christians constantly live in the contamination of sin (1 John 3:7-10), without bearing some fruit in their Christian lives, as a result of God’s indwelling life (John 15:1-8; Eph. 2:10; Phil. 1:6). This is true of all blood-washed believers who are part of God’s elect community of people called the Church who

by transformation of living “make your calling and election sure” (2 Pet. 1:10). All genuine Christians will in some measure, press on, in varying degrees, and various ways, bearing some fruit for God’s glory for the Bible says in the end, “then shall every man have praise of God” (1 Cor. 4:5).

“There's a course that must be finished  
There's a race that must be run,  
There's a mission to accomplish,  
And a battle to be won.  
We've been called to take the challenge  
By God's might and through His son.  
He will give us grace to complete the race  
Moving forward! pressing on!  
Toward the hope of our high calling,  
Toward the promise we've received,  
With the strength that we've been given,  
Pressing on to victory!

6. The CONFIRMATION of a person’s salvation through their new birth and life from God (1 John 2:29; 3:7-10; 5:18-19).

1 John 2:29 says:

“If ye know that he is righteous (God the Father or God the Son), ye know that every one (this is true of all believers without exception!) that doeth righteousness (literally, “the one doing the righteousness” – present active participle denotes habit of life - the prevailing principle of one’s life – not a single action, but a succession of acts which make up the life) is born of him” (possesses God’s life and nature and righteous living becomes the visible sign of regeneration).

Edmond Hiebert remarks about this verse:

“The sure sign of the new birth is ‘every one that doeth righteousness.’ ‘Every one’ (*pas ho*) asserts that this is true of every true believer without exception, and ‘that doeth righteousness’ (*ho poiōn tēn dikaiosunēn*, literally, ‘the one doing the righteousness’) declares the visible sign.”

Of course, a lifestyle of righteousness does not produce the new birth but is the visible evidence and outward confirmation that the individual “is born of Him.” This is John’s main point throughout the entire epistle.

1 John 3:9 teaches something similar:

“Whosoever is born of God (possesses God’s life and nature) doth not commit sin (literally, “every one having been born of God sin not is doing” – as a pattern or habitual practice or way of life as the present-tense verb indicates); for his seed (God’s life and nature) remaineth in him: and he cannot sin (literally – “not he is able to go on sinning” – a life in which sin is not the permanent state), because he is born of God.”

The scholar, Hiebert, once again appropriately remarks:

“In seeking to understand the teaching here, one must keep in view the force of the present tenses, ‘doing sin’ and ‘cannot sin,’ as suggesting the habitual practice of sin. John insists that the believer’s inability to continue in the practice of sin is due to the fact that he has been born of God.”

Steven Cole correctly observes:

“John uses the present tense throughout this section, and while the Greek present tense does not necessarily emphasize continuous action, it certainly allows for it.”

Of course, John is not talking about sinning once, twice, ten times, or a hundred times. He is not trying to assign a number to how many times a person must sin in order to qualify as “constantly sinning.” And yes, some Christians battle or struggle with certain sins all of their lives. Then too, Christians can have blind spots and do not recognize certain aspects of their life as sinful (2 Pet. 1:8-9). Furthermore, there are carnal Christians (1 Cor. 3:1-3). John is not writing his epistle without this knowledge and understanding (1 John 2:1). However, he is impressing the teaching upon his readership that a genuine Christian does not live without any fruits of righteousness being manifested in his life. A Christian does not live in total rebellion against God and His ways. He will not abandon the way of truth and righteousness in exchange for only sinful living. All Christians bear fruit in various ways and display signs of regenerating life.

1 John 3:9 once again expresses a universal assertion which allows no exceptions. The rendering “doth not commit sin” again connotes the idea of practicing sin as a

general pattern and way of life. This is a restatement of 1 John 3:6 where the believer's abiding in Christ explains his conduct but here the indicated empowerment is our new birth. John explains the born-again individual's termination of the practice of habitual sin by adding these words: "for his seed remaineth in him." In other words, the genuine believer possesses God's "seed" (the new life and nature of God) and therefore he "cannot sin" in a habitual manner, since through the new birth he possesses God's life, and can now yield to the life of God for victory. The indwelling of "His seed" motivates and empowers the believer's moral conduct. The internal seed of the new nature (2 Pet. 1:4) provides a new urge and power to resist sin, so that the believer does not habitually practice sin, as he once did in his unregenerate state.

Plummer explains:

"A child of God may sin; but his normal condition is one of resistance to sin."

Dr. Lehman Strauss adds:

"What is in view here is not the committal of some act of sin, but the continuance of sin; not the possibility of sin, but the practice of sin. One continuing in sin as a practice of life has not God's seed in him."

Bruce also observes:

"The new birth involves a radical change in human nature; for those who have not experienced it, sin is natural, whereas for those who have experienced it, sin is unnatural—so unnatural, indeed, that its practice constitutes a powerful refutation of any claim to possess the divine life."

