



1 John 3:1 -

S/ John marveled at God's **love** because of its effect—sinners can be called **God's children**. - CSB Study Bible: Notes

S/ God's love for us is unique. First John 3:1 may be translated, "Behold, what peculiar, out-of-this-world kind of love the Father has bestowed on us." While we were *His enemies* God loved us and sent His Son to die for us! The whole wonderful plan of salvation begins with the love of God. - Warren Wiersbe

S/ **Love the Father has given to us** God demonstrates His love by allowing the community (and all true believers) to be known as His children. **Children of God** Refers to membership in God's spiritual family (compare John 1:12). Paul uses similar terminology, including adoption into God's family (see Rom 8:15; Gal 4:5). - Faithlife Study Bible

S/ Having introduced the idea that believers are the children of God, John is reminded of the wondrous nature of God's love by which we are granted this privilege. The NIV loses something of the significance in the original by failing to translate the imperative "see" or "behold" (*idete*). In a more accurate translation, the NASB reads, "See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us." The imperative calls for direct attention and reflection upon the amazing love God has bestowed upon his children. The adjective *potapēn* translated "how great" (NIV) or "what manner" (KJV), which occurs only seven times in the New Testament, always implies astonishment. Admiration is usually conveyed as well.³²⁹ Being a child of God stirs within John a sense of wonder, awe, and amazement. The expression carries both a qualitative and quantitative force, "what glorious, measureless love." Originally, the adjective meant "of what country." Stott captures this original sense when he writes, "The Father's love is so unearthly, so foreign to

this world, that [John] wonders from what country it may come.”³³¹ God’s love is foreign to humankind in that we cannot understand the magnitude of such love. It astonishes, amazes, and creates wonder within those who properly reflect upon it. - *The New American Commentary*

S/ The perception to which John invited his readers is, however, lost on the world. Since the **world...did not know Him** (God or Christ), it can hardly be expected to recognize believers as His children. This kind of discernment about others is a distinctly Christian perception - *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament Edition*

1 John 3:2 -

S/ First John 3:1 tells us *what we are* and 1 John 3:2 tells us *what we shall be*. The reference here, of course, is to the time of Christ’s coming for His church. This was mentioned in 1 John 2:28 as an incentive for holy living, and now it is repeated.

God’s love for us does not stop with the new birth. It continues throughout our lives and takes us right up to the return of Jesus Christ! When our Lord appears, all true believers will see Him and will become like Him (Phil. 3:20–21). This means, of course, that they will have new, glorified bodies, suited to heaven. - Warren Wiersbe

S/ **Has not yet been revealed** God’s full plans for a person’s life are unknown, especially in terms of the transformation he will offer believers upon Jesus’ return. **Whenever he is revealed we will be like him** On the day that Jesus returns, a full transformation of believers will take place, though John admits that no one knows what this will look like. John likely is drawing on the imagery of new creation, as well as the idea that God’s image is restored in a person through the saving work of Jesus (Rev 21; 2 Cor 3:18; 5:17; compare Rom 8:29 and note). - Faithlife Study Bible

S/ The NIV translates John’s personal address *agapētoi* as “dear friends.” The better rendering is “beloved,” which emphasizes the bonding love of the Father for his children. By using the first person “we,” John also identifies himself with them as one of the beloved of God. John has an intense love for his readers because of their shared love in the Father. Smalley points out that John puts into practice “his own ethical demand of love within the

brotherhood” (2:9–11; 3:11–17; 4:7–12).

The writer’s use of *nun* (“now”) and *oupō* (“not yet”) uncovers a stark contrast between the present and the future, the known and the unknown. On the one hand, John wants to accentuate the fact that we are the children of God here and now. At the same time, the full extent of what we will be has yet to be revealed. Although our present status as children of God is wonderful, our future state will be even more extraordinary. God has only begun a work in us that will not reach full fruition until the “not yet” has been fulfilled. John’s “apostolic confession of ignorance” affirms that the exact nature and state of the children of God after Christ’s return has not been revealed to him. It will be disclosed only when he appears. “What we shall be” (*ti esometha*) remains veiled from our sight until his coming. Wild speculation and guesswork are futile and should be avoided. - *The New American Commentary*

1 John 3:3 -

S/ Knowing that the Lord will return is a strong incentive for believers to live in ways that are pleasing to him. - CSB Study Bible: Notes

S/ Now, in 1 John 3:3, he tells us *what we should be*. In view of the return of Jesus Christ, we should keep our lives clean.

