

Sermon Series in 1 John

Sin Is "Soooo" . . . Bad

*1 John 5:14-16*

Pastor Matthew Diehl

August 6, 2017 A.D.

We have been journeying spiritually through 1 John and should have come to realize a few things:

1. John, as a senior citizen by our modern-day definition, has contributed in a most amazing and supernatural way to the community of man. God chose John at this age in his life to be an instrument who contributed to the New Testament.
2. God works through an individual's entire life. John was a young man when he met Jesus, and these letters were produced about fifty years after the Ascension.
3. God works through people to deliver His message.
4. God does not deviate from His message of love, peace, forgiveness and witness. All of these are delivered through the incarnation and now through the witness of the Holy Spirit working inside the heart of every Believer. God is love and Believers contain the love of God.
5. God gives everyone a free-will choice in life. A person can live a sinful practiced life leading to death or chose to live a life with

the power of the resurrected Lord operating inside of them.

Therefore, as a rule, practice righteousness (right-living).

6. John delivers God's words of finality. There are demarcations in life. There are separations in life from those that surrender to God and those that choose to live a practiced life of rebellion.

7. God interacts with the affairs of men. God seeks our prayers.

**Today, we start with 1 John 5: 14, 15 . . .**

**This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. <sup>15</sup> And if we know that He hears us *in* whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.**

In verse 14, we see that God looks for our prayers to come to Him. However, these are prayers of confidence in our seeking to fulfill the will of God, our Father, in our lives. These are not prayers for selfish motives to be wealthy or to attain luxurious possessions or to attain personal fame. Our mission is God's mission. Remember that the man who writes these five letters for God writes from a life of bare necessities. We know that John writes Revelation from the island of Patmos. John didn't have any luxurious possessions. God did not have John write letters to make Believers have a road map to personal wealth. All the apostles died a martyr's death, save John

who is believed to have died in exile on Patmos. Based on early church letters written by church leaders, some scholars believe John was sent to Patmos as slave labor to work the mines. John was sent there for preaching about Jesus being a king which would label him a traitor to Rome who had an Emperor. In addition, some scholars, based upon letters of churchmen (*Church Fathers . . . who were the last generation of men after the last apostle died*) of the day, say that John was released from Patmos and returned to Ephesus where he died of natural causes around 100 A.D.

Revelation 1:9 I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance *which are* in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

All of these traditions leave speculation. But, what we do know is that John was not a wealthy man. Being a leading voice for God and His Gospel brought John a life of hardship. John's prayers, no doubt, focused on the eternal because his letters did. John was not concerned about his audience becoming wealthy or famous. He was concerned about their very survival in a hostile world knowing their final destination was Heaven.

Athletes in team sports are known for saying there is no “I” in the word ‘Team’. In the same world-view, there is no “you” in God’s name. God did not incarnate Himself so Believers could become materially wealthy. The Gospel is about peace on earth and eternal life in Heaven. 1 John 5:13 tells us that John writes to ensure us that we know we have eternal life. Therefore, our eternal lives cannot take anything with us into eternity. I heard, and have stated before, that the Evangelist Billy Graham preached that he never saw a U-Haul behind a hearse. I have confidence this is a true statement. I also have confidence that the charlatan preachers who say that you can “name and claim” a new car in the name of Jesus, and have enough faith (and donate “seed money” into their ministry) are aligned with the money-changers that Jesus drove out of the Temple.

### **Understanding 1 John in the light of man’s sinful condition**

Before we study the next few lines of Scripture in 1 John, there is the realization that God’s Word is the polar-opposite of the fallen world. God’s way is often viewed as foolish, outdated and just plain wrong-headed. The greatest example of this is the incarnation. God enters His creation as one of us to die on the Cross for our sins. This is a thought that man does not possess on his own. Man is incapable of fathoming such a plan. Fallen man does not have the awareness that he

owes God a debt for sin. This thought, in and of itself, is foreign to fallen man.

Man's most daunting problem in the creation is that sin is crouching at his door (Genesis 4:7), and he is challenged to conquer sin. History tells us that man on his own fails to conquer sin. Sin conquers man every time. Paul admits this in Romans 7. **<sup>17</sup> So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. (Rom. 7:17)**. Aside from the Cross, Romans chapter seven is the center-piece of God's psychology addressing the condition of man. God writes through Paul in Romans 2:9 . . . **<sup>9</sup> There will be tribulation and distress for every soul (psyche) of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek.**" The English word "soul" is translated from the Greek word "psuche" (English - psyche), thus the study of psyche is psychology.

