

An In-Depth Study of the First Letter of Apostle John

[Part 7]

1 John 5:1-5 [NIV] *“Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.”*

The apostle John had two things in the back of his mind as he wrote these verses.

a) The love of God and the love of a human being are inseparable parts of the same experience.

Mark 12:28-31 [NIV] *“One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”*

Jesus had told the apostle John as a disciple of these two linked commandments which encompassed the total will of God. Nothing is more important in the mind and will of the Creator God.

b) The same loving experience can be found on a human level.

A child will naturally and instinctively love their parents, when **not** destructively influenced by a Satan-driven society.

A child will also naturally love brothers and sisters who are also born of the same father and mother.

If we love a father, we also love his other children.

The apostle John transfers the natural human experience to the spiritual realm of Christian thought and experience.

John 3:1-7 [NIV] *“Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no-one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.” In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no-one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.” “How can a man be born when he is old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb to be born!” Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no-one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’”*

Every true Christian undergoes the experience of being reborn.

In this case the father is the Creator God, and we are bound to love our spiritual Father for all that He has done for us.

Every birth is always into a family, spiritually as well as physically.

Mark 3:31-35 [NIV] *“Then Jesus’ mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, “Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you.” “Who are my mother and my brothers?” he asked. Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother.”*

Jesus Christ looked on all who obey the will of God the Father as His spiritual family.

Why this family relationship?

Psalms 68:4-6 [Living Bible] *“Sing praises to the Lord! Raise your voice in song to Him who rides upon the clouds! Jehovah is his name, oh, rejoice in His presence. He is a father to the fatherless, He gives justice to the widows, for He is holy. He gives families to the lonely...”*

God sets His spiritually begotten children into families, that is Christian fellowships.

Humans are not only born to love but also born to be loved.

The apostle John reverts to what is central to his teaching, obedience to the Creator God is the only proof of our love for Him.

The apostle John then says that keeping God’s commandments is **not** a burden in our life.

This certainly does **not** mean that obedience to God’s commandments is easy to achieve. Practical application of Christian love is **no** easy matter.

Matthew 5:44-47 [NIV] *“But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?”*

To love people whom we do **not** like, or who have hurt us mentally or physically is far from easy.

Matthew 23:4 [NIV] *“They tie up heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.”*

Jesus spoke of the Scribes and Pharisees putting heavy load on people.

Matthew 11:28-30 [NIV] *“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*

Jesus also told His disciples that following His way of life would **not** be a heavy burden to bear.

How then is this to be explained?

a) God never lays a commandment on any person without also giving them the strength to carry it out.

With any vision also comes the power to fulfil it.

With any need comes the strength to endure.

What is impossible for us physically, becomes possible with God.

When we step out in faith God will always be beside us guiding us.

b) Our whole response to God must be a loving response.

Love makes no duty too hard, and no task too great.

What we would never do for a stranger we will willingly attempt for someone we love.

What we would find an impossible sacrifice, if it is demanded by a stranger, becomes a willing gift for one we love.

Difficult the commandments of Jesus Christ are for any human being but burdensome they are **not**.

The commandments of Jesus Christ are a privilege for they provide us with opportunities to express our love for God and other human beings.

c) Faith is the key that unlocks the power to obey the commandments of Jesus Christ.

It is faith that enables a Christian to conquer this world, faith in what God has done through Jesus Christ.

Remember that when scripture quotes “*the world*” it is translating the Greek word “*kōsmōs*” that refers to a world that is apart from its Creator God and in opposition to Him and His way of life.

Conquering faith is belief in the incarnation, God entering into the created human world to save it from its death generating sinful lifestyle.

The fact that God decide to enter the human world shows His great love for all humanity.

The incarnation was an unimaginable sacrifice and act of love which passes all human understanding.

The incarnation shows just how great God’s desire is to share all the manifold activities of human life.

God knows the many and varied trials, temptations, sorrows and pains of life in this godless society.

The incarnation shows the conviction that God has to share and care for all humanity.

Once we possess this faith in the incarnation certain things will follow in our lives.

This presence of God in our lives gives us a powerful defence against being infected by worldly immoral standards.

We can resist the fascinations of wrong things.

We can resist the temptations that are part of this godless society.

We become uninterested in the selfish goals of this human, Satan-influenced world.