All this is to remind us of the Father’s love. Because the Father loved us and sent His Son to die for us, we are children of God. Because God loves us, He wants us to live with Him one day. Salvation, from start to finish, is an expression of the love of God. We are saved by the *grace* of God (Eph. 2:8–9; Titus 2:11–15), but the provision for our salvation was originated in the love of God. And since we have experienced the love of the Father, we have no desire to live in sin. - Warren Wiersbe

S/ The verb translated *purifies* (ἀγνίζω, *hagnizō*) is somewhat unusual here, since it is not common in the NT, and occurs only once in the Gospel of John (11:55). One might wonder why the author did not use the more common verb ἀγιάζω (*hagiazō*), as in John 17:19, where Jesus prays, “On their behalf I consecrate myself, so that they may also be consecrated in the truth.” It is possible that there is some overlap between the two verbs and thus this is another example of Johannine stylistic variation, but the verb ἀγνίζω is used in the context of John 11:55, which describes ritual purification for the

Passover, a usage also found in the LXX (Exod 19:10–11, Num 8:21). In this context the use of ἀγνίζω would remind the readers that, if they have the future hope of entering the Father’s presence (“seeing him as he is” in 3:2), they need to prepare themselves by living a purified lifestyle now, just as Jesus lived during his earthly life and ministry (cf. 2:6 again). This serves to rebut the opponents’ claims to moral indifference, that what the Christian does in the present life is of no consequence. - The NET Bible First Edition Notes

S/ Purifies himself John is referring to the active role that a Christian plays in the effort to overcome sin, but his statement also points to ultimate reliance on Christ, the Pure One, to accomplish this effort. - Faithlife Study Bible

S/ Now John reveals his reason for writing about the second coming of Christ. Our final state has an ethical and moral component for the present. With the use of the initial conjunction *kai* (absent in the NIV), John joins his previous eschatological thoughts with a moral, practical conclusion. There are practical implications associated with living the life of hope. Being born of God creates a vibrant hope for the future, one that motivates pure living in everyday life.

John’s use of “everyone who” (*pas ho*) seems to dismiss “the claims of some party or other who claimed special privileges or exemptions for themselves.”³⁵⁴ In this context John’s inclusion defuses the proto-Gnostics who regarded themselves above any moral standard. Their life of sin exposed the falsity of their profession. John makes it clear that the possession of hope produces purity. There is no exception to the rule.

The hope (*tēn elpida*) John describes includes three primary factors: Christ’s appearing, the believer’s seeing him, and the believer’s becoming as he is. Defined in its New Testament context, hope involves a confident expectation of the future, a trust in God’s provision, and the patience of waiting for him.³⁵⁶ Our hope is founded upon Christ. There is nothing within the believer that creates hope and security for the future. The foundation for hope, now and forever, is Christ alone. - *The New American Commentary*

1 John 3:4 -

S/ Sin is a grave matter because God has revealed his moral character in his holy law, and **sin is lawlessness**. It is a personal offense against God. - CSB