**Soul: Strong's 5590 ψυχή *psuche psyche***  
**Meaning: breath, the soul**

In Romans seven, the Law (specifically the TORA or first five books of the Old Testament) makes man aware of God's plan for man to live. Therefore, the law convicts man of sin. Without God pointing out what is good for man, man would be continually evil. We know the Law in and of itself does not save us and cannot remove sin

(Hebrews 10:11). The Law points to our shortcomings. The Law identifies our need for The Savior.

Remember in the Genesis creation account that God created and called the things He created “good”. From this, we see that God sets the standard for what is good. Man has a problem with living inside the parameters of God’s good. The history of man and Scripture tells us that there is not one that is right in God’s eyes (Romans 3:10; Psalm 14:1).

From the first time we sin, as a knowing accountable person, sin takes charge of our lives. Paul addresses the psyche condition in all of us in [Romans 7:20-25](#).

[7:20](#) But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.

<sup>21</sup> I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good.

<sup>22</sup> For I joyfully concur with the **law of God** in the inner man,

<sup>23</sup> but I see a **different law** in the members of my body, **waging war** against the law of my mind and making me a **prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members**.

<sup>24</sup> **Wretched man that I am!**

**Who will set me free from the body of this death?**

<sup>25</sup> Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

The above scriptures need to be kept in mind as we read 1 John 5. Sin is overwhelming in this world without God to confront its scourge. The conflict in our time (or in any time) is that the world does not like to be judged by any moral standard. We have criminal and civil laws in America that are constantly being bumped against and, in fact, eroded. For years now, many local and national leaders call evil ‘good’ and support the practice of evil life-styles. They run rapidly to evil and encourage others to do the same. The killing of innocent life in the womb upon demand and same-sex marriage are just a couple of abominable acts to God that are ongoing. These are the tip of the iceberg, and God hates these practices (Proverbs 6:16 and following). God has ‘turned these people over to their own desires’. They have chosen to worship the creation instead of the Creator (Romans 1:18 and following). These are the same people who share company with those in Isaiah 59:1-4 and Jeremiah 7:16; 11:14; 14:11; 15:1. These verses document that God does not hear prayers from some sinners, and He can ask a person not to pray for the sins of another.

## **WHEN A NATION TOTALLY TURNS THEIR BACK ON GOD**

**From the time of John, God had taught His people through the prophets and had a long history since Abraham (2000 B.C.) of being in a covenant relationship. I will be your God and you will be my people.**

**The fall, destruction and deportation of the Northern Kingdom (Israel) in 722 B.C. and the Southern Kingdom (Judah) by 586 B.C. is an example to the world that God judges. God's judgement is often long in coming, and there are repeated chances to turn from debauchery. Then the judgement comes, and it is devastating; it is annihilating; it is final.**

**Jeremiah prophesied to the Southern Kingdom of Judah before the Babylonian Conquest. The population was enslaved and deported to Babylon and the Temple destroyed. The process started in about 600 B.C.**

**Jeremiah 7:16 "As for you, do not pray for this people, and do not lift up cry or prayer for them, and do not intercede with Me; for I do not hear you.**

Here God says that he does not hear the prayers of people who have sinned so badly; just like Paul describes in Romans 1, they have



been turned-over to their own desires. God warned the Hebrews not to worship idols, but they did. Idol worship leads to death and destruction of a people. Worshiping any god but The One and Only True God destroys families which is the basic building block of God's plan for humanity. As we shall see, these Hebrews, due to their idol worship, sacrificed their children to them. When man worships himself as his own idol or idols, like these Hebrews did, children will always suffer and many will lose their lives. Abortion on-demand in our time is the result of man worshiping himself.

**Isaiah 59:1-4** 1 Behold, the LORD's hand is not so short That it cannot save; Neither is His ear so dull That it cannot hear. 2 But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden *His* face from you, so that He does not hear.

We have reviewed in the recent past that God does not hear prayers of non-repentant people (Isaiah 59:1-4). Isaiah prophesied before the destruction of the Northern Kingdom Israel in 722 B.C. by the Assyrians. The people worshiped pagan idols and sacrificed their children to them (Isaiah 57:5). God had warned them not to do this. When the prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 7:1-15) spoke for God, he stood on the Temple steps in Jerusalem and indicted the people. Jeremiah

spoke before the Babylonian captivity (beginning about 600 B.C.) at which time the Temple was destroyed. These Jews too, like their Northern kin, worshiped idols and sacrificed their children (Jeremiah 32:35). This is why God directed Jeremiah not to pray for them. After the indictment, the Lord told Jeremiah. . .

