

Hating Sin

By Paris Reidhead*

Now I wish you'd turn to the little epistle of 1 John. You that are joining us this morning that will not have been with us in the other services may be interested in knowing that I've asked each of the people present to mark certain verses in 1 John, so that they can use them.

You know, today we have so many people that will come saying, "I'm not sure about my salvation. I'm not sure I'm a Christian. I'm not sure I've been born of God." To tell you the truth, there's a great deal of reason why many ought to be concerned. I've seen missionaries that have discovered they'd not been born of God, and pastors, and deacons, and Christian workers. Because during their lifetime there have been so much that one might term "easy believism", or shallow evangelism, or something else, so people have a right to be concerned about it. I've asked that folks mark this, now not just for your sake, but for the sake of those that'll be coming to you.

When someone says, "I'm not sure I'm a Christian." What are you going to do? Pat them on the back, smile at them? "Why do you worry?" Or are you going to have the same kind of concern that a doctor should have, even though he's a friend of the family, if someone comes and says, "I think I may have cancer." You don't want that doctor to just pat you on the back, and smile at you, and tell a joke, do you? Wouldn't you rather that the doctor would say, "Well, because we're friends I'm going to use everything available to me in medical knowledge and equipment to help discover this. If you have it, we should not let one day go. If you don't have it, you should have the assurance that comes from knowing that."

With people that say, "I'm not sure I'm a child of God," we're viewing 1 John as God's little X-ray machine. We ask the person to read each of these verses, because each verse is in the midst of a truth that deals exactly with that issue. In 1 John the 5th chapter and the 13th verse we're told, "These things are written that you might know that you have eternal life." That's why they're written, so that you can know.

Well, the first of these evidences of eternal life is the 1st chapter and the 6th verse. "If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness we lie, and do not the truth." This person sitting across from you in the restaurant, to whom you're speaking because they've asked you this question, you just turn your testament or your Bible and say, "Read that. What's it say?" "Well, if we say we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness." "Well, what's that mean?" "Just what it says. How do you walk? Is it your purpose to walk in the light, or are you still walking in darkness?"

If they have a question, what does it mean to walk in darkness? Then of course you take them to Ephesians chapter four, verse 17, through about the 6th verse of the 5th chapter, and you have God's explanation of what it means to walk in darkness. Now put a number two next to the third verse of the second chapter. "Hereby we do know that we know him if we keep his commandments. He that sayeth, 'I know him' and keepeth not his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 Joh. 2:3-4). How do you walk? What's your attitude towards the commandments? That's evidence number two.

Then I have chosen to put three verses with a number three, has to do with loving your brother. In this case, it's enough just to put a number three next to verse nine of the second chapter. "He that sayeth he is in the light and hateth his brother is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light" (1 Joh. 2:9-10). What's your attitude toward others? Do you love God? You know to "love God with all your heart, and mind, and soul, and strength" includes "loving your neighbor as yourself" (Mat. 22:37&39). Hatred is the intention to harm somebody, and love the intention to help and bless someone. Well that's number three.

Number four, we've put just opposite verse 15 of the second chapter. The 4th evidence, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Well, that's pretty clear, isn't it? What's your attitude toward the world? Whom you love you seek to please, you get your happiness from. Do you love God, or do you love the world? That's the 4th evidence.

Then the next evidence is found in the 24th verse of the 2nd chapter. "Let that therefore abide in you, which you have heard from the beginning. If that which you've heard from the beginning shall remain in you, you shall also continue in the Son and in the Father. This is the promise He has promised us, even eternal life" (1 Joh 2:24-25). Are you continuing in that profession of faith you've made, in that trust in the finished work of Christ, or have you gone away? That's the issue, and that's the 5th evidence, continuance. Go carrying on, standing firm.

Now today we're coming to the 6th evidence, and I want you, because you're now up with us, I want you to put a six next to the 10th verse of the 3rd chapter. This is the 6th evidence of being born of God. I guess you have to check the 9th verse and put the six next to 10. "Whosoever is born of God does not commit, or practice, or do sin, for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot do sin because he is born of God. 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."

Now everything that we've seen in 1 John relates to those first three verses where John said, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you might have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ" (1 Joh. 1:3). Then he said, "And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full" (1 Joh. 1:4). If we're going to have fellowship with God, we've got to know about God, we've got to know something about Him.