We can resist the attacks of all who wish to take away this faith we have in Jesus Christ as our Saviour.

This faith can support us in all our sorrows, failures, disappointments and pains that could pressure us into abandoning our struggle to obey our Saviour Jesus Christ.

This faith in the incarnation gives us an indestructible hope of final victory over sin and an expected gift of eternal life in God’s presence.

A true Christian has given up the hopes and desires of this physical life for a future eternal spiritual life.

1 Corinthians 13:9-13 [NIV] *“For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”*

No human has a clear picture of what a future eternal spiritual life will be like, but exercising love in our life now will give us a glimpse into that glorious future.

Faith in the incarnation gives us a share in the victory that the human Jesus Christ had over our greatest enemy, death.

We have in Jesus Christ one who endured and was victorious over all that this world could do to destroy Him.

Jesus Christ as a human being was hunted, hounded and slandered.

Jesus Christ as a human was branded a heretic, a sinner and friend of sinners.

Jesus Christ was illegally judged, tried, murdered and His body buried.

This world did all it could to break His faith in God and eliminate Jesus Christ and all that He taught, but failed totally.

In Jesus Christ we have a human being who saw life at its grimmest, was murdered but who overcame death by a resurrection to eternal life.

If we believe in the incarnation, the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, then we have with us for ever One whose victory we can share.

1 John 5:6-8 [NIV] *“This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testify: the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.”*

There are two general facts that help us understand this passage of scripture.

John 19:34-35 [NIV] *“Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe.”*

In the mind of the apostle John, water and blood in connection with Jesus Christ had special symbolic meaning.

In connection with Jesus Christ, water and blood can refer to essential parts of His Messiahship.

Water refers to Christ’s baptism by John the Baptist and blood refers to His death on the cross.

The fact that the apostle John states that Jesus Christ came by water and blood indicates that some were saying that Jesus’ baptism was an essential part of His Messiahship but **not** His cross.

Such a belief is part of the heresy of Gnosticism that rejects the full doctrine of the incarnation, denying that Jesus *“came in the flesh,”* that He was fully human as well as fully God.

Such heretical teaching robs the life and death of Jesus Christ of all value for us.

What the apostle John was saying is that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is essential for our redemption from the penalty of our sins.

The water could also refer to the human birth of Jesus Christ, water always being associated with the birth of every human being.

Jesus Christ had to have a physical human birth for Him to become our Spiritual Saviour.

Philippians 2:1-8 [NIV] *“If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross!”*

Paul states the importance of our being like Jesus Christ, as human beings, being willing to sacrifice our own lives for others.

Romans 12:1-2 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

This is the way we worship and fulfil our Creator’s will for human beings, even as Jesus Christ did for all humanity.

The apostle John then continues this letter with the mention of a triple witness, the Holy Spirit being added to the water and blood.

The Holy Spirit was involved in the baptism of Jesus Christ.

Mark 1:9-11 [NIV] *“At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”*

Verbal and spiritual confirmation of the status of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

John 1:32-34 [NIV] *“Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptise with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptise with the Holy Spirit.’ I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.”*

John the Baptist came to baptise humans with water, Jesus came to baptise humans with the Holy Spirit. [Mark 1:8; Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5]

1 John 5:9-10 [NIV] *“We accept man’s testimony, but God’s testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son.”*

Behind this scripture is two basic ideas.

Deuteronomy 19:15 [NIV] *“One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of any crime or offence he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.”*

Under the law given to humanity in the Old Covenant a triple human witness is enough to establish a fact. [Example: **Deuteronomy 17:6**]

How much more is a triple divine witness, the witness of the Holy Spirit, Christ's baptism or human birth and His blood sacrifice on the cross.

The idea of witness or testimony is an integral part of the apostle John's thought.

John the Baptist is a witness [testimony] to Jesus Christ. [John 1:15, 32-34; John 5:33]

Jesus' deeds are a witness [testimony] to whom He is, the Son of God sent to this earth to fulfil the Father's will. [John 5:36]

The scriptures of the Old Testament are a witness or testimony, to who Jesus Christ is. [John 5:39]

God the Father who sent Jesus Christ is a witness or testimony as to whom Jesus Christ is. [**John 5:30-32, 37-38; John 8:17-18**]

The Holy Spirit is a witness as to whom Jesus Christ is. [John 15:26-27] All Christians are to continue this witness, or testimony, as to whom Jesus Christ is, to overcome the evil influence of Satan and his world. [Revelation 12:9-11]

The apostle John then re-states the need to believe in Jesus Christ, that He is the Son of God.