**Jeremiah 11:14** "Therefore do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry or prayer for them; for I will not listen when they call to Me because of their disaster.

**Jeremiah 14:11** So the LORD said to me, "Do not pray for the welfare of this people."**12** "When they fast, I am not going to listen to their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I am not going to accept them. Rather I am going to make an end of them by the sword, famine and pestilence."

**Jeremiah 15:1** Then the LORD said to me, "Even though Moses and Samuel were to stand before Me, My heart would not be with this people; send them away from My presence and let them go!

God's judgement was for unbelief, and in their unbelief murdered their innocent children. They had sacrificed their children to idols, and now, in the judgement, they boiled their children for food during the Babylonian conquest. Jeremiah writes in the book of **Lamentations 4:9-10 . . .**

<sup>9</sup> Better are those slain with the sword Than those slain with hunger; For they pine away, being stricken for lack of the fruits of the field.

<sup>10</sup> The hands of compassionate women Boiled their own children; They became food for them Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people.

Therefore, with this history of destruction and deportation, John writes for God in the late first century. God's judgment was just as severe in John's day as it was in the days of Jeremiah and Isaiah. The Temple was destroyed, and the people displaced. It should not be forgotten that Jesus told of the destruction of the Temple (Matthew 24:2; Mark 13:1-2).

### **Matthew 24:2**

<sup>2</sup> And He answered and said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here shall be left upon another, which will not be torn down."

**Mark 13:1-2** 1 And as He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!"

<sup>2</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another which will not be torn down."

The Temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D. Of the many roles Jesus lived, He was a prophet. Like Isaiah and Jeremiah, the Hebrew people did not listen and receive God's message. They were then slaughtered, deported and the Temple was destroyed just as in the days of Jeremiah and Isaiah.

Again, God's judgement for unbelief and rebellion was just as severe in John's time. The cannibalistic acts were repeated during the siege of Jerusalem (70 A.D.). Remember, Jesus prophesied this destruction would happen. Once again, during the Roman siege, there is a record of cannibalizing a child. When the Roman commander, Titus, heard of this atrocity, he declared that 'he would bury so abominable a crime in the ruins of their state'.

We read from Josephus' "The Wars of the Jews":

**201** 4. There was a certain woman that dwelt beyond Jordan, her name was Mary; her father was Eleazar, of the village Bethzub, which signifies the house of Hyssop. She was eminent for her family and her wealth, and had fled away to Jerusalem with the rest of the multitude, and was with them besieged therein at this time. **202**The other effects of this woman had been already seized upon, such I mean as she had brought with her out of Perea, and removed to the city. What she had treasured up besides, as also what food she had contrived to save, had been also carried off by the rapacious guards, who came every day running into her house for that purpose. **203**This put the poor woman into a very great passion, and by the frequent reproaches and imprecations she cast at these rapacious villains, she had provoked them to anger against her; **204**but none of them, either out of the indignation she had raised against herself, or out of commiseration of her case, would take away her life;

and if she found any food, she perceived her labors were for others, and not for herself; and it was now become impossible for her anyway to find any more food, while the famine pierced through her very bowels and marrow, when also her passion was fired to a degree beyond the famine itself; nor did she consult with anything but with her passion and the necessity she was in. She then attempted a most unnatural thing; **205**and snatching up her son, who was a child sucking at her breast, she said, "O thou miserable infant! for whom shall I preserve thee in this war, this famine, and this sedition? **206**As to the war with the Romans, if they preserve our lives, we must be slaves. This famine also will destroy us, even before that slavery comes upon us. Yet are these seditious rogues more terrible than both the other. **207**Come on; be thou my food, and be thou a fury to these seditious varlets, and a by-word to the world, which is all that is now wanting to complete the calamities of us Jews." **208**As soon as she had said this, she slew her son, and then roasted him, and ate the one half of him, and kept the other half by her concealed. **209**Upon this the seditious came in presently, and smelling the horrid scent of this food, they threatened her, that they would cut her throat immediately if she did not show them what food she had gotten ready. She replied that she had saved a very fine portion of it for them, and withal uncovered what was left of her son. **210**Here upon they were seized with a horror and amazement of mind, and stood astonished at the sight, when she said to them, "This is mine own son, and what hath been done was mine own doing! Come, eat of this food; for I have eaten of it myself! **211**Do not you pretend to be either more tender than a woman, or more compassionate than a mother; but if you be so scrupulous, and do abominate this my sacrifice, as I have eaten the one half, let the rest be reserved for me also." **212**After which those men went out trembling, being never so much affrighted at anything as they were at this, and with some difficulty they left the rest of that meat to the mother. Upon which the whole city was full of this horrid action immediately; and while everybody laid this miserable case before their own eyes, they trembled, as if

