

SUNDAY MORNING

Announcements

Mike Davis

Song Leader

Daniel Allgor

Lord's Supper

Jon Barry Bill Brittenham
Cole Meador Jerry Schnelle

Prayers

Jack Calvert Matt Davis

SUNDAY EVENING

Announcements

Mike Davis

Song Leader

Cory Easley

Lord's Supper

Bill Brittenham Cole Meador

Prayers

Jerry Schnelle Dave Massey

WEDNESDAY

Announcements

Pete Rowland

Song Leader

Cory Easley

Prayers

Dee Minter W.H. McFerrin

Invitation

Bryan Garlock

ABOUT US

Elders

Jack Calvert Rodney Ellis

Deacons

Jon Barry Bill Brittenham
Mike Davis Dave Massey

Evangelist

Bryan Garlock

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday

Bible Study9:30 A.M.
Worship10:15 A.M.
Worship6:00 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

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GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

Hear the word of truth Romans 10:13-17

Believe the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24

Repent from all sins Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38

Confess the name of Christ ... Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 8:35-30

Be Baptized in His name Mark 16:16;
1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12

Walk in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10

Think On These Things

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Volume XXII

June 11, 2017

Issue 23

Can One Go Without Sinning?

Bryan Garlock

John wrote, "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin..." (1 John 2.1)

Reader, have you ever considered that the Bible was written "that you may not sin"? It is true that since the flesh is weak and temptations are many, we stumble and fall from time to time. Paul wrote, "...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3.23). This article is not meant to deny the sinfulness of man or to say man does not sin. In fact, in the same letter where he wrote his instructions so that we may not sin, John said, "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" and "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 John 1.8, 10). However, it seems to this writer that there are some who are under the impression that we cannot go without sin; they almost say it is impossible.

John's letter is filled with instructions for the God fearing and seeking saint. Surely

then, it cannot be said that those who kept the commandments found within his epistles cannot go without sin. The concept is quite contradicting to say the least. Thus, all those in the first century who kept the commandments and all those today that do so can go without sinning. This is not to say we are without sin; remember the teachings of John. On the other hand, one who is diligently imitating Christ and has truly perfected the love of God within himself can keep from sinning. This man is no longer living or walking in sin (Col. 3.7). He may fall short at times, yet he can go some time without sinning.

To say "go without sinning" is not to contradict John's words. These words do not claim prior or future sinlessness, but they can claim present innocence. There are simply too many passages commanding the saint to be faithful, holy, obedient, etc. and as many passages warning of impending judgment on those who do not obey and eternal blessings for those who

FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember and check on our shut-ins: **L. G. Clemmons, Willie Margaret Mobley, Bob Buls, Bonnie Allgor, Max Thomas, Maxine Burnham** and **Mary Alice Turner**.

Rhonda Minter had gall bladder surgery on Thursday. All went well and she is home recuperating.

Joey and **Jetta Avance** are on their way to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. We pray that the doctors there will be able to diagnose **Joey's** problems and be able to provide successful treatment.

Cathy Monaghan was back at services Wednesday after successful placement of a heart stent.

It was also very good to see **Sonny** back. He has been out sick for quite some time.

The elders, deacons and preacher will meet at the building this afternoon at 4:45.

Front Page Article (concl.)

remain faithful to claim one cannot keep these commandments and admonitions (Romans chapter 6, James 1.12, etc.)

Further, it should be noted that sinlessness is possible because all temptations are capable of being withstood. Let that sink in for a moment. Paul penned, "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it" (1 Cor. 10.13). Notice that God will not allow us to be tempted beyond our ability. He will always provide a way of escape. Thus, if we want to escape a temptation, we have been given the opportunity. Jesus did so and so can we (Matt. 4.1-11).

Another way we can keep from sinning is to add to our faith. Peter wrote, "For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1.5-11). Concerning verse ten, let us examine

another translation that reads, "...ye shall never stumble" (ASV).

Some contend that Peter is not saying that we will never sin, but that we will not fall so far that we will not fall away nor from grace. This writer can concede that even after adding all the qualities given by Peter, one can still sin. However, by adding all these qualities cannot one can keep himself from sinning?

For instance, if one was to add self-control to his faith, could he not be diligent and always abounding in that area so as to not be "ineffective or unfruitful"? If he practices self-control, does he not remember that his sins were washed away and is he being diligent to make his calling and election sure? Thus, one who has added these necessary qualities to his life will not only keep himself from being spiritually blinded, but also keep himself from falling or stumbling. If John could write so as to invoke his readers not to sin, could not Peter? Could these passages not be parallel in principle?

It should be concluded, therefore, that one could go an hour, a day, a week, maybe even a month without sin. It may not be probable, but it is not impossible. It depends on whether the person is adding to his faith, escaping temptations, keeping the commands of God, loving like he should, praying like he should, bearing the fruit of the spirit, etc. This should not be too far-fetched to see. Even David said, "I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119.11). If one were to contend that "we cannot help but sin" we must respond, "How can we be held responsible if we cannot help but sin?" Through God's word, we are capable of rising above sin.

In addition, John said, "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" (1 John 3.9). The one who cannot keep on sinning may be likened to the child who cannot have a cookie before dinner; he does not have the permission. We are not to sin because we do not have the permission. Instead we are to be blameless. It would be appropriate to add here as well that one cannot boast about his faithfulness. Though we may go a day or more without any known sin, this does not give us the right to boast before God. We may, however, be confident in our salvation. John wrote, "Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him" (1 John 3.21-22).

Finally, John writes, "...But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." As noted above, we will from time to time fall short God's glory. If it should happen, John promised us, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1.9).

Can one go without sinning at the present time? What's stopping you from trying? BG

Our Bible classes offer another opportunity to study and learn more about our Almighty God and the great revelation of His Bible His Spirit has given us.



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