

## THE SINS OF THE SAINTS

"Thou shalt call him name Jesus, for he shall save the people from their sins"  
Matthew 1:21.

"My little children, these things I write unto you that ye may not sin; and if any-one should sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins; but not only for ours, but also for the whole world" I John 2:1-2.

Our first text implies that Jesus is a Saviour for saints as well as for sinners. Paul has told us that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners". He is also the Saviour for saints. Christ is the Saviour of saints in that He seeks to save them from the fruits of sin as well as from the root of sin.

We get a glimpse into the relation existing between John and his readers when he addresses them in our text as his "little children." The term used here for children is one of endearment, and John makes it doubly so by using it in the diminutive form--"little children." Many of these readers John had known in person; perhaps they had been brought into the Christian life and nourished under his personal ministry. He, therefore, feels a deep and abiding interest in their spiritual welfare. He does not want them led astray on the question of sin.

John realizes that what he has just said about sin may be misunderstood and misapplied. He wants it distinctly understood that he is not encouraging any one to commit sin. On the contrary he is writing to discourage sin. He is writing to say in substance, "I do not want you to sin at all."

### 1. What is Sin?

- (1) Sin is a rebellion against the will of God.
- (2) Sin is a transgression of the law of God.
- (3) Sin is a missing of the mark.
- (4) Sin is a failure to live up to the light we have.
- (5) Sin is a lack of faith in God.
- (6) Sin is a wrong treatment of others.

### 2. What Is a Saint?

- (1) A saint is not a person who has attained rare heights of sanctity.
- (2) A saint is not a person who has had his carnality removed.
- (3) A saint is a person who has been saved.
- (4) "Saint" is God's name for every true believer in Jesus Christ.  
It is a term which refers to the standing of the believer in Christ.

### 3. Do Saints Sin?

Yes.

## I. The Reality of the Sins of the Saints.

There are four things that prove the reality of the sins of the saints.

### 1. Experience.

Every Christian knows that he has come short of perfection. In his life there are sins of omission and of commission.

### 2. Observation.

In looking about us we see strong Christians and weak Christians. The strongest, as well as the weakest, have their shortcomings.

3. History.

Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Peter, Paul, and all the rest sinned.

4. Scripture.

(1) Paul.

"For we all have sinned and keep on falling short of the glory of God"  
Romans 3:23.

(2) Peter.

"When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees saying, depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord" Luke 5:8.

(3) John.

"If we say that we do not have sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." I John 1:8.

Not merely are we mistaken or misled, but we "lead ourselves astray." It is the active voice, indicating that the erring is our own doing.

II. The Results of the Sins of the Saints.

In every believer there remains the liability to sin. The new birth is not the removal of the carnal nature, but is the reception of an entirely new nature. The new birth is neither the elimination nor the transformation of the old nature, but is the communication and impartation of a new nature, the Divine nature. In every born again person there are two natures--the old and the new--the flesh and the spirit--which Paul tells us are contrary in disposition, continually warring against each other. As then the old, carnal nature, remains in the believer as long as he continues in this body, there is always a possibility of him sinning.

While this is true, yet the believer is responsible not to sin. The death of Christ has freed us from the dominion of sin. Once we were its slaves, but now it has no right to control us. But the fact remains that all believers do sin. "For there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not." Every believer sins every day of his life, sins both negatively and positively. By this we do not mean that he deliberately breaks one of the ten commandments. We mean that all come short of the standard of holiness revealed in God's Word. Every believer fails to measure up to the standard of holiness revealed in God's Word and fails to follow perfectly the example left us by the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Communion with God is broken.

"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Amos 3:3. On a beautiful day, one may stand gazing at the sun. Suddenly, a dark cloud may come between them. The sun is still there, but it is no longer visible, and one can no longer feel its warmth. By and by the cloud passes over and that person can enjoy the warmth and beauty of the sun again. Thus it is with sin. God is still in heaven and you are on earth, but when the cloud of sin comes between your soul and God, your communion with Him is severed.

2. Loss of joy of salvation.

"Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." Psalm 51:12. Note that the Psalmist did not pray for the restoration of salvation, but for the joy of his salvation.

There is a tremendous difference between losing one's salvation and losing the joy thereof. A husband and wife may quarrel and part in anger. Neither has lost the other; they have merely lost the joy of married life. Thus with David, the joy of his salvation was destroyed by his sin. "And Peter went out and wept bitterly."

3. Loss of reward.

John says, "Look to yourselves that we lost not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward" II John 1:8.

Paul said, "Let no man beguile you of your reward" Col. 2:18.

"If any man's work shall be burned he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" I Cor. 3:15.

4. Loss of influence.

One cannot retain his influence for God and good when he indulges in sin.

5. Divine chastisement.

"His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments; if they break My statutes, and keep not My commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless My loving-kindness will I not utterly take away from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail" Psalm 89:29-33. Many of us believers suffer under the rod of God and have many stripes fall on us because of our sins. Hebrews 12:5-9., makes it clear that if we sin we are chastened. If we are not chastened, then we are not children of God.

6. Physical life is endangered.

"Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh it away" John 15:2.

In the church at Corinth, they had been observing the Lord's Supper in the wrong manner. God had chastened some of them by sickness and some of them had actually died because of their sins. "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" I Cor. 11:30.

In the O. T. we read how that Moses was commanded to speak to the rock, but, instead in his anger, he smote it. Because of this he was not permitted to enter Palestine but rather died prematurely on Mount Nebo.

Though losses and chastisements come to the believer because he sins, yet he does not lose his salvation.

III. The Remedy For The Sins of the Saints.

God's child should realize that there is a need of a remedy for the sins of the saints. This need has already been provided for, and the saint should understand this fact. The believer in Christ really has two Advocates or Paracletes. Advocate means one called to the side of another, with a view to taking his part or pleading his cause, or in some way supporting or aiding him. The Advocate within is the Holy Spirit. "I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter". Paul said, "The Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." The Advocate without is Jesus Christ. "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Christ's work today is that of intercession.

As an Advocate Christ is in the place of influence and power, has knowledge and sympathy, is righteous and faithful, is ready and diligent, is earnest and pressing, is wise and zealous, is propitiation, is complete, final, sufficient, and available.