this unheard of action had been done by themselves. **213** So those that were thus distressed by the famine were very desirous to die, and those already dead were esteemed happy, because they had not lived long enough either to hear or to see such miseries.

The Wars of the Jews, 6.177–6.219 Flavius Josephus *translated by* William Whiston  
[http://lexundria.com/j\\_bj/6.177-6.219/wst](http://lexundria.com/j_bj/6.177-6.219/wst)

This is why unbelief is so damaging to man. Like Cain, a heart that is not surrendered to God disregards life. John witnessed all of this in his lifetime. He understood that people who walk so far away from God commit unconfessed sins leading to death. Yes, this involves the rejection of God's Holy Spirit.

Fallen man does not want to be judged. In the end, Satan will not willingly go into the lake of fire. In fact, death, hades and everyone who's name is not found in the book of life will be thrown into the lake of fire, not for annihilation, but to be in torment forever.

### **Revelation 20:10 -15.**

<sup>10</sup> And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they **will** be tormented day and night forever and ever.

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them.

<sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.

<sup>13</sup> And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one *of them* according to their deeds.

<sup>14</sup> Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

<sup>15</sup> And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:11-15 NAU)

## **SIN IS “SOOOOOO” BAD**

With the above scriptures in mind, we see John address sin and evil in 1 John 5:16. He talks about sin not leading to death and that Believers can make a prayer to God for that person and sins leading to death; “I do not say that he should make a request for this.”

These verses are perplexing. What is so bad or so evil that God allows for man not to pray for a sinner?

Is this part of God's judgement?

Is sin that bad?

Are some people too far gone, and God knows they are?

Are these the ones who have been turned over to their own desires?

The Christian world-view is that we all have a chance at salvation until the time we die a physical death. This is seen in the criminal on the cross beside Jesus. The criminal confessed and was saved. So, until the last breath, you have a chance of being saved and live an eternal life with God in His Heaven. Therefore, does the text John writes seem to contradict this teaching? Does "death" here in 1 John 5 mean the loss of temporal life or eternal life?

Sins leading to death are often and, rightfully so, attached to sins against the Holy Spirit which will not be forgiven (Matthew 12:31; Mark 3:28-30; Luke 12:10). Do we see this with Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1-10 and those in 1 Corinthians 11:30)?



It is logical that the word “death” appears here in the thought of an eternal existence due to the previous verse 5:13 talking about eternal life. Therefore, death here could be viewed as eternal, pointing to the next life being eternally separated from God. That would be a state of death.

The fate of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1-10 and of those who participated in the Lord’s Supper (1 Corinthians 11:30) in an unworthy manner because they did not confess their sins by not examining themselves – verse 11:28 and therefore went to sleep, appear to have lost their earthly life. However, they may have still been admitted to God’s Heaven due to their faith. Even though they sinned gravely and grieved the Holy Spirit, they did not lose their salvation, because salvation is a promised possession in the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13) for Believers.

The accounts of Ananias and Sapphira, and those taking the Lord’s Supper inappropriately, chronicle that these did not confess their sins, whereas David did (2 Samuel 12:13). This leaves a question that only God can answer. Instead of Ananias and Sapphira admitting their wrong, they lied to Peter, and, as Peter said, they really lied to God. When people appear to be sinning against us, they are really sinning against God, and we should not take their actions and statement

personally. Unconfessed sin leads to physical death and can lead to eternal death which is separation from God and His Heaven for an eternity. The fate of Ananias and Saphira, along with those taking the Lord's Supper inappropriately, is known. They lost their earthly life. It is God's sovereign authority to place them for an eternity. However, we see those in John 6:64-66 who walked away because they had no real faith in Jesus, and Jesus knew who they were from the beginning as being identified as those who rejected the Messiahship of the incarnate God. Therefore, these received physical and eternal death.

