

# Who do you resemble? - Lesson 10

**1 John 3:4–10 ESV “3:4 ¶ Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.**

**3:5 You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.**

**3:6 No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.**

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

**3:8 Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.**

**3:9 No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God’s seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God.**

**3:10 By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.”**

“You are looking more like your father every day,” was the comment I received from Pat a few Sundays back. “How?” was my response. “The way you look, act, and your mannerism resembles your father.”

To me, that is a great compliment. To look and act like my father who was a great man is one of the greatest compliments I can receive.

As children, when we grow up, we resemble our parents more and more in our mannerism, words, looks, and actions. We hear ourselves and think, “I’m sounding just like my father or mother.”

You are a child of either the Lord or the devil. If you are a child of the Lord, you will begin resembling Him more as you grow in your spiritual life. If you are a child of the devil, as you grow, you will resemble the devil more in your life.

John addresses this in chapter 3 verses 4 through 9. If you are a child of God, you will resemble Him and if not, then the devil.

So, who do you resemble today?

This brings up two questions we must answer today:

1. Who are the children of the devil?
2. Who are the children of the Lord?

## Who are the children of the devil?

**1 John 3:4 ESV “¶ Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.”**

**1 John 3:6 ESV “No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.”**

**1 John 3:8 ESV “Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.”**

The truth is scarce today. Everything is relative. It depends upon who is talking to hear the truth from their perspective. Everyone has their angle they are trying to push. One-sided stories filled with partial truth are being told to deceive individuals into believing a lie.

**Proverbs 18:13 If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame.**

When one only hears one side of a story and then answers, it is foolishness to him. One person said, “There are three sides to every story. One person’s truth is told from his viewpoint and agenda. Another person’s truth is told from his viewpoint and agenda. And then the actual truth of the matter, which both parties have given only partial truth in their stories.”

What is truth? Are there any absolute truths in this world? Or does truth depend on the times, society, popular opinion, or who is in power at the time?

Absolute truth is a truth that remains true regardless of any other factor. It is the truth all the time. The Bible is absolute truth. Sometimes absolute truth hurts and digs deep into our preconceived notions and the propaganda the world is feeding us daily.

“Fortunately, there is such a Creator, and He has revealed His truth to us through His Word, the Bible. Knowing absolute truth/universal truth is only possible through a personal relationship with the One who claims to be the Truth—Jesus Christ. Jesus claimed to be the only way, the only truth, the only life and the only path to God (John 14:6). The fact that absolute truth does exist points us to the truth that there is a sovereign God who created the heavens and the earth and who has revealed Himself to us in order that we might know Him personally through His Son Jesus Christ. That is the absolute truth.”<sup>1</sup>

Today, we live in a world filled with propaganda. Media, governments, corporations, identity groups, activists, and many others are filling the minds of our children and adults with lies portrayed as truths, slowly being brainwashed into believing that sin and sinful acts are permissible.

**Isaiah 5:20 Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!**

John, the beloved apostle, is sharing the truth with those in the church so each person can examine his or her life and know if they have eternal life through Jesus Christ. He shares the truth because he has a desire for others to be saved. Those who need to hear them are the ones he tells the hard truths. He warns each individual to look at one’s life by the Word of God, not according to the world’s standards.

Matthew 7:15–27 ESV “7:15 ¶ “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

7:16 You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?

7:17 So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit.

7:18 A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit.

7:19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

7:20 Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

7:21 ¶ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

7:22 On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’

7:23 And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

7:24 ¶ “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

7:25 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.

7:26 And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.

7:27 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.””

The truth is there are those who think they know the Lord only to find out in the end, they did not. How tragic to live a life believing your life is right with the Lord to fall short of eternal life.

Jesus gives us three truths concerning those who know Christ and those who do not.

1. Good tree bears good fruit. A Christian bears fruit for the Lord.
2. Not everyone who proclaims to know the Lord knows the Lord. Those who do His will know Him.
3. A life built upon the Lord by obedience to His word is a life that will stand the storms of life. Those who hear God’s word and do not do them will not weather the storms of life.