Study Bible: Notes

- S/** There are several definitions of sin in the Bible: “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Rom. 14:23). “The thought of foolishness is sin” (Prov. 24:9). “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (James 4:17). “All unrighteousness is sin” (1 John 5:17). But John’s epistle defines sin as *lawlessness* (1 John 3:4). It views sin as *defilement* (1 John 1:9–2:2), but here it views it as *defiance*. The emphasis here is not on sins (plural), but on *sin* (singular): “Whosoever *practices sin.*” *Sins* are the fruit, but *sin* is the root. - Warren Wiersbe
- S/** The Greek word ἀνομία (*anomia*) is often translated “iniquity” or “lawlessness” and in the LXX refers particularly to transgression of the law of Moses. In Jewish thought the ideas of sin (ἁμαρτία, *hamartia*) and lawlessness or iniquity (ἀνομία) were often equated because sin involved a violation of the Mosaic law and hence lawlessness. For example, Ps 51:5 LXX sets the two in parallel, and Paul in Rom 4:7 (quoting Ps 32:1) does the same. For the author, it is not violation of the Mosaic law that results in lawlessness, since he is writing to Christians. The ‘law’ for the author is the law of love, as given by Jesus in the new commandment of John 13:34–35. This is the command to love one’s brother, a major theme of 1 John and the one specific sin in the entire letter which the opponents are charged with (3:17). Since the author has already labeled the opponents “antichrists” in 2:18, it may well be that he sees in their iniquitous behavior of withdrawing from the community and refusing to love the brethren a foreshadowing of the apocalyptic iniquity of the end times (cf. 2 Thess 2:3–8). In Matt 24:11–12 Jesus foretold that false prophets would arise in the end times (cf. 1 John 4:1), that lawlessness (*anomia*) would increase, and that “the love of many will grow cold” (which would certainly fit the author’s portrait of the opponents here). - The NET Bible First Edition Notes
- S/** John’s terminology parallels Paul’s use of the term man of lawlessness, to speak of an adversary to Christ. If this parallel in language reflects common terminology between Paul and John, then John’s intention is to once again distinguish between those in communion with God and those who are not (2 Thess 2:1–12). John makes this distinction not just on the basis of proclamation of Jesus as eternal God in the flesh, although that is important,

but also on the basis of practicing the principles of Jesus. - Faithlife Study Bible

S/ As in the previous verse, John uses the all-inclusive *pas* (“Everyone”) to accentuate that there is no elite group that is above God’s moral standards. While those who had left the church thought themselves to be above accountability, John emphasizes that no one is excluded from the following rule: literally, “Everyone doing [*poiōn*, a present tense participle] sin [*tēn hamartian*] also does [*poiei*, present tense indicative] lawlessness [*anomia*].” This truth is universal. There are no exceptions. John makes an obvious contrast between this construction (*pas ho poiōn tēn hamartian*, “everyone who practices sin” [NASB]) and the expression in 2:29 (*pas ho poiōn tēn dikaiosunēn*, “everyone who practices righteousness” [NASB]). Not only does the child of God live a life marked by righteousness (2:29) and purity (3:3), but he abstains from a life characterized by the practice of sin. The word *poiōn* is used frequently in this section (vv. 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10) to imply a continual practice of sin as well as a realization of sin’s completeness. In other words, it is a willful, habitual action. - *The New American Commentary*

S/ John now wrote about sin which stands in opposition to the purity he had just referred to in verse 3...A person who sins does what is wicked, and sin is wickedness, John was insisting. (Lit., the first clause in v. 4 is, “Everyone who commits wickedness.”) Sin must not be taken lightly. - *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament Edition*

1 John 3:5 -

S/ Verses 4 and 6 are veiled imperatives that warn by negative examples how John’s readers are not to conduct themselves. Verse 5 is the indicative that grounds the imperatives. The purpose of the incarnation was to **take away sins**. John’s statement affirms the sinlessness of Jesus (see 2Co 5:21; Heb 4:15). - CSB Study Bible: Notes

S/ The context makes it clear that this is a reference to Jesus, because the reader is told “he was revealed in order that he might take away sins.” The connection with Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world in John 1:29 provides additional confirmation that the previous use of

ἐκεῖνος (*ekeinos*) in 3:3b should also be understood as a reference to Jesus, as 2:6 was. - The NET Bible First Edition Notes

S/ John offers an added reason why the child of God is to strive to live without sin—the person and work of Christ. The apostle appeals to the common knowledge his readers possess by virtue of the spiritual “anointing” they have received (cf. 2:27). Implicit in this appeal to his hearers’ basic Christian knowledge is an encouragement for them to conform their lives to the truth they already know. - *The New American Commentary*