I regret that the beginning of the 3rd chapter did not start with the 29th verse of the 2nd chapter. We're going to do that. We're going to make verse 29 of chapter two the first verse, even though it isn't in your Bible. I'm not changing that, I'm just including that and saying that's where we're going to begin. "If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone that doeth righteousness is born of Him" (1 Joh. 2:29). In the 7th verse of the 3rd chapter, we are told the "Christ is righteous." "The Lord Jesus Christ is righteous." In this 29th verse we're told that "God is righteous." You see it says, "Everyone that doeth righteousness is born of Him." Nowhere are we said to have been born of the Son. We're born of the Father.

What we're discovering here is more about the Father and about the Son. If we're going to have fellowship with God, and our fellowship is with the Father and with the Son, we'd better know all we can know about them. What John is telling us here is that God, God the Father, is righteous. I said in the 7th verse the apostle says, "The Lord Jesus is righteous." Now here's the argument that the apostle makes. "God is righteous. Everyone doing righteousness is born of Him." That's his logical argument. Now, if I do not do righteousness, it is evidence that I am not born of God. If someone is saying, "Am I a child of God?" John says, "Do you do righteousness? Do you practice righteousness? God is righteous, and everyone that's born of Him has been made a partaker of the divine nature." If someone says that they're a child of God and they've been born again, and they don't practice righteousness, the argument John makes is they're not telling the truth, because God is righteous, and therefore everyone born of Him, will do righteousness. If I do it, if I do righteousness, if I practice righteousness, there is evidence that I am born of God.

Now there are a great many in the day of our Lord, and ever since, and certainly today, a great many who pronounce themselves to be righteous, and we're not counting that. For instance, Christ said to the Pharisees, "You are the ones declaring yourselves righteous before men" (Luk. 16:15a). You see, the Pharisees thought that if they made a claim, then what they claimed was a reality. The claim made them what they claimed. It doesn't work that way I'm afraid. It just doesn't happen that way. They thought so. They said, "Because we declare ourselves to be righteous, therefore we're righteous." No. Not so, said our Lord Jesus.

When Claus Harms¹, on the anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation prepared the 95 theses that he put on the door at the cathedral, one of his theses was this, "people used to pay for the forgiveness of their sins." In other words, they bought indulgence from the priest. But nowadays people have advanced, they don't want to part with the money I guess, so what they do is every sinner just forgives his own sins, or he declares himself to be righteous. Of course that, according to this good man, is an evidence of the declension into which we've come. Oh yes, many do pronounce themselves righteous.

Then there's another company that consider themselves safe because they're resting in their baptism as infants, and so they

¹ Claus Harms (1778-1855) A German clergyman and theologian.

assume themselves to be acceptable to God. Then there are other multitudes, multitudes of people who followed the instructions of some religious leader, and they now have assumed themselves to be righteous. That's a dangerous thing to do, because God is righteous, and they that do righteousness as He prescribes it, are born of Him.

You see, the problem rides on this, the world doesn't understand God. We have it right here. It's very clear. "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God, therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew Him not" (1 Joh. 3:1). Therefore, those that have been born of God, those that are truly His, are going to have a little bit of a problem. God may see them as righteous, and God may accept them, but the world has a different standard. The world knows what we were, because many times we've been born of God, and yet there are those around who recall how we lived before we came to know the Lord. They're going to realize that once we were traitors against God, and rebels, and anarchists, and enemies, and "we walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince power of the same spirit that continues to work in them" (Eph. 2:2). They're going to say, "Well, what difference is there about you?"

The world has no way of knowing God, and because the world doesn't know God, it doesn't know those that are born of God. It doesn't have the grounds for understanding what has happened to us. The world has this idea promulgated by a lot of preachers of the universal fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. No concept of redemption or regeneration. The world did not know our Lord Jesus Christ, that's a historical fact. Since it never knew Him, didn't know who He was, didn't understand who He was, today the world doesn't know those that are His. We shouldn't be grieved about that. Don't grieve because the world doesn't understand you as a child of God, born into the Father's family through faith in Christ.

I think you ought to be grieved if the world did understand you! The fact that it doesn't, that's all right. The people that you work with, the people that know you, and that you meet out in the normal course of activities, they don't understand this thing that's taken place in your life. They're certainly going to know the difference that He's made. Perhaps the best time in the world for you to tell someone of what's taken place in your life is when they come to you and say, "What's happened to you? I've known you then, I've known you since, but you're different. What happened to you?" Best opportunity in the world to tell someone about Christ. If they don't see a difference, all the talking in the world you're going to do isn't going to mean anything to them. They've got to see it. If they don't understand it, we've established that, but they recognize there is a difference, and they'd like to, many of them at least, would like to know more about it.

We have to, in this same portion, John's going to tell us more about those who are born of God. In this 2nd verse of the 3rd chapter, "Beloved now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." Now, we still look like other people, and as I've pointed out, the world does not really understand anything about us. *The world* laughs at the idea that we are children of God.

You see, God has not yet made a public display of His children. One day He's going to do it. We're going to have a body like unto the body of glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have an incorruptible inheritance. We'll have white robes, and we'll be all that He has planned for us to be, and then there'll be the setting forth of the children of God, but not yet. We're still as we were in many respects, and the world doesn't understand how we can claim to be born of God and still be so much like the rest of the people in the world. We know that when He appears, and we see Him, we're going to be changed into His likeness, we'll be like Him.

You see, here on earth at this time we are in, shall I say a state of humiliation in the same way Christ was when He was here. He was said to be "a root out of the dry ground, and no beauty that anyone should desire Him" (Isa. 53:2). He's been glorified, and when we see Him we're going to be as He is, we're going to appear like the Lord Jesus Christ. That's when it will be made manifest, that one great final manifestation. Then the children of this world will see that those whom they've despised and disregarded, often persecuted, are indeed in the children of God.

Now if you have been born of God, if you are a child of God, the evidence is going to be supported by the fact that since you know He is righteous, and you've been born of Him, and made a partaker of His nature, that one day you're going to be like Him when you see Him as He is. You are going to certify the genuineness of your faith in Christ by your continuing to purify yourself, even as the Lord Jesus Christ is pure.

Now you say, “Well how can you purify yourselves?” Well, you do it by obeying the Word, “Taking heed according to the word” (Psa. 119:9). Doing righteousness means that you obey the Scripture, that you are careful to obey the Scripture. You say, “Well, we’re not under law.” No, we’re not under the law of mosaic offerings, and sacrifices, and all that pertained as shadows and types of Christ, but everything in the New Testament that’s in the imperative mood is a command of the Holy Ghost. We are expected to give “heed to the Word of God.” We are told, “That the Word is to have free course and be glorified in” us, and the Word is glorified in us when we obey it (II The. 3:1b).

How much time do you give in reading the Word with the purpose of changing your attitudes, your relationships, your activities to match the Word? Well, it’s important for you to know that because we’re told that, “every man that hath this hope of” seeing Him and being like Him continues to “purify himself even as Christ is pure” (I Joh. 3:3). You’ve sung it. Have you ever really thought about those words when you sang them?

“Oh, to be like thee. Oh, to be like thee,
Blessed redeemer, pure as thou art.
Come in thy fullness. Come in thy pureness.
Stamp thine own image deep on my heart.”²

Well that’s the cry of the one who’s been born of God. “Oh, to be like, thee blessed redeemer.” “Purifies himself even as he is pure,” “by taking heed according to the Word,” by reading it, by studying it. It’s so very, very important for us to understand that. There is no exception, no exception at all. He who stops purifying himself has dropped this hope from his heart. You can’t have it both ways. You can’t have it, “He that hath this hope in him purifies himself.” On the one hand, and say, “He that stops purifying himself, still has this hope in him.” It doesn’t work that way. It’s got to be that “he that hath this hope in him purifies himself.” Conversely, he that has stopped purifying himself has dropped his hope from his heart. The evidence therefore is that if you’re born of God, you have this continuous desire to bring your life in accord with the Word of God, to purify yourself by the Word. “How shall a young man cleanse his way, purify himself?” said David, “by taking heed thereto according to thy Word.”

