

1 John Lesson 3 Articles

The penalty of sin is taken care of when the sinner trusts Christ, but the power of sin over the daily life is another matter. First John explains how we may have victory over sin and how to get forgiveness when we do sin.¹

That we may not sin (2:1). John faces the problem of sin squarely (cf. 1 John 3:4–9, for example) and announces the only answer to this enigma—the person and work of Jesus Christ. Christ not only died for us to carry the penalty of our sins, but rose from the dead in order to intercede for us at the throne of God: “If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1).

Christ is our Representative. He defends us at the Father’s throne. Satan may stand there as the accuser of the brethren (Zech. 3; Rev. 12:10), but Christ stands there as our Advocate—He pleads on our behalf! Continuing forgiveness, in response to His intercession, is God’s answer to our sinfulness.

“I would like to become a Christian,” an interested woman said to a visiting pastor, “but I’m afraid I can’t hold out. I’m sure to sin again!”

Turning to 1 John 1, the pastor said, “No doubt you *will* sin again, because God says, ‘If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us’ (1 John 1:8). But if you *do* sin, God will forgive you if you will confess your sin to Him. But it isn’t *necessary* for Christians to sin. As we walk in fellowship with God and in obedience to His Word, He gives us ability to resist and to have victory over temptation.”

Then the pastor remembered that the woman had gone through surgery some months before.

“When you had your surgery,” he asked, “was there a possibility of complications or problems afterward?”

“Oh, yes,” she replied, “But whenever I had a problem, I went to see the doctor and he took care of it.”

Then the truth hit her! “I see it!” she exclaimed. “Christ is always available to keep me out of sin or to forgive my sin!”

The life that is real is a life of *victory*. In this letter, John tells us how to draw on our divine resources to experience victory over temptation and sin.²

¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (1992). *Wiersbe’s expository outlines on the New Testament* (p. 766). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

² Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 2, p. 477). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.