S/

1 John 3:6 -

S/ The interpretive problem raised by the use of the present tense ἁμαρτάνει (*hamartanei*) in this verse (and ποιεῖ [*poiēi*] in 3:9 as well) is that (a) it appears to teach a sinless state of perfection for the true Christian, and (b) it appears to contradict the author’s own statements in 2:1–2 where he acknowledged that Christians do indeed sin. (1) One widely used method of reconciling the acknowledgment in 2:1–2 that Christians do sin with the statements in 3:6 and 3:9 that they do not is expressed by M. Zerwick (*“Biblical Greek”* §251). He understands the aorist to mean “commit sin in the concrete, commit some sin or other” while the present means “be a sinner, as a characteristic «state».” N. Turner (*Grammatical Insights*, 151) argues essentially the same as Zerwick, stating that the present tense ἁμαρτάνει is stative (be a sinner) while the aorist is ingressive (begin to be a sinner, as the initial step of committing this or that sin). Similar interpretations can be found in a number of grammatical works and commentaries. (2) Others, however, have questioned the view that the distinction in tenses alone can convey a “habitual” meaning without further contextual clarification, including C. H. Dodd (*The Johannine Epistles* [MNTC], 79) and Z. C. Hodges (“1 John,” *BKCNT*, 894). B. Fanning (*Verbal Aspect* [OTM], 215–17) has concluded that the habitual meaning for the present tense cannot be ruled out, because there are clear instances of habitual presents in the NT where other clarifying words are not present and the habitual sense is derived from the context alone. This means that from a grammatical standpoint alone, the habitual present cannot be ruled out in 1 John 3:6 and 9. It is still true, however, that it would have been much clearer

if the author had reinforced the habitual sense with clarifying words or phrases in 1 John 3:6 and 9 if that is what he had intended. Dodd's point, that reliance on the distinction in tenses alone is quite a subtle way of communicating such a vital point in the author's argument, is still valid. It may also be added that the author of 1 John has demonstrated a propensity for alternating between present and aorist tenses for purely stylistic reasons (see 2:12). - The NET Bible First Edition Notes

S/ John seems to be arguing against those who use God's grace as an excuse for sinful behavior (compare Rom 6:1–11). It may be that John's opponents viewed salvation as something spiritual only that gave them permission to go on living a sinful life. - Faithlife Study Bible

S/ Verse 6 is a natural deduction from the previous verse. Since Christ came to take away sin, since there is no sin in him, and since the believer is to pattern his life after Christ, it is obviously true that the one who remains in him will not live a life of sin. As a matter of fact, John asserts that the one abiding in Christ cannot, that is, it is an absolute impossibility, to "keep on sinning." As before, John utilizes the all-inclusive *pas ho* ("everyone who"). This time, however, it is connected with a negative (*ouk*), which combines to give the universal negative "no one."

The apostle distinguishes between two groups in this verse. The first class is characterized by their abiding relationship with Christ (*en autou*). For this group abiding in Christ is the grounds for their abstinence from sin.

John's affirmation that "no one who lives ["abides, remains"] in him keeps on sinning" has been the center of much debate. What is John proposing here? Is the apostle suggesting that a believer does not commit acts of sin? What about his earlier statements that Christians do sin (1:8, 10; 2:1–2)? How can this statement be balanced with these earlier assertions? Is John contradicting himself? These are all legitimate questions the serious biblical exegete must seek to answer.

Although numerous suggestions have been offered, and none is completely satisfying, the most reasonable still seems to center on John's use of the present tense verb. John is not suggesting that the child of God will not commit a single act of sin. Instead, John is describing a way of life, a character, a prevailing lifestyle. Here the present tense verb contextually depicts linear, continual action. In other words, the believer will not live a life characterized by sin. From John's earlier statements it is obvious that the

Christian, while enjoying a position or standing of sinlessness through identification with Christ, will sin on occasion and will need to seek God's forgiveness (1:9; 2:1–2). But what is also apparent from John's writings is that a genuine believer will not live in continual sin. As D. Smith writes, "The believer may fall into sin but he will not walk in it." - *The New American Commentary*

S/ Sin can never come out of seeing and knowing God. It can never be a part of the experience of abiding in Christ. "No one who abides in Him sins" (v. 6a). But though the meaning of this is not really open to question, there has seemed to be an inconsistency between such assertions and John's earlier insistence that a believer can never claim to be without sin (1:8). The solution to this problem has been suggested by the statement in 3:3 in which the purification of the one "who has this hope in Him" is comparable in its nature to the purity of Christ ("just as He is pure"). From this it follows that the regenerate life is, in one sense, an essentially and fundamentally sinless life. For the believer sin is abnormal and unnatural; his whole bent of life is away from sin.