It is then that the evidence you were born of God is this continuous desire in every relationship, in every aspiration, in all of our motivations, and our plans, and our words. Well, now you say, “My goodness.” You’re saying, “What if I fail? What if I do? What happens when I’m overtaken by a fault and I’m led aside into temptation? What’s that mean? You mean to say that there’s a place in grace that I’ll never be tempted anymore?” No, I don’t mean that. I know a lot of folks are looking for it, but they aren’t going to find it. If there ever came a place in the Christian life, or a state of grace where you couldn’t be tempted, do you know what that would mean? That would mean that you were holier than your wonderful Lord, because “He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15b).

See, temptation is not sin. Temptation is the proposition presented to the mind to satisfy a good appetite in a bad way, and sin is the decision to do it. There’s no time in our pilgrimage when we aren’t subject to temptation and no place in our life on earth that we’re not capable of yielding to temptation. By the same token, “There’s no temptation we have to yield to, because with every temptation He’s made a way of escape that we may be able to bear it,” so we’ve got protection there (I Cor. 10:13). Should it be we do not avail ourselves of that way of escape, and we fall into sin, the evidence that you are His, that you have been born of God, is that when you discover what you’ve done, or said, or thought, in terms of purpose, whenever you realize what it is that’s come between you and the Lord, you deal with it. Because your hope of seeing Him means you’re going to purify yourself as He is pure, and the purifying means that you’re going to immediately do everything the Scripture says to do.

What does the Scripture say to do? Well, do you remember when the people at Corinth got into trouble at the Lord’s table and sinned? Paul said in writing to them, “Judge yourself that you be not judged, for he that is judged is chastened of the Lord that he should not be condemned with the world” (I Cor. 11:31-32). Now, judge yourself means that the moment that you discover that what you said, and what you wanted, and what you purposed, and even what you continued to think about, because

² “O To Be Like Thee” By Thomas O. Chisholm, pub. 1897; Music by William J. Kirkpatrick, 1897.

sometimes sin gets in the mind the same way a candy gets on a child's tongue and it's sort of rolled over and the sweetness sucked out without having acquired the outward actions or the penalties that imposes, God looks on the thoughts and the intents of the heart.

What happens when we discover that? Judge it, immediately. This is what the Word of God says about it. Judge it to be what God's Word declares. Then the second thing is forsake it. Done with it. Finished with it. No defense. No plan to continue. Forsake it. "For let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he'll have mercy" (Isa. 55:7). Then to confess it. Say with God exactly what God says. This is how we purify ourselves when there comes into our life that which has grieved God. He that "hath his hope in Him of seeing Him" and "being like Him will purify himself."

It used to be back down in the south that every August after the corn was laid by, any of you farmers know what that means, and when the corn got so high you couldn't cultivate it anymore without breaking the stalks over. That was the last cultivation. Between the time the corn was laid by and had to be cut, they'd have Brush Arbor meetings. They'd go down in somebody's woods where there was a stream for fresh water, and they would cut poles and lay them across the branches. Then they would cut branches and lay them across the poles. Then they would cut logs down, split them in two, and auger a couple of holes, and put some branches in them, and those were the seats. Then they'd cut off a big tree up to the front halfway through, fall it in such a way that it became a pulpit, and they'd already set up. People would come with their wagons, and horses, and their tents, and they'd have a Brush Arbor meeting, and all the families would be there tending around, and preachers would come and would preach. It was an altar, which was a split log on branches, and they brought a few loads of straw and they spread that down the aisles. Then preachers would preach and call the people to repentance. Some of the folks got the idea that when they sinned in September, there wasn't anything they could do about it til the next August at the Brush Arbor meeting. That was when you took care of these things. Like getting your foot infected in September and limping around on it, losing it till the next August when you could treat it. A sin sets in an infection.

Well now, the one that's looking for Christ, yearning to see Him, knowing he's going to be like Him, purifies himself. He isn't going to wait from September till the next August. He can't afford to do that. He's going to purify himself. He's going to do exactly what the Scripture says to do at the moment that he discovers that he's got a problem. That's what the text teaches us here. Everyone having this hope, oh the world is full of people that have some kind of hope, maybe they've invented the foundation, but this hope rests on Christ who shed His blood, who poured out His soul unto death. We're going to purify ourselves. He is pure, we are His, we're going to be like Him. Our Lord's purity is an eternal state; this is what He is by nature. Ours is a constant purifying, an action. We keep striving to be like the Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone, and then we proceed to say, "Whosoever does sin ..." I'm using this because it gives the idea of continuance. "Whosoever committeth," keeps on practicing sin, "transgresses also the law for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 Joh. 3:4).