There is a wide difference in believing a person and believing **in** a person.

We believe a person when we accept what they are saying at that moment is true.

We believe **in** a person when we accept the whole person, having complete confidence and trust in all that they stand for and live out in their lives.

We not only trust the person's words but are willing to trust our present and future lives to that person.

That is what "believing in Jesus Christ" involves.

We commit all our life into His hands for direction now and on into eternity.

When we do this the Holy Spirit within us testifies that we are acting according to God's will.

It is the Holy Spirit in us that assures us that we are right to make this act of commitment to Jesus Christ.

John 6:66-69 [NIV] *"From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."*

Simon Peter is an example of a person who made this commitment to the same person all Christians would, Jesus Christ, the **only** One who can be our Saviour.

The apostle John then makes a powerful statement.

If we reject this witness, or testimony, as to whom Jesus Christ is, we are calling the Creator God a liar.

I would not wish any person to be in such a situation when they are judged by Jesus Christ, as to how they conducted the life that God had given them. [2 Corinthians 5:10]

1 John 5:11-13 [NIV] *“And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.”*

For the apostle John, directly inspired by the Holy Spirit, there is no “middle ground.” We either accept Jesus Christ as our Saviour and then eventually receive eternal life, or we reject this powerful testimony as to whom Jesus Christ is and lose out on any life beyond this brief human existence.

1 John 5:14-15 [NIV] *“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have what we asked of him.”*

We have in this scripture the basis and principle of successful prayer.

The basis of prayer – it is a simple fact that God does listen to our prayers.

The apostle John uses the Greek word “*parrhēsia*” literally meaning “*freedom of speech*.” Free to speak boldly, for God already knows what is in our heart and what motivates us.

Psalms 139:1-4 [NIV] *“O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD.”*

God is waiting for us to accept and share with Him what is in our heart, we never need to force our way into God’s presence in prayer.

The principle of prayer – prayer, if it is to be answered, must be according to God’s will that is subject to certain conditions.

a) We must keep His commandments and do what pleases God –

1 John 3:21-23 [NIV] *“Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him. And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.”*

This is how we can have confidence that our prayers will be answered.

b) We must remain in Jesus Christ –

1 John 3:24 [NIV] *“Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.”*

We “*remain in Jesus Christ*” through responding to the indwelling Holy Spirit.

John 15:5-9 [NIV] *“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.”*

The study of the words of Jesus Christ, as recorded in the Christian Bible, are also one of the conditions of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, that is “*Jesus Christ in us.*”

c) We have to pray in the name of Jesus Christ –

One of the tests of any prayer is can we be sure that what we are asking is in harmony with the thoughts and actions of our Saviour Jesus Christ?

d) The prayer must be according to the will of God –

Matthew 6:10 [NIV] *“your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”*

Jesus Christ taught us to pray *“your will be done,”* **not** *“your will be changed.”*

Matthew 26:39, 42 [NIV] *“Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.” ... “He went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.”*

Jesus Christ’s personal prayers to His Father were subject to the will of the Father.

The simple analysis is that the only true prayer is one that says *“show me your will dear God that it may be fulfilled through me.”*

Such a prayer will be answered.

1 John 5:16-17 [NIV] *“If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that he should pray about that. All wrongdoing is sin, and there is sin that does not lead to death.”*

The apostle John is focusing on one aspect of prayer, intercessory prayer.

Prayer must never be selfish, never concentrated entirely on our own needs.

Prayer must be an outgoing activity, prayer for others, again and again the New Testament writers stress the need of this prayer of intercession.

1 Thessalonians 5:25 [NIV] *“Brothers, pray for us.”*

Prayer for God’s servants.

Hebrews 13:18-19 [NIV] *“Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honourably in every way. I particularly urge you to pray so that I may be restored to you soon.”*

Prayer for God’s servants needs to be specific.

James 5:14-15 [NIV] *“Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.”*

The servants of God have specific prayer responsibilities towards their congregation, physical health as well as spiritual health. We naturally pray for those who are physically sick, but we should also pray for those who are straying away from God.