## **Sin is defined by the Word of God, not society**

Society, special interests groups, and others seek to redefine sin. They twist words, distort facts, and use different tactics to justify their sins. Sin must be defined according to the Word of God. Words used to describe sin in the Scriptures:

**Hamartia – greek word that means to “miss the mark”**

**266 ἁμαρτία** hamartia {ham-ar-tee'-ah} • from 264; TDNT' - 1:267,44; n f • AV - sin 172, sinful 1, offense 1; 174 • 1) equivalent to 264 1a) to be without a share in 1b) to miss the mark 1c) to err, be mistaken 1d) to miss or wander from the path of uprightness and honour, to do or go wrong 1e) to wander from the law of God, violate God's law, sin 2) that which is done wrong, sin, an offence, a violation of the divine law in thought or in act 3) collectively, the complex or aggregate of sins committed either by a single person or by many<sup>2</sup>

**1 John 3:4 ESV “¶ Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.”**

Sin is the picture of an archer shooting at a target and missing. It is missing the goal set. It is a falling away, missing of the right way, or missing the mark.

Hamaria gives the concept that man does not find in the sin that which he expected to find, but is in a state of delusion or deception.

**Parabasis is the Greek word for transgression or violation.**

**3847 παραβασί** parabasis {par-ab'-as-is} • from 3845; TDNT' - 5:739,772; n f • AV - transgression 6, breaking 1; 7 • 1) a going over 2) metaph. a disregarding, violating 2a) of the Mosaic law 2b) the breach of a definite, promulgated, ratified law 2c) to create transgressions, i.e. that sins might take on the character of transgressions, and thereby the consciousness of sin be intensified and the desire for redemption be aroused<sup>3</sup>

It is the act of transgression of the Law or an moral order. It means to break the Law.

**Romans 4:15 ESV “For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.”**

**Unrighteousness is the Greek word for the unrighteousness of one’s heart.**

**93 ἀδικία** adikia {ad-ee-kee'-ah} • from 94; TDNT' - 1:153,22; n f • AV - unrighteousness 16, iniquity 6, unjust 2, wrong 1; 25 • 1) injustice, of a judge 2) unrighteousness of heart and life 3) a deed violating law and justice, act of unrighteousness<sup>4</sup>

**1 John 5:17 ESV “All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death.”**

The first two words indicate actions of sin where this word indicates the attitude or state of sin. It indicates the absence of righteousness or state of perversion.

**Transgression – violating the law**

**458 ἀνομία** anomia {an-om-ee'-ah} • from 459; TDNT' - 4:1085,646; n f • AV - iniquity 12, unrighteousness 1, transgress the law + 4060 1, transgression of the law 1; 15 • 1) the condition of

without law 1a) because ignorant of it 1b) because of violating it 2) contempt and violation of law, iniquity, wickedness<sup>5</sup>

The word is translated other times as iniquity, unrighteousness, and transgresses the law.

It goes beyond the previous word from a lack of righteousness to a state of rebellion or hostility to righteousness.

**Matthew 24:12 ESV “And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.”**

**Titus 2:14 ESV “who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.”**

### **Ungodliness**

**763 ἀσεβεία** asebeia {as-eb'-i-ah} • from 765; TDNT - 7:185,1010; n f • AV - ungodliness 4, ungodly 2; 6 • 1) want of reverence towards God, impiety, ungodliness<sup>6</sup>

**Romans 1:18 ESV “¶ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.”**

**Jude 1:14–15 ESV “14 ¶ It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones,**

**15 to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.””**

Term carries the concept of impeding doom because of sinfulness.

### **Another definition of sin – James 4:17**

**James 4:17 ESV “So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.”**

Not only is it sin to do that which is contrary to the law of God, but also to fail to do that which is right and good.

### **Definition of sin**

James Arminius defined sin as “something thought, spoken, or done against the law of God, or the omission of something which has been commanded by the Law to be thought, spoken, or done”

John Wesley said, “a voluntary transgression of a known law”

Dr. Miley said, “Sin is disobedience to a law of God, conditional on free moral agency and opportunity for know the law”

Dr. A. H. Strong said “Sin is lack of conformity to the moral law of God, either in act, disposition, or state.”

