

What We Do Defines Who We Are

Study Outline – Grace Bible Chapel

1st John Study - emphasis on 1st John 3:4-10

Sunday – July 20th, 2025

CONTEXT: John continues his self-test letter which has as its purpose to distinguish the saved from others who profess to be saved but are yet unsaved. He provides the purpose of his writing, “That you may know you have eternal life” (1 John 5:13). This portion separates or contrasts the lifestyle of those saved from the unsaved as marked by our relation to and life expression of sin. The word used for practice refers to habitual sins or a lifestyle controlled by being prey to sinful desires, or a lifestyle instead characterized by the practice of righteousness. There are only two classes of people. Those who are naturally controlled by sin and thereby showing their relationship to Satan and to evil, and those who are now controlled by the inner working of the Spirit of God. Early in the epistle, John made it clear that Christians are not yet perfect and do still sin (1 John 1:8). The issue is whether our lives are dominated or characterized by sin, here referred to as practicing sin, or are we characterized instead by our allegiance to God and His righteousness. A right understanding of John’s writing is vitally important to distinguish possessors of salvation from mere professors of salvation.

Outline of 1st John (underlined portion is the immediate context)

- II. The Reality of Fellowship with Christ (1:5-2:29)
 - B. The Characteristics of Fellowship (1st John 3:1-3:24)
 - 1. Practicing Moral Excellence (1st John 3:1-10)
 - a. Our Possession (Vs. 1-2)
 - b. Our Preparation (Vs. 3)
 - c. Our Preoccupation (Vs.4)

Key Words & times used

- sin or sins (9)
- who (8)
- practice(s) (6)
- devil (4)
- righteous or righteousness (4)

Introduction:

c. Our Preoccupation (3:4-6)

- Association to sin (3:4, 6)

- Antithesis to sin (3:5)

d. Our Practice (3:7-8)

- Association with God (3:7)

- Association with Satan (3:8)

e. Our Product (9-10)

- Accomplished in God (3:9)

- Actions reveal (3:10)

Closing: