

# So That You May Know

## An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 5:16&17**

### Chapter 29- The Sin Unto Death

### 263 The Sin Unto Death- Part 3

---

WAOY Friday-Monday 10/10-13/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today we're going to continue to look at what John taught about "The Sin that is unto Death". So let's open our Bibles and read **1John 5:16&17** again together:

**16** If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not *leading* to death, he shall ask and *God* will for him give life to those who commit sin not *leading* to death. There is a sin *leading* to death; I do not say that he should make request for this.

**17** All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not *leading* to death.

Now I realize that there are many views about what John was talking about in these two verses. These two verses are highly controversial and have been the subject of much debate for many years. But I really believe that we can cut through most of the debate and go right to the heart of what John was talking about here if we just remember one very important aspect of Bible Interpretation.

The Bible has over 40 writers- 40 men who wrote inspired Words in 66 Books over a 1500 year time frame. These 40 men lived on four different continents and many of the Old Testament writers never even knew one another.

But while all of that is true- there is only one Author of Scripture. God the Holy Ghost moved upon each of those 40 men and had them write exactly what God wanted to say. So while each writer had his own style and his own personal approach- the Scriptures are seamless- meaning they are like one giant Book all held together by a common thread.

Not one single Book of the 66 Books teaches anything that contradicts or diminishes what any other Book teaches. No verse

contradicts another verse. And while there are several mysteries and paradoxes throughout Scripture- there are no contradictions- not one. So as we examine the section that we are studying now in 1John- we must keep this fact of Biblical Interpretation in mind.

The Apostle John is not teaching anything new here. John is not inventing or creating any new doctrine by saying what he is saying here. John is teaching in his typical style that is unique to him- the very same Truth that Paul and Peter and James and Jesus taught.

So, we must resist the temptation to say that John is going off the beaten path here to teach some strange new doctrine. He isn't. John is simply restating in his own words- the already established Truth of Scripture to those of the late first Century and to us today.

And we know this to be true by his statement in the first part of verse 17 when he says:

### **All unrighteousness is sin...**

All sin is evil and wicked in the Eyes of God and God cannot and God will not tolerate sin at all. Listen, God is Merciful; God is Good; God is Kind; God is Love- and God is Longsuffering. But we must be careful, dear friends, that we do not presume on the Mercy and Longsuffering of God to misunderstand what that means. God being longsuffering is not the same thing as God being tolerant. God is not tolerant at all in any way. God does not tolerate sin- He judges it. Sin is patently offensive to God's Own Righteous Character and Nature and He cannot and He will not abide with sin for one second.

God is longsuffering, however and that means that God gives us space to repent. So God withholds instant Judgment against our sins- not because they don't matter- but so that we will come to our senses and be convicted of them and repent and turn from them.

So while God is mercifully longsuffering towards us- do not think that that means that God doesn't mind if you sin against Him- because He does mind it very much. So don't push it. Walk softly before the Lord your God and fear Him; be quick to repent and do not presume on His Mercy by continuing on in a sin that He has already convicted you about because John says that all unrighteousness of any kind or sort is sin.

So we know by this that John is *not* saying that some sins are okay

while others are bad- no, John says here that *all* unrighteousness is sin.

And so as we go through this troubling passage together- we must keep in mind that whatever conclusion we come to about what John was talking about here will not and must not contradict any other passage or our conclusion is wrong.

And we saw last time that- in my opinion- based upon my own best honest research- there are only two possible answers to just what John meant when he used the term, “sin unto death” that doesn’t contradict any other verse:

- A. John *may* have been talking about a sin that is unto *eternal* death as in the unpardonable sin of blaspheming the Holy Ghost as Jesus taught in **Matthew 12**
  
- B. John *may* have been talking about a sin that is unto physical death as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira as Luke recorded for us in **The Acts 5**.

So since *either* interpretation would solve the problem for us- let’s look at both of them- one at a time.

Now to look at just what the unpardonable sin is- please turn in your Bibles and read **Matthew 12:31&32**:

**31 "Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven.**

**32 "Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the *age* to come.**

Now as we saw last time- Jesus Himself is teaching here that all blasphemy will be forgiven Man expect one- those who blaspheme against the Holy Spirit *cannot* and *will not* be forgiven. So since this is true- since this sin cannot be forgiven- then the Apostle John may have been referring to what Jesus taught here and calling this the “sin unto death”.

Now it will probably help us in our study to learn just what Jesus was talking about here when He said that blasphemy against the Holy

Spirit will not be forgiven. Just what is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?

Some people teach that if you question what somebody is teaching who says that God told them something directly- then you have blasphemed the Holy Spirit. Others teach that if you have the audacity to hold people accountable to what the Bible actually says- and do not condone unbiblical behavior or practices- that you do not accept unbiblical teaching and unbiblical activity- even when they say that they feel led to say or do those things or that God told them to say or do those things- that you have blasphemed the Holy Spirit. Others teach that because they hold some high position in the Church- that they are now entitled to use you and manipulate you and coerce you and command you to do and believe things that you really don't understand or have great reservations about. And these people say that because they are who they are- that if you even question them- that you have blasphemed the Holy Spirit.