Westminster Shorter Catechism states “Sin is any want of conformity to, or transgression of, the law of God.”

## **Root of Sin Problem**

Augustine and Aquinas believed that pride was the root of the sin problem.

Luther and Calvin believed that unbelief was the root of the sin problem.

The root of the sin problem is probably selfishness, wanting one’s own way.

**2 Timothy 3:2 ESV “For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,”**

**Isaiah 53:6 ESV “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”**

## **What is continuing in sin?**

**1 John 3:4 ESV “¶ Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.”**

Every person is born with a sin nature. When a child is born, within his nature is to commit sin. It does not take him long before selfishness rears its ugly head and takes over. Just watch a child grow and you will discover one of the first words the child says with passion is “Mine!” Mine, my way, and myself, is the problem with every person.

Our nature is bent toward selfishness. We want our way, our will, and our stuff.

**Job 14:1 ESV “¶ “Man who is born of a woman is few of days and full of trouble.”**

**Romans 3:10–19 ESV “3:10 as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; 3:11 no one understands; no one seeks for God.**

**3:12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”**

**3:13 “Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive.” “The venom of asps is under their lips.”**

**3:14 “Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.”**

**3:15 “Their feet are swift to shed blood;**

**3:16 in their paths are ruin and misery,**

**3:17 and the way of peace they have not known.”**

**3:18 “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”**

**3:19 ¶ Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.”**

**Romans 3:23 ESV “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”**

**Psalm 53:3 ESV “¶ They have all fallen away; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one.”**

**1 John 3:10 ESV “By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.”**

“Whoever committed sin” - whoever goes on committing sin, whoever simply lives in sin.”<sup>7</sup>

Committing sin or practice of sin is a person who lives in sin. His life is spent going after sin. His desires is to fulfill the lust of the flesh, eyes, and pride of life. He lives to satisfy his or her desires, to have his way and will.

“The believer who abides in Christ does not practice sin, he doesn’t live in it. The sinner lives in at all the time, but the child of God has a new nature.”<sup>8</sup>

**Luke 15:11–24 ESV “15:11 ¶ And he said, “There was a man who had two sons.**

**15:12 And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them.**

**15:13 Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living.**

**15:14 And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need.**

**15:15 So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs.**

**15:16 And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.**

**15:17 ¶ “But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger!**

**15:18 I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you.**

**15:19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.”**

**15:20 And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.**

**15:21 And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’**

**15:22 But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.**

**15:23 And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate.**

**15:24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.”**

The son was miserable in the pigpen. He knew this was not the place where he belong. Notice when he came to himself, he got out of the pigpen and went home. He repented of his sins. Humbly confessing his sins, he returned home to his father.

Continuing in sin is one who is in the pigpen and enjoys it. It is his desire to wallow with the pigs. His life is bent toward the pigpen. He might get out of the pigpen for a while and then jump right back in.

However, the Christian might get in the pigpen, that is sin, but he will be miserable because he knows he is not living as his Heavenly Father has called him to live. He will be miserable because of his sin.

If a person is living in sin, continuing in sin, and happy with it, then he is not a child of God.

## **Who are the children of the Lord?**

Every person has a nature. Some have only one nature: sin nature. Child of God has two natures: old (sin)nature & new nature in Christ.

Who are the children of God? Those who have been born again, new birth. No one can be a child of God if he has not been born again. Must be a new birth.

**John 3:3–5 ESV “3:3 Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”**

**3:4 Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”**

**3:5 Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”**

**1 John 3:5, 7, 9 ESV “3:5 You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.**

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

**3:9 No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God’s seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God.”**

Only way a person will have victory over sin is through the new birth in Christ. When a person accepts Jesus Christ as his Saviour, he is born again. He receives a new nature, a new self. When he receives that new nature, God transforms his life. Because he is a new creation, he can begin living like his Heavenly Father.