The fact remains, however, that Christians do not experience the sinless life perfectly on this earth; hence 1:8, 10 remain true. The two ideas are not really incompatible. The Christian still experiences a genuine struggle with the flesh and overcomes its impulses only by the help of the Holy Spirit (cf. Gal. 5:16-26). - *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament Edition*

1 John 3:7 -

S/ The logic here is clear: if a man knows God, he will obey God; if he belongs to the devil, he will obey the devil.

John accepts the reality of a personal devil. This enemy has many different names in Scripture: Satan (adversary, enemy), the devil (accuser), Abaddon or Apollyon (destroyer), the prince of this world, the dragon, etc. Whatever name you call him, keep in mind that his chief activity is to oppose Christ and God's people.

The contrast here is between Christ (who has no sin, 1 John 3:5) and the devil (who can do nothing but sin). - Warren Wiersbe

S/ John's tender affection for his readers (*teknia*) causes him to remind them of the peril of their situation. As God's children they are to be on guard against

those who want to lead them astray. The present imperative (*planatō*) carries the idea of “Let no one engage in deceiving you, i.e., even try it!” Historically, the reference is to the false teachers who have attempted both doctrinal deception (2:26) and moral deception. As Stott points out, the subject of this deceit appears to center around the false teaching that one “could ‘be’ righteous without necessarily bothering to ‘practice’ righteousness.” Bruce explains, “The false teachers with their sophistry were capable not merely of condoning sin, but of making it seem virtuous.”³⁷⁷ John’s warning has been relevant throughout the history of the church until our own day.

The apostle’s words of caution include a moral criterion for the professing believer: “He who does what is right is righteous” (*ho poiōn tēn dikaiosunēn dikaios estin*). Hiebert asserts: “The present tense participle makes clear that the test is not the performance of an occasional righteous deed but rather the habitual practice of ‘righteousness.’” Furthermore, “the righteousness” (*tēn dikaiosunēn*) indicates that a particular righteousness is in view. It emphasizes the completeness and unity of this righteous quality. Obviously the reference is to that righteousness that is characteristic of Christ. It is a distinguishing trait of God’s family and is a product of regeneration. Notice that the practice of righteousness is not what makes the individual “righteous” (*dikaios*), but it reveals the inner nature of the one who is practicing righteousness. One practices righteousness because of his righteous character. “By their fruit you will recognize them” (Matt 7:16). The individual’s conduct is certain evidence of his nature. The one who practices righteousness does so because he has been granted the righteousness of God. In this sense John’s regeneration language parallels the New Testament concept of justification. The believer does right because he possesses the imputed righteousness of Christ. - *The New American Commentary*

S/

1 John 3:8 -

S/ 1 John 3:10 and John 8:44 might be cited as parallels, because these speak of opponents as the devil’s “children.” However, it is significant that the author of 1 John never speaks of the opponents as “fathered by the devil” in the same sense as Christians are “fathered by God” (3:9). A concept of evildoers as “fathered” by the devil in the same sense as Christians are fathered by God would imply a much more fully developed Gnosticism with its dualistic

approach to humanity. The author of 1 John carefully avoids saying that the opponents are “fathered by the devil,” because in Johannine theology not to be fathered by God is to be fathered only by the flesh (John 1:13). This is a significant piece of evidence that 1 John predates the more fully developed Gnosticism of the 2nd century. What the author *does* say is that the opponents (“the one who practices sin”) are *from* the devil, in the sense that they belong to him and have given him their allegiance. - The NET Bible First Edition Notes

S/ A person who sins stands in opposition to God’s plan and thus follows evil plans. The person who continually chooses to sin aligns with the work of the devil, not with Christ’s work (compare note on John 8:44; note on 1 John 2:19). John is not suggesting that the devil possesses people when they sin; rather, he means that opposition to God gives evil room to operate. It seems that one of John’s primary concerns is addressing false teaching that suggests sinning is acceptable because of Christ’s work—a position he refutes in this passage. Engaging in sin inhibits Christ’s work and aligns a person with the devil’s will rather than the will of Christ, making them one (at least for that time) with the devil and his work. Like Paul, John believes that people who come to faith should live in freedom from sin rather than align themselves with it (Rom 6:1–7). Sin itself is advocated for by the devil because it destroys the relationship between God and humanity. When God became flesh in Jesus, and offered salvation to the world, He removed the stronghold sin had on humanity (compare Rom 6:22; Heb 2:14). - Faithlife Study Bible