Dear friends- let me say to you that none of these things is an example of somebody blaspheming the Holy Spirit. The Apostle John right here in this very Epistle that we are studying told us to "test the Spirits to see if they are of God". And he was an Apostle- who spent physical time with Jesus. Now why did John tell us to do that? **1John 4:1** says that we are to test the spirits to see if they are of God and not accept everything that people say simply because they say that God revealed it to them because:

**... many false prophets have gone out into the world.**

So God does not want or expect us to blindly follow what somebody says- simply because they supposedly have some special connection with God. There is no command anywhere in all of Scripture, dear friends, that tells us to do that. God wants you to understand what you believe and why you believe it. And so you are *supposed* to ask questions and you are *supposed* to think and you are *supposed* to ponder what you are being taught. And if something that is taught is not true- then God expects you to say that and reject it and walk away.

And you know what? Truth doesn't mind examination. Divine Truth was true yesterday and it is true today and it will be true

tomorrow. So Truth can handle your doubts and your fears and your examination and your questions and remain true.

And you know what else? No true man of God would ever mind you questioning what he is teaching. He would welcome that. Because he has done his homework and he knows what he is talking about and is proficient in what the Bible says about that subject- and so he is eager to help you understand it as well.

All true, godly leaders in Christ's Church are struggling as hard as they can to be Biblical and they don't want to say or do *anything* that would be against the Word of God. They are not merely regurgitating what they read in the latest best seller- they have spent time in God's Word and they have spent time in prayer and they have agonized over the text and they have gone back to the original languages and they have conjugated the verses and they have examined the tense of the verbs and they have applied the correct grammar to the sentence and they have consulted with Teachers of the past who also studied that verse and so when they say something- all true godly leaders know what they are saying.

They haven't spent three days out on the golf course; they haven't tried to "wing it"; they haven't just "hit the high points" so they can move on; they haven't plagiarized from other Pastors; and they haven't engaged in any shortcuts at all.

All true godly pastors and Teachers and Elders and under-shepherds have spent time with the text and they have spent time with God and they have spent time seeking to ask and answer three questions about every single verse of every single Chapter of every single Book in the Bible:

1. What did God the Holy Spirit say in this verse?
2. What did God the Holy Spirit mean by what He said?
3. How can we, who are saved in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century- obey this Truth?

... and nothing else matters. Because if we get the Word of God wrong- then everything else will be wrong as well. If the people of God don't understand the Word of God- then all is lost. So this is where the rubber meets the road; this is where the men are separated from the boys; and this is where the dividing line is between true Pastors and false teachers.

And so a true man of God would never get angry at you for asking questions or of trying to put the pieces together. The only people who would be insulted at you asking questions or condemn you for trying to understand are false teachers who do not have the Truth and who want you to obey them without thinking so they can use you.

And so they will accuse you of *quenching* the Spirit or of being “carnal minded” or of even blaspheming the Holy Spirit- simply because you cannot find what they are teaching in the Bible or because you have the temerity to ask them to prove what they teach from the Scriptures or because you doubt that what they are doing or saying is really from God at all.

And what I want you to know is that all these people are proving- by attacking you for doing nothing more than what God told you to do in the Bible- is that they either don't know what they are talking about and they need to be corrected or they don't care what the Bible says and they are purposefully trying to deceive you- in which case they need to be rebuked and brought to repentance.

I mean even God Himself said this in **Isaiah 1:18**:

**Come now, and let us reason together...**

So even God Himself doesn't want or expect blind obedience. No, it is God's Will that you think and reason about what you believe and what you do- so that what you do and what you believe is truly the logical conclusion that you have come to about that particular verse and you obey it- not because you are afraid not to- but because you understand it and think God is worthy of your obedience.

So as we consider just what blasphemy against the Holy Spirit really is- I want you to forever remove things like this from your mind- and never be pushed down or cowed down out of fear or intimidation by some church leader who tries to manipulate you by scaring you about blaspheming the Holy Spirit- to the point where you accept things you really don't understand and that you obey without thinking- because that is *never* God's Will.

Well, I have to stop right here- but please join me again on the next broadcast- as we continue our journey through the Epistle of 1John. May God- help us all.

© 2007- 2023 by Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America  
Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. PO Box 147 Saucier, Mississippi 39574 [www.covenantofpeace.net](http://www.covenantofpeace.net)

Scripture quotations, except those noted otherwise, are from The New American Standard Bible © 1995 by The Lockmann Foundation. Used by permission.

This is a single transcript in a larger series of teachings taken from a verse by verse Journey through the Epistle of 1John. You are free to reproduce it and distribute it as the Lord leads you- without cost or reimbursement to us with the stipulation that you may not add anything or take anything away from this transcript without the express written permission of The Covenant of Peace Church and that this complete copyright statement be at the end of all copies.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.