

9 No one who has been born of God practices sin, because His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin continually, because he has been born of God.

No one who has been born of God practices sin,

Literally “Everyone who has been born from God does not sin.” John is saying that habitual sin is inconsistent with a Christian’s walk. Is John saying that the believer never sins? No. John makes it very clear in 1:8–10 that no believer can at any time claim an absence of sin in their life. That is why God provides cleansing from all unrighteousness for the one who confesses known sins (1st John 1:9 **1 John 1:9 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous, so that He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. God is faithful and Just in forgiving our sins.** The emphasis here is on the results of being born of God—i.e., the ability NOT to sin. We have the Potential to be Sinless in Christ. But we, along with Paul, and all other believers, we come up short in walking out that sinless life. The Gift of God of eternal life and being a New Creation, as His adopted Children is perfect. 1 John 3:1a **See how great a love the Father has given us, that we would be called children of God; and in fact we are.** There is no question of the person’s status as a child of God. The question is in how much we are going to walk this out in our lives!

The children of God obey Him and live in freedom from habitual sin. We can do this because Jesus has set us free from the slavery of sin John 8:36 **So if the Son sets you free, you are free indeed**—free NOT to sin.

Romans 6:1–23 goes even further in this idea of a slave and his master. As Christians we aren’t to continue in habitual sin because we died to sin. Romans 6:4 says that **since we have been buried and resurrected with Christ we are now able to walk in that newness of life**, unlike the unbeliever who is still a slave to sin. Romans 6:6 goes on to say that, since we know that **our old self was crucified with Him so that our body of sin might be done away with**, we should no longer be slaves to sin. And Romans 6:11 says that we are **to consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus**. We are commanded by God to **not let sin reign in our bodies, obeying its lusts, but instead we are to present ourselves to Him as instruments of righteousness** (Romans 6:12–14). In Romans 6:16–18 we’re told that **we are slaves to the one we obey, either of obedience to sin or of obedience to righteousness**. We are to be enslaved to God from whom we receive our gifts of sanctification and eternal life. We do this because (Rom 6:23) **the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord**. Since we have been Born of God, born again, we have the power of the Holy Spirit within us NOT to sin. This is the focus of what John says next. He answers the question of how this is made possible. It is by a spiritual birth and a new parentage.

because His seed remains in him;

The one born of God does not sin “because His seed abides in him.” This seed, abiding in the believer is both permanent, and a continuous influencer of our lives as believers. This seed is from God, and impacts our life with the character of God, transforming us into the image of His Son Jesus.

This seed only influences for good, because we know from James 1:13b **for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone**. This sounds to me like this Seed is referring to the Holy Spirit. When we are born again, we are fundamentally, a new creation. Jesus said in John 3:5–6 **5 Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which has been born of the flesh is flesh, and that which has been born of the Spirit is spirit.** The Holy Spirit is a continuous witness to us that we are His 1 John 4:24 **24 The one who keeps His commandments remains in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He remains in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us** or 1 John 4:13 **13 By this we know that we remain in Him and He in us, because He has given to us of His Spirit.** So, we know that we remain in Christ, are His by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Sin does not reside in the inward man, the Spirit, because this spirit has been born of God. Sin does not reside in the inward man, the Spirit, because this spirit has been born of God—that’s why Paul says in

Rom 7:16 **However, if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, that the Law is good. 17 But now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin that dwells in me.** It's not the flesh that has been redeemed, for there is no redeeming the flesh, it must be crucified, put to death. Gal 5:24 **Now those who belong to Christ Jesus crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.** Rom 8:6 **For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.** So, it's very clear that the flesh is sinful, and cannot please God, nor be redeemed in any way. And, so this seed, that John refers to is our New Spiritual Nature, born of God, who is Spirit, connected to God who is Spirit, by the Holy Spirit, who is God. And it is not where sin resides, because our New Spiritual Nature, our New Man, our New Nature is from God. So, John is essentially saying that "everyone who has been born of God" does not sin because, as our new Nature is from God, adopted as Children by God, as His spiritual offspring, we abide in God, as believers. God's children do not sin because we are born of God." So to the extent that we cooperate with the Holy Spirit, and walk by the Spirit, and not the Flesh, we do not sin. So, John is talking about represents the divine nature the new nature that believers receive at regeneration 1 Peter 1:4 **4 Through these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world on account of lust.**

And, so the Seed, as John uses it here, consciously calls us back to the Word of God. John 15:7 **7 If you remain in Me, and My words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.** And again in John 15:10 **10 If you keep My commandments, you will remain in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and remain in His love.** The young men of his congregation are commended precisely because as 1st John 3:14b says **I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one. "and it is not able to sin."**

And, so, it is in this context of God's work in the deepest part of us, the Spirit, and in the context of the Work of God's Spirit within us in sanctifying us and illuminating God's Word, Jesus to us that John makes his boldest statement yet, that those who are abiding with Jesus in cooperation with the Holy Spirit's work in our lives are not able to sin. And to the extent that we do sin, as John affirms, we're not walking in the newness of life that we've been given. The ideas of divine sonship and sin are mutually exclusive—sinful acts are the expression of the imperfectness of our walk. And, as we confess our sins, and rely on the faithfulness of Christ to act as our Advocate before the father, forgiving our sins, we allow ourselves to be sanctified, set apart for service. As Eph 5:26 puts it **26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.** So, John is affirming that the new nature, from God does not participate in sin. The root of sin our "old fallen nature". Habitual sin is an inconsistency in the life of a Christian, and is unchristian, and although it's possible, it's also very dangerous. Letting sin penetrate down, by habitual accommodation, deeper and deeper into the core of our being means that a Christian, by being UnChristian, can reach the place where they're no longer Christian, and become apostate, and fall away. Then, they find that they no longer believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior, and some never come back. Worse than that, some get to the point where God stops dealing with them, and they CAN NEVER come back. It's a very scary thing. But, the old nature, being fallen, naturally and consistently rebels against God. That's why we're warned over and over again to guard our hearts. Proverbs 4:23 **Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life.** And to keep God's Word stored there, as a protection against sin Psalm 119:11 **I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.** And let the Lord examine our hearts as in Psalm 139:23-24, **"Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!"** The Lord examines the Heart, and, according to Jesus in Matthew 5:8 **"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.** So, when someone sins, it is the person sinning under the

influence of their old nature, and causing damage to themselves, and to their relationship with God, and those around them. When a believer sins, he or she is acting out of the old nature and being consistent with it. It is the new nature that motivates the believer to obey God, though once again it is the person, not his or her nature, who is doing the obeying.

because he has been born of God.

The extent of absence of sin in our lives results from the Spiritual Birth, and our cooperation with the Holy Spirit in allowing Him to conform us to the image of Jesus. Our spiritual birth had a beginning point, but the effect of it continues on in our lives. The person remains a child of God, and His seed remains in us.

Therefore, Cannot Sin Continually

Why not? Why can't those who have been born of God sin continually? Because for a Christian, the struggle is AGAINST the flesh, by the power of the Spirit. We are no longer allied with the flesh against God. We have changed sides. But, we still have this flesh, with it's problems, hurts, habits and hangups. And that means that we have a struggle going on inside us, the Spirit against the flesh. We see this struggle with the flesh carefully depicted by Paul in Rom 7:14-15 **14 We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. 15 I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.**

Just as our Salvation was a work of God through Jesus empowered by the Holy Spirit, we have this same resurrection power of the Holy Spirit within us, who can achieve are sanctification. We just have to cooperate with the process, and obey out of love for Jesus, and faith in Him, that He can accomplish victory over sin, where we have failed so many times!