A pig and a sheep may fall into the same mud hole, but there is a difference. The pig will love it and wallow in it, because that's its nature (2 Pet. 2:22). The sheep will want to get out and avoid that mud hole the next time, because it has a different nature. If God's "seed" (1 John 3:9) abides in you, you cannot and will not wallow in the mud forever.

1 John 3:10 resurfaces once again in our study:

"In this the children of God (the saved) are manifest, and the children of the devil (the unsaved – as in John 8:44; Eph. 2:2): whosoever doeth not righteousness (does not express righteous living and fruitfulness as a pattern of life) is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

All of these texts are giving a very obvious dichotomy or distinction between the lifestyle of the saved and unsaved. John reminds us that an ongoing and outward display of transformation that is reflected in righteous living gives solid, Biblical evidence that one is a genuine believer. The expressions “doeth” (1 John 2:29; 3:7) and “doth not commit” (1 John 3:9) speaks of a habitual lifestyle of righteous living and a lifestyle that is not characterized by constant sinning. Once again, living a life of transformation becomes a secondary confirmation that one possesses the new birth and eternal life, while the primary confirmation is our faith in God’s Son and the promise of eternal life (1 John 5:10-13).

On the other hand, when a person continually sows to their flesh and follows the devil, without demonstrating regenerating life, it proves that they are of the devil or the wicked one (1 John 3:10, 12, 5:18-19). Jesus repeatedly taught that “Ye shall know them by their fruits” (Matt. 7:16, 20). In other words, we can identify unsaved people by the kind of wicked and perverse life that they choose to live apart from God. In short, living in constant rebellion against God gives proof that a person is a child of the devil and not a child of God (1 John 3:10). The expression “committeth sin” (1 John 3:8) in its present tense, once again speaks of a habitual lifestyle of sin, or a life that is only characteristic of sin, which proves that this type of person has not received the divine birth and nature of God.

Imagine a professional football player who is an all-pro and master of his position. He knows what his responsibilities are and how to carry out his assignments. Normally he performs his tasks as he should. But occasionally he misses an assignment. He may miss a block or a tackle. But that is not the norm for him. Rather it is the exception. This is the way it is in the Christian life. Sin is the exception, not the rule. If sin is the rule rather than the exception, we have not been born of God. Yes, this is an over-simplified illustration, but when someone goes through their life living like the devil and for the devil, without repentance, without expressing any interest in righteousness, then they are not one of God’s children.

1 John 3:8 declares:

“He that committeth sin (continually and habitually practices sin as characteristic of one’s life – as the present-tense participle indicates) is of the devil (is the devil’s child); for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God

was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil” (the sinful works generated by the devil that are used to control our lives).

From day one and persisting ever since, the devil is characterized by sinning. The same is true of those who are “of the devil.” They characteristically practice sin as a way of life and do not demonstrate that God’s nature and life indwell them. The devil is unsaved and those who are “of the devil” are not saved. They are “children of the devil” (1 John 3:10). If someone is “of the devil” and said to be “children of the devil,” it can mean only one thing, they are not of God.

The bottom line is this; if you live like the devil (John 8:44), you are going to a devil’s hell (Matt. 25:41). The unbeliever primarily lives for himself and sin. But John reveals the opposite is true of Christians. All genuine believers live differently than the unsaved of this world in some measure and demonstrate that they possess God’s life. True believers will manifest fruit and transformation in their lives. Although there are varying levels of spirituality and sanctification in Christians, one thing is certain; all Christians do practice righteous living. There will be a certain amount of transformation or new life that is sought after and witnessed within the life of a genuine Christian, while an unbeliever eventually manifests a pattern of disobedience and defiance against God’s will and purposes.

John Ritchie states:

“The one who abides in Him is not here a spiritual Christian in contrast to a carnal Christian; this is a born-again person in contrast to one who is not saved. The born-again person is seen as one who habitually abides in Christ; that person does not habitually practice sin. This does not suggest that the believer never commits one single act of sin but he will not habitually live a life of sin. A sinful life does not mark a child of God.”

The new birth produces new life. It’s as simple as this. The point in John’s epistle is that with unbelievers there is an unbroken pattern of sinning that cannot be restrained. However, in the lives of genuine born again believers this unbroken pattern of sin is broken. This means the frequency and totality of sin is changed in the life of the child of God. Righteousness, godliness, and many Christian virtues, which stem from God’s new life and nature, manifest themselves in the experience of a genuine Christian.



Romans 8:9 declares:

“But ye are not in the flesh (the sphere of the flesh where unsaved people live and die), but in the Spirit (the realm of the Holy Spirit who operates within the life of all Christians), if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”

This passage distinguishes between the saved and the unsaved, for the unsaved do not have the indwelling Holy Spirit. When a person is born again, he is no longer in the flesh but in the Spirit. This means he lives and operates in a different realm of existence. Just as a fish lives in water and a man lives in the air, so a believer lives in the Spirit. As a result, his bent toward living is not continually evil but is one that manifests righteous living and Christian virtues. He is not constantly controlled by the sinful nature but is naturally controlled by the Holy Spirit throughout his days on earth (Gal. 5:22-23). The evidence of conversion is the presence of the Holy Spirit within, giving witness that you are a child of God.

