

## **1:10 If we say that we have not sinned,**

John is warning us against an attitude toward sin that any believer, including him, could fall into and thereby do harm to their fellowship with God. This is the kind of claim that might be made by one who admits to a sin nature, but sees it as no longer affecting them. This person claims that there remains nothing to confess.

### **we make Him a liar**

When we come to Christ by faith and trust Him to forgive and cleanse us of all our sin, we are in that moment born again, according to John 3:3, and this new birth of the spirit results in a new creation according to 2 Corinthians 5:17. But, we still live in the flesh, and the flesh cannot be regenerated, only put to death, crucified, because all it does is wants what it wants (Romans 7:21–25). Battles with temptation are won or lost based upon how fully we are surrendered to the control of the Holy Spirit **Galatians 5:16–17 16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17 For the desire of the flesh is against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, in order to keep you from doing whatever you want.**

The book of 1 John was written to Christians. Since 1 John 1:8-9 says **“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.** Then it’s clear that even those who have been born again, and redeemed by the blood of Jesus will still sin.

But a sinful lifestyle is an indicator of self-deception regarding salvation. Later in 1st John 3:6, we’re going to read **“No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.”** Verse 9 says that those who have been “born of God” will not continue to live sinfully. A sinful lifestyle is incompatible with the New Life in Christ. Overcoming sin is not a matter of trying harder, but rather surrendering more to the Holy Spirit, and letting Him lead, and overcome through us!

If we were to claim that we are now sinless in the sense that we’ve reached perfection, have no struggle with the flesh, and are incapable of committing sin, then we would be calling God a liar. It’s one thing to be self-deceived, but it’s another thing to say that God, who cannot be deceived, is dishonest about our spiritual condition, falsely accusing us of sin. That’s a big deal. That is unbelief. Remember that faith is all about believing that God is who He says that He is, and that He can be trusted, and taken at His Word. We see many examples of the swift consequences of disbelief that God is Who He says that He is. In John 5:18 when the Jewish leadership are accusing him of sin because He healed the man who had been ill for 38 years at the Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath. Look at the result of unbelief in the hearts of the Pharisees in verse 18: **18 For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.** So, although the Truth was revealed to them, their unbelief caused Truth to produce hatred in their hearts toward God. We see this in John 8:45-47 **45 But because I say the truth, you do not believe Me. 46 Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me? 47 The one who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God.”** The self-righteous, who tend to think that they already have the inside track. The religious leaders of Jesus time are so blind to the truth, that they continually accuse Jesus: see John 8:48-59, Look at the judgement of unbelief: Jesus often meets unbelief with an even harder truth to accept about Himself. (see John 8:51-53, etc.). And He just kept giving them hard teachings,

filled with greater Truth, saying in verse 56: **56 Your father Abraham was overjoyed that he would see My day, and he saw it and rejoiced.** 57 So the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and You have seen Abraham?” 58 Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM.” With that statement, saying not only that he was before Abraham, but that He is the I AM. Why is this so significant to our study today? Because the same Jesus who these Jewish leaders are making all these false accusations of is letting them know in no uncertain terms that He is God. So we can see the effect of this self-righteous delusion, and this desire to glorify ourselves, and lead ourselves to destruction. They had come to the point that they wouldn’t recognize God when He was standing before them, but instead chose to fully commit themselves to their religious self-righteousness, then Jesus left them in their sins. It’s not a place that anyone should want to be. This denial of the character of God is serious. When a person gets to the point of completely impugning the Character of God, and rejecting His Goodness and Righteousness in favor of their own, they are on much more dangerous ground.

**and His word is not in us.**

God’s Word is not impacting the person’s life. They are ignoring God’s Word, and refusing to let it influence them in their conduct of life. John literally says that God’s Word is not in us. So, he’s saying that God’s Word is not abiding in the person who denies sin. But the necessity of abiding, was taught by Jesus said in John 15:4 **4 Remain in Me, and I in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself but must remain in the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in Me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches; the one who remains in Me, and I in him bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not remain in Me, he is thrown away like a branch and dries up; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.** Abiding in Jesus means that we have a desire to know Him better and to get closer to Him in relationship, and to allow His presence and His Word to influence us. The believer who denies a need to confess sins is not thinking truthfully, and is drifting farther from the truth in their self-deception, and missing out on the cleansing power of God’s Word. Ephesians 5:26 **26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,** This puts them in danger of drifting so far that they begin to doubt God’s character.

When we come to God and admit to our guilt for specific sins, He promises to forgive them. We know they are forgiven on the basis of Jesus’ shed blood—His finished work on the cross. And by agreeing with God that sin is sin, and that we have sinned, there is a change made in our heart. And it’s this repentance of sin, based on a desire to remain in close relationship with Him, and get closer to him that conforms us more into His image, and this cooperation with the Holy Spirit’s sanctifying work in us that makes all the difference in our hearts. So, agree with God that your sins are sins. Then repent of the sin, turning away from it, and turning toward God to follow Him in the light, just as He is in the light. Then confess to God, asking for forgiveness, knowing that you already have it in Christ, and can trust God to forgive you, and cleanse you from all unrighteousness. And by continuing to do this, you won’t have to worry about coming to the place where you are beginning to doubt God’s Word, or lose faith in His Character. You will stay in good relationship with Him, and enjoy all of the Joy and Peace Love that living in God’s Truth brings us.