Now, we've already seen in the past the nature of the law. The law is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and mind, and soul, and strength: that's the first and great commandment," and the love of that commandment is the intention to please God in everything (Mar. 12:30). If you've been born of God, you have repented of your sin and your sin was the intention to please yourself, and now you've turned your back on that and you've made a commitment to please God in everything. Therefore, the whole law is summed up in that one commandment. Do only that which will bring joy, and satisfaction, and gladness, and happiness to the heart of God.

If you find someone that claims to be a child of God, but he is transgressing that, he's living to please himself, well we have it here. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law." Everyone doing sin gives concrete evidence that he hasn't been born of God. His will is still set to do evil. In Ecclesiastes, chapter eight and verse 11 we are told, "Because the judgment upon sinners isn't executed speedily, the heart is set to do evil."

Is your heart set to please God? Have you fixed your heart to please God? Well, that's what the issue is. That's what he's talking about. Why? Because we are told in that verse that Christ came into the world, He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him is no sin. Our sin was the committal of the will to please ourself. Our sins were what we had done in obedience

to that governing principle of pleasing ourself.

Now Christ came, remember what the angel said that night of His birth? Listen, hear the song. Get the echo of it. Though shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from hell and take them to heaven when they die. Was that what the angel said about our Lord? Why have we preachers been focusing on that and forgot what the angel did say? The angel said, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins" (Mat. 1:21). That's what He came to do. Do you mean to say that He could love the world and give His life for it, die and go into death, be raised from the dead, and not accomplish what He came for? I certainly don't believe that. He accomplished what He came for. He came into the world to destroy the power of sin, to pardon the guilt of sin, to cleanse from the pollution of sin, and He made full, and perfect, and complete provision to do everything He came for. Do you think it can be stated that He either cannot or will not do that which was the object of His coming? Well you might think so, should you choose, but I don't think so. I don't hold it for a moment.

Since He came with the purpose of taking away the sins, it's plain that anyone who is doing the sin, anyone who is practicing lawlessness scorns Christ sacrifice for sins. If he doesn't scorn it, he views it as a license so he can go on to practice sin and somehow escape from the consequence of it. No. The Lord Jesus accomplished what He came for. "He came to save His people from their sin," and everyone that's in Him, everyone that's born again, we read in verse six, "Whosoever abideth in Him doth not go on sinning. And anyone who goes on sinning has not seen Him nor has he known Him" (I Joh. 3:6).

You know, if I had written this, I might get a little afraid of the faces of the people, but since I'm reading what God by the Holy Ghost gave through John that's been part of the Bible ever since then, I have to read it. Now listen, if you'd have caught me a few years ago, I had some clever, neat, tricky little explanations that got all around this. I was like somebody going through the blackberry patch, and I dodged the bushes, and I never got raked by one of the thorns. I knew how to get right through it, come out on the other side and say, "Well that's not so bad." The only thing was I had given lip service to what was inspired by the traditions of the elders and the teaching of my fathers that made the Word of God of none effect.

Well, I've had to unlearn a lot since then, and you're catching me now at a point where my unlearning isn't complete yet, but it's well on the way. I'm going to have to tell you what the explanation of these Scriptures are in 1 John 3. Do you know what they are? It means just exactly what it says.

Now you can either like that or not like that as you wish, but that doesn't change it. In my opinion, God meant it because He said it, and He said it because He meant it. The only way to deal with it is to accept that God said what He meant and meant what He said, and He said, "Everyone remaining in Christ does not go on practicing sin, and everyone keeping on practicing sin has not seen Him, nor has he known Him." Everyone into whom Christ has come in response to receiving faith, and who remains in Christ by faith simply does not keep on doing or practicing sin. Not to do sin implies a decisive break with sinning.

I have a memory of my own past days, years ago, when I said, because I read it, oh I read a lot of nice things that weren't true. I read somewhere that everyone sins 1000 times a day in thought, word, and deed. I figured about then that if I was going to sin 1000 times a day in thought, word, and deed, I might just be clever enough to work in something I enjoyed now and then. It became a license, but it wasn't long till the Spirit of God through the Word of God showed me that antinomianism is a disease of the mind, and of the heart, and of the spirit, and I got under deep conviction.