Romans 8:16 declares:

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”

The true mark of a born-again believer and a genuine Christian is that he is indwelt by the Spirit of God. Even Paul could say to the carnal Corinthians: “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” (1 Cor. 6:19). This means that all Christians bear various amounts of fruit, even carnal Christians, and demonstrate that the Holy Spirit lives within them.

After speaking to Nicodemus about the new birth, Jesus drew an analogy between the effects of the wind and the effects of the Holy Spirit (John 3:8). We can't see the wind, but we can see its effects. When a piece of paper blows by us, we do not assume that it is flying on its own, like a bird would fly. We assume that the wind is blowing it. So it is with the Spirit. You can't see the Holy Spirit, but you can see His effects in the new birth, such as His *choice* and resulting *conviction* in the sinner's heart, and His *control* over the newly born-again Christian, which brings a new life of transformation. The work of the Holy Spirit can be seen in every child of God.

1 John 5:18 goes on to say:

“We know that whosoever is born of God (possessing God's new life and nature) sinneth not (literally - “that every one having been born of God not is sinning” as a

pattern of life and in a permanent way - as the present-tense verb indicates); but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself (from an unbroken pattern of sin and way of life), and that wicked one (the devil) toucheth him not” (does not overcome the believer’s life and keep him bound to sin because of the new nature residing in him).

The child of God will no longer live in a permanent state of sin without evidencing fruit and transformation of new life. Furthermore, they can no longer be “touched” by the devil (be totally recaptured and live constantly under the devil’s dictates and power as in their prior unsaved state – Eph. 2:1-2; Heb. 2:14-15). The believer now possesses victory over the wicked one and “sinneth not” as a pattern or way of life, since God’s life and nature is residing in him (Phil. 2:13). In short, God’s children are no longer overcome by the “wicked one” since in Christ they have overcome the world (1 John 5:4-5) and no longer are bound to the “works of the devil” (1 John 3:8), as they once were in their unregenerate and lost state.

Instead of allowing the devil to “touch” us or overcome our lives, as he once did in our lost estate, God has now touched us with His grace and brought us “out of the darkness and into his marvelous light” (Col. 1:13). God’s protective hedge about the believer (“that wicked one toucheth him not”) reassures us that demons cannot indwell us and the devil cannot control us in the same manner, as he once did, when we were his child (John 8:44; 1 John 3:8; Eph. 2:1-2). This is because of God’s promise of protection and transformation that comes into our lives, through the new nature, and sharing the indwelling life of God, as His beloved children.

Edmond Hiebert concludes:

“Satan will assail the believer, but his slimy fingers will never regain an abiding grip on the redeemed soul. His attacks may be vicious and inspire fear, but the promise is that he will never destroy the true child of God.”

Actually, the saving, protective, and transforming touch of God upon our life is greater than the touch of the devil. This is why we sing the beloved words:

“Shackled by a heavy burden,  
'Neath a load of guilt and shame.  
Then the hand of Jesus touched me,  
And now I am no longer the same.

He touched me, Oh He touched me,  
And oh the joy that floods my soul!  
Something happened and now I know,  
He touched me and made me whole.”

7. The CONFIRMATION of a person’s salvation through answered prayer by God (1 John 5:14-15).

1 John 5:14-15 gives this promise:

“And this is the confidence that we have in him (in our saving union and relationship with God through Christ), that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.”

Answered prayer is always a wonderful added blessing that becomes yet another sign that we are God’s child. We can be confident about getting answers to our prayers because we are “in him” and this becomes another positive, secondary confirmation of our salvation. We can know that God is part of our life when we are praying and seeing answers to our prayers. Both Jesus (Matt. 7:7) and James (James 1:5-7) encourage us to pray, believing that we will receive answers to our prayers. God is a very gracious and merciful God and He wants to bless our lives by answering our prayers. Why? It’s because we are His children!

“Whisper a prayer in the morning,  
Whisper a prayer at noon;  
Whisper a prayer in the ev’ning,  
To keep your heart in tune.

God answers prayer in the morning,  
God answers prayer at noon;  
God answers prayer in the ev’ning,  
To keep your heart in tune.”

These seven signs of salvation, as outlined in the First Epistle of John, give added confirmation to a believer’s heart that God has saved him by grace alone through faith alone (Eph. 2:8-9) and that the Lord was now transforming his life through grace alone (Eph. 2:10; 2 Pet. 3:18). Like many other writers, John is dealing with the progressive sanctification of the believer’s life (1 Thess. 4:4), which results in a

new way of life, a Christian life, an abundant life (John 10:10), and a contrasting life with the unsaved. The Christian life is not a “sinning religion” as old-time Methodism would put it. When a person is born again, as Jesus taught (John 3:3, 7), possessing life from above and life from God, then they will manifest to God and others that they are born again!

“Born again, there's really been a change in me,  
Born again, just like Jesus said,  
Born again, and all because of Calvary,  
I'm so glad that I've been born again.”

This is the message of the First Epistle of John!