S/ For the first time in the epistle John refers, specifically and directly, to the devil (cf. 3:12; 2:13–14; 5:18–19). John now contrasts the one who practices righteousness and is of Christ with the one who does what is sinful and is of the devil. As Thomas emphasizes, “The parallel clauses show the sharp contrast in the conduct and character of two classes of man. The former clause pictures a man whose righteous character underlies his righteous deeds.... The latter clause pictures a man whose sinful conduct and character find their source in the devil.” In essence, both reflect the nature of their masters. The preposition “of” (*ek*) speaks of the source of this habitual sinfulness, that is, the devil (*tou diabolou*). Satan is the source, the spiritual father (John 8:44), of the one who continually practices sin. John uses the word “devil”

four times in his epistle, all in this section (3:8, 10). The name means “slanderer” or “accuser.” He instigates sin, and those who live in sin are his children. He stands as the direct opponent of God and righteousness. The further comment, “for the devil has been sinning from the beginning,” identifies the devil as the originator of sin. The progressive present tense of the verb *hamartanei* depicts sin as continuous and ongoing. For the devil and his children, sin is a ceaseless way of life. - *The New American Commentary*

1 John 3:9 -

S/ The Holy Spirit has a transformative power in the life of a believer, so by necessity, if it is at work in a person, they will be changed for the better. John argues that if this change is lacking in the life of someone, then there is a clear sign that they do not truly know God. Later in the letter John discusses the presence of God’s Spirit as proof of a true believer (compare John 17; see 1 John 3:24; 4:1–4). - Faithlife Study Bible

S/ John returns to the concept that the child of God will behave in a manner that is similar to his Father’s nature. The one who is “born of God” will not continue in sin. The perfect participle (*gegennēmenos*) implies not only a single past act of spiritual new birth but also the ongoing effects of being born of God. It is the one who has been born of God and continues to abide in Christ who is a child of God. Once again the apostle expresses a universal declaration (*pas*, “everyone”) that allows no exceptions to the rule: “No one who is born of God will continue to sin.” John’s word order (*pas ho gegennēmenos ek tou theou hamartian ou poiēi*, lit., “everyone having been born from God sin not is doing”) puts emphasis on the phrase “born of God.” Westcott notes the importance of this order by affirming that the child of God “cannot sin, because it is of God, and of no other that he hath been born.” Because the child is born of God, he does not practice sin. This concept is a restatement of v. 6, where “abiding in Christ” explains one’s abstinence from sin. Here the indicated source of power over sin is the regenerating power of God. John’s point is clear: there is not a single regenerated person who lives a life of habitual sin. As in v. 6, the writer’s use of the present tense accentuates that the child of God does not continually engage in sin. John is not suggesting the believer is completely free from sin, but that the Christian’s life is not characterized by sin, which is the mark of the follower of Satan, who has been sinning from the beginning

(v. 8). The child of God does not behave in a manner that has the nature or character of sin.

The two conjunctions (*hoti ... hoti*) translated “because” both times reveal the two reasons for the incompatibility of sin and the child of God. First, the believer does not sin because “God’s [lit. “his”] seed remains in him (*hoti sperma autou en auto meui*). The indwelling “seed” enables and motivates the sin-free living of the child of God. The metaphorical designation “his seed,” which appears only here in John’s writings, is variously interpreted. Some interpret it as the Word of God, the regenerating agent that produces new birth (cf. Jas 1:18; 1 Pet 1:23–25). Others designate it as the divine nature or principle of life, which is implanted by God in the believer. Some understand the seed to denote God’s offspring, that is, his children collectively. Still others identify the seed as the Holy Spirit (John 3:5–8). Smalley attempts to combine the two concepts of “Word” and “Spirit.” He understands *sperma* to mean “the word of God which is received in faith by the Christian, and which (through the inward activity of the Spirit) leads to rebirth, and the experience of increasing holiness by living in Jesus.” Through both the Word and the Spirit, the Christian is born of God and enabled to live like Christ. This is an attractive option, but the natural parallelism with human reproduction is too strong. The believer cannot continue in sin because of the divine life that has been implanted through the new birth. A new nature, a divine nature, has been imparted to the believer. The life of God is now his life, and a life of sin is simply no longer possible. - *The New American Commentary*