**2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”**

**Ephesians 4:24 ESV “and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”**

**Colossians 3:10 ESV “and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.”**

**1 Peter 1:23 ESV “since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God;”**

**2 Peter 1:4 ESV “by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.”**

In Christ, a person who comes to Christ in faith has a new nature; he is a new creation in Christ. Barclay says:

"John is not setting before us here a terrifying perfectionism, in which he is demanding a life which is totally and absolutely without" sin; but he is demanding a life which is ever on the watch against sin, a life which ever fights the battle of goodness, a life which has never surrendered to sin, a life in which sin is not the permanent state, but only the 'temporary aberration, a life in which sin is not the normal accepted way, but the abnormal moment of defeat. John is not saying that the man who abides in God cannot sin; he is saying that the man who abides in God cannot continue to be a consistent and deliberate sinner.”<sup>9</sup>

## **Who do you resemble?**

A Civil War chaplain approached a wounded soldier on the battlefield and asked if he would like to hear a few verses from the Bible. The wounded man said, “No, I’m so thirsty, I’d rather have some water.” The chaplain gave him a drink, then repeated his question. “No sir, not now — but could you put something under my head?” The chaplain did so, and again repeated his question. “No,” said the soldier, “I’m cold. Could you cover me up?” The chaplain took off his inside coat and wrapped the soldier. Afraid to ask, he did not repeat his question. He made to go away, but the soldier called him

back. “Look, Chaplain, if there’s anything in that book of yours that makes a person do for another what you’ve done for me, then I want to hear it.”<sup>10</sup>

**1 John 3:10 ESV “By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.”**

The Greek word for evident is “5318. φανερός phaneros, fan-er-os’; from 5316; shining, i.e. apparent (literally or figuratively); neuter (as adverb) publicly, externally: — abroad, + appear, known, manifest, open (+ -ly), outward (+ -ly).<sup>11</sup>”

**Matthew 12:33–37 ESV “12:33 ¶ “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit.**

**12:34 You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.**

**12:35 The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil.**

**12:36 I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak,**

**12:37 for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.””**

How do you tell if a person is a child of God or a child of the devil? You look at their lives to see the fruit being produced? What is in the heart will eventually come out of the mouth and be evident by the hands! It will appear.

**John 15:1–8 ESV “15:1 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.**

**15:2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.**

**15:3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.**

**15:4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.**

**15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.**

**15:6 If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.**

**15:7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.**

**15:8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”**

You tell by the fruit their lives bear. Notice in verse 5 those who abide in Christ bears much fruit.

## Things to Consider:

1. A person who is continually living in sin does not know Christ.

John stresses in his letter the importance of one's life backing up one's speech. If a person says he knows the Lord yet the fruit of his life is sinful, he does not know Christ. A good tree produces good fruit and an evil tree produces evil fruit.

2. A Christian is known by the fruit he produces in his life. His testimony speaks.

**Colossians 1:10 ESV** “so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”

**Hebrews 13:15 ESV** “Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.”

**Galatians 5:22–23 ESV** “5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,  
5:23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”

**Romans 15:28 ESV** “When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you.”

**Philippians 4:17 ESV** “Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit.”

What fruit are you producing in your life?

---

<sup>1</sup><https://www.gotquestions.org/absolute-truth.html>

<sup>2</sup>Strong's Greek Dictionary of the New Testament, s.v. “paragraph 1.

<sup>3</sup>Strong's Greek Dictionary of the New Testament, s.v. “paragraph 1.

<sup>4</sup>Strong's Greek Dictionary of the New Testament, s.v. “paragraph 1.

<sup>5</sup>Strong's Greek Dictionary of the New Testament, s.v. “paragraph 1.

<sup>6</sup>Strong's Greek Dictionary of the New Testament, s.v. “paragraph 1.

<sup>7</sup>McGee, James Vernon, through the Bible Volume 5, Pasadena, CA, p. 798

<sup>8</sup>McGee, James Vernon, through the Bible Volume 5, Pasadena, CA, p. 790

<sup>9</sup>Barclay, The Letters of John and Jude, P.96f

<sup>10</sup>Carlos Wilton, via PresbyNet, “Sermonshop 04 17 1994,” #5, 4/12/94. <https://sermonwriter.com/sermons/new-testament-1-john-31-7-look-just-like-father-leininger/>

<sup>11</sup>Strong's Greek Dictionary of the New Testament, s.v. “paragraph 1.