## SINS LEADING TO DEATH, AND PRAYER

### 1 John 5:16,17

<sup>16</sup> If anyone sees his brother committing a sin  
not *leading to death*                      Leviticus 4:2,22,27 – unintentional sin?  
he shall ask [prayer]                      Numbers 15:22-29  
and God's will for him  
give life to those who commit sin not *leading to death*.

There is a *sin leading to death*;  
[Un-Belief Exodus 31:14,15; Numbers 15:30, 32-36]  
I do not say that he should make request for this.                      Jer. 7:16

<sup>17</sup> All unrighteousness is sin,  
and there is a sin not *leading to death*.

There are many in the Old Testament that lost their earthly life. Aaron, whose golden calf and grumbling against Moses' wife, was

taken by God the third time. He gravely sinned when he, along with Moses, struck the rock for water instead of speaking to the rock (Numbers 20). King Saul gravely sinned and lost his life in battle as God had withdrawn his mantle from him (1 Samuel 31). The people of Sodom and Gomorrah, save Lot and his family, sinned severely, and God destroyed their whole town. The list could continue. There is sin that leads to death. In fact, God told Adam that if he ate from the forbidden tree he would die (Genesis 2:17). Therefore, all sin eventually leads to death. We only have life when we surrender to God and our spirit, our heart, is regenerated. However, as we have seen, some sin is so grave that we can lose our earthly lives early. And some sin is so profane that God purposely refuses to hear from the offenders, as we see in Jeremiah and Isaiah.

One of the keys to understanding this text of Scripture is tied to “**he shall ask.**” In other words, “**he shall pray.**” Part of the forgiveness process can include others praying for us to confess our sins. And, conversely, we pray for others to confess their sins. We pray every Lord’s Day for lost people to surrender to the Lord. It shall be noted that we are to pray for others to confess their sins, but it is their decision or choice to respond to the Holy Spirit’s prompting (conviction) to actually receive forgiveness from the Lord and thus salvation. We have no power to forgive. We are used as instruments of

God, like Peter, and the other apostles, who bound and loosed sin. Once confessed, we, like the apostles, can announce to a person that they are forgiven, “sin loosed” (Matthew 18:18). We are used as God’s assurance to witness to a person whose heart has surrendered to God that they are forgiven. A good example of this is found when David confessed with his own words after God’s prophet Nathan confronted him (2 Samuel 12:5-13).

<sup>13</sup> Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die.

Here Nathan tells David the Lord has taken away your sins. But there were consequences (2 Samuel 12:10-12).

<sup>10</sup> 'Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' <sup>11</sup> "Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes, and give *them* to your companion, and he shall lie with your wives in broad daylight. <sup>12</sup> 'Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.'"

The most dreadful consequence was that the child born from Bathsheba died. David sinned gravely. David murdered and took another man's wife. He responded to Nathan that the man who did this deserves to die. David knew his sin led to death.

## 2 Samuel 12:5-7

<sup>5</sup> Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die. <sup>6</sup> "He must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion." <sup>7</sup> Nathan then said to David, "You are the man

David confessed and did not die; he lived. David not only continued to live his earthly life, but he lives eternally with the Lord. However, the child born from Bathsheba and David died. Unfortunately, the infant died due to David's sin. Many children throughout history have lost their lives due to their parent's sin. It is noted that God, as Jesus, claims the children in Mark 10:13-16. Again, the lesson here is that David was confronted with his sin, confessed and lived and lives eternally with God in Heaven.

In addition, it is noted that God will give life to those committing sins **not** leading to death (1 John 5:16). This means that God forgives and gives life. A sin not leading to death is a confessed sin. Therefore, they continue living in this life. And they live eternally, because they live a confessional life as John outlined for Believers in 1 John 1. If we go to the Lord with our confessions, He is faithful to forgive us.

Lord's Supper in a worthy manner brings life,  
but taken in an unworthy manner brings death.

### 1 Corinthians 11:20-32

<sup>20</sup> Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper,  
<sup>21</sup> for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk.

<sup>22</sup> What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you.

<sup>23</sup> For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread;  
<sup>24</sup> and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

<sup>25</sup> In the same way *He took* the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me."

<sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

<sup>27</sup> Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.

<sup>28</sup> But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

<sup>29</sup> For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly.

<sup>30</sup> For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.

<sup>31</sup> But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged.

<sup>32</sup> But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world.