Listen, sin is the transgression of the law, and the law is before us in the Word of God and the will of God! God does not treat as sin the failure to measure up to the infinite perfections of God or the infinite perfections of angels. We're talking about transgression of the law. We're saying that anyone who goes on sinning implies that he has never made a decisive break with his past, and he's still dead in his sins.

All right, verses seven to ten we learn how to recognize those who are born of God. Now there's always a possibility of deception. In verse seven it says, "Little children, let no man deceive you" (I Joh. 3:7). Don't be taken in. Everybody talking about heaven ain't going there, if I can quote some of my southern friends from a few hundred years ago.

In chapter two, verse 18 to 19 shows that there were and there are anti-Christian deceivers who seek to lead astray. Now some of these in the 8th verse of the 1st chapter, they don't have any sin, they couldn't sin. Some claim they cannot be saved from sin. There are others that argue that sin won't do you any harm if you're in the family of God, because nothing can happen to you anyway. The verse here says, "Don't be deceived. Everyone continuing to sin has not seen Him, nor has He known Him." I get the idea that this is intended to be understood just the way it's written. "My little children, let no man deceive you. He that doeth righteousness is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil. He that keeps on practicing sin" (I Joh 3:7-8a).

Conduct is a result of what a person is, and a person who is practicing doing righteousness has been born into the family of God and made a partaker of the divine nature. The person that is practicing sin is doing exactly according to his father, the devil. The devil maintains sin in the world by controlling all those who serve him, and he continued holds his followers in sin and largely often because he keeps telling them that there isn't any possibility of their being saved from sin. Regrettably, there are preachers today who were like I was for years, and are telling them that that's true, there's no way they can be saved from sin.

All right. The purpose of Christ coming. We are told in the 8th verse in the second part of that verse, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (I Joh. 3:8b). The Lord Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, lived a sinless, holy life. He came to loose the bonds of sin and release people from the power, and influence, and control of sin. He was manifest in the flesh, in His human nature, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

Now, He was raised from the dead, and the resurrection of Christ from the dead is the testimony to the universe that the Lord Jesus accomplished what He came for. Those who are born of God, who pass from death unto life, share this life of Christ and exhibit the victory of their risen Lord. Now everyone that has been born of God doth not go on doing sin. Do you see it right there? "Whosoever is born of God doth not keep on practicing sin," for he who has been born of God has been made a partaker of the divine nature by the Holy Spirit, and therefore he cannot continue practicing sin, "for God's seed remain in him, and he can't because he is born of God" (I Joh. 3:9).

Isn't that marvelous? Isn't that wonderful? Isn't that a great emancipation proclamation to the human heart? It seems so to me. That's why Paul, writing to that church at Corinth in the 2nd letter, 13th chapter, 5th verse, said to the Corinthians, "Examine yourself whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves. Do you not know your own selves, how Christ be in you except ye be reprobates." Therefore, anyone who's been born of God cannot go on practicing sin. Doesn't say he couldn't fall. We've dealt with that. He isn't going to go on practicing. His purpose is to please God.

Now, I want you to see the conclusion here in the first part of this 10th verse. "In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil" (I Joh. 3:10a). How can a person know whether they're born of God? What's the evidence of eternal life? Because of their hatred for sin, and because of their purpose to please God, and it's in this we are told that "the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil."

With that in our understanding, with that before us, we've got the 6th evidence of eternal life. Examine your own heart. Oh, to have gone through all of these Scripture verses, and to have the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit. Yes, this is what you were, but now you are light in the Lord. In 2nd Corinthians, chapter 4 verse 6 we read, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." There, that's the testimony. That's the work of the Spirit of God, through the Word of God.

Heavenly Father, we're grateful that we have Thy Word, and as we've given our hearts to it this hour, we ask that it may have been buried there like good seed and will spring forth 100 fold to the glory of Christ. Let blessing come to those that have listened and those who will permit the Word of God to have free course and be glorified in them. We ask with thanksgiving in Jesus name, Amen.

* Reference such as, Delivered at Bethany Fellowship, Minneapolis, MN on Friday, June 10, 1988 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.