1 John 3:10 -

S/ The theme of loving one’s fellow Christian appears in the final clause of 3:10 because it provides the transition to the second major section of 1 John, 3:11–5:12, and specifically to the following section 3:11–24. The theme of love will dominate the second major section of the letter (see 1 John 4:8). - The NET Bible First Edition Notes

S/ John pointed out that the person who made a practice of sinning had never known Christ. In verse 9 he indicated that the experience of a believer in conversion rendered the practice of sin a moral impossibility. John was not suggesting that a Christian will never commit an act of sin. He did indicate that a believer could not live in the practice of sin.

The conclusion in verse 10 pointed out the importance of righteous behavior and also underscored the significance of loving other believers. It makes a good transition from discussion of right action to another presentation of the proper attitude, an attitude of love. - David S. Dockery

S/ John summarizes his argument from chapter two: those whose lives characterized by love and obedience are identified as God's children and enjoy His fellowship. Those who proclaim a false religion do not have the characteristics that come from a life of love and obedience.

Children of the devil People who condone sin are in essence following the devil's leadership. John seems to be cautioning his audience about the dangers of excusing sin. Doing so makes a person's life under the jurisdiction of the devil—not God.

In John's worldview, people are either with God or against Him. Opposing God results in affiliation with the devil's work—since all other work belongs to the devil (see note on 2:19; note on v. 8; compare note on John 14:6).

John is not suggesting that believers should break all ties with unbelievers; rather, he is issuing a stern warning against the teachings of those who have left the community (see 1 John 2:18–27). Similarly, in Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he addresses the danger of believers who excuse sin within their communities (see note on 1 Cor 5:5; note on 2 Cor 6:14). - Faithlife Study Bible.

S/ This verse serves as both a summary and conclusion of what has gone before and a transition to what follows. Opinion is divided as to the antecedent of the phrase "by this" (*en toutō*). Some believe it refers to what precedes. Others see it as a transition to what follows,³⁹³ and still others suggest it refers to both what precedes and what follows. John uses the pronoun both ways in his epistle. Burdick points out, "It makes little difference since both the preceding and the following context speak of the same fact: the family of God is marked by the practice of righteousness."³⁹⁵ What is crucial to John's transition is the identification of the members of two opposing families: the children of God and the children of the devil. This verse brings to a conclusion John's discussion in vv. 4–10 concerning the identifiable nature of the child of God. John reaffirms that both the child of God and the child of the devil can be identified by what they do. There are only two classes of people in John's diagnosis—those who are children of God and those who are children of the devil. John knows of no intermediate

group. Sharp lines are drawn between those who practice sin and those who practice righteousness. One is fathered by the devil, and the other is fathered by God.

The apostle's twofold criterion for distinguishing the children of God and the children of Satan is stated negatively. First, "anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God" (*pas ho mē poiōn dikaiosunēn ouk estin ek tou theou*).

The absence of righteous character, as revealed by one's continual unrighteous conduct, indicates that the individual is not a child of God.

Moral conduct is a test of one's spiritual heritage.

Second, "anyone who does not love his brother" (*hō mē agapōn ton adelphon autou*) is not a child of God. This last phrase provides a transition to the theme of love that will dominate the second major section of the epistle (3:11–5:12), but it is not to be separated from its immediate application. As Plummer notes, "Love is righteousness in relation to others." John's vertical-horizontal theme resurfaces. One who has been born of God treats his fellow brothers and sisters as family members. There is a common bond of love. Two of the apostle's major themes (righteousness and love) are joined together as evidence of the new birth. Those who fail to practice righteousness and/or neglect to love other Christians are not of the same spiritual heritage as the child of God. The family of God is marked by the practice of righteousness and love. - *The New American Commentary*