1 Timothy 2:1-4 [NIV] *“I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone, for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and*

quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.”

Our intercessory prayer needs to be for **all** other people who come into our sphere of life as well as those who are in leadership.

God may well desire to answer our prayers for others but even fervent prayer can be frustrated by stubborn foolishness and disobedience of the person we are praying for.

God will urge, He will plead, warn and offer help; but God will **never** violate the inviolable freedom of choice that He has given to all human beings.

Prayer is **not** a device for inducing God to change His mind for **only** He knows what is best for all concerned in the end.

The apostle John distinguishes between “*mortal*” sin and sin that is **not** death giving, “*not mortal*”; but he does **not** define either specifically.

The apostle John tells us to pray for a brother who is committing a non-mortal sin, so that God will give such a person life.

The Greek word translated “*brother*” is “*adēphōs*” is **not** confined to direct relationship or of the same family.

Luke 10:29 [NIV] “*But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbour?”*”

This word “*adēphōs*” is translated “*neighbour*.”

This included in this command for intercessory prayer is any other human being we come in contact with.

The “*life*” must refer to a non-Christian who as yet does **not** have the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 2:1-2 [NIV] “*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.*”

It is one who is dead spiritually and deceived by Satan who is being referred to, such a person is **not** being judged by God at this time.

1 Peter 4:17 [NIV] “*For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God?”*”

God’s judgement is at this time limited to Christians.

In response to our specifically directed prayer, the indwelling Holy Spirit **may**, if it is God’s will, be given to the person we are praying for.

Mortal sin, that leads to eternal death, is a state of mind rather than an act.

1 John 3:14 [NIV] “*We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.*”

Without love, the fruit of the indwelling Holy Spirit, a person remains in a state of death.

Luke 12:10 [NIV] “*And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.*”

Here is a specific example of “mortal” sin.

Why?

John 16:7-8 [NIV] *“But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:”*

One of the tasks of the Holy Spirit is to bring us to the state of repentance by convicting us of our sin.

The Greek word translated “blaspheme” in **Luke 12:10** is “*blasphēmēō*” meaning to speak evil of, revile, defame.

Such a state of mind will cut us off from the only power that can bring us to repentance, the first step towards salvation from eternal death.

Our prayers for such a person would be premature, for God knows that this is **not** the best time for such a person to be given the chance for salvation.

Such prayers could even be presumptuous, thinking we know better than God what is in the mind of such a person.

Psalms 19:13-14 [King James] *“Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.”*

Only when the Holy Spirit is directing our lives can we avoid this wilful sin.

The Greek words that the apostle John uses in this passage of scripture is also worth knowing as they help us reach into His Holy Spirit inspired mind.

“See a brother commit a sin” – the Greek word “*hamartanō*” meaning to err – missing what was aimed at, to wander away from the original chosen path.

This sin can be by omission as well as commission in thought, word or deed, to the point of becoming a way of life.

Same word used in the following scriptures:

Matthew 18:21 [NIV] *“Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?”*

Peter’s attempt to limit the number of times he has to forgive.

Luke 15:18 [NIV] *“I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.”*

Sinning had become a way of life for this now prodigal son.

John 5:14 [NIV] *“Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, “See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.”*

Jesus indicates that this man’s sinful way of life had brought this infirmity on him.

John 8:11 [NIV] *“No-one, sir,” she said. “Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.”*

Adultery had become a way of life for this woman, see context of this scripture.

1 Corinthians 6:18 [NIV] *“Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.”*

Fornication misses the true reason for sex, to bond a husband and wife together in an intimate relationship of marriage.

Ephesians 4:26 [NIV] *“In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,”*

Anger is right only when it is directed **away** from selfish desires, towards what is bringing pain and deception upon other people.

Even if a Christian, in a moment of weakness, sins, knowing what they are doing, they should be prayed for, asking God to help them have a humble and repentant attitude.

2 Peter 2:4 [NIV] *“For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment;”*

The angels were led astray by Satan, they sinned knowingly, but are not repentant.

1 John 3:8 [NIV] *“He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.”*

The sin that a person commits when totally under the control of Satan.

John 7:38-39 [NIV] *“Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.”*

Our defence against this sinful way of life to the continuing indwelling of the Holy Spirit, flowing out from us in acts of love for others.

What about the sin that leads to death?

In the Greek it is a sin that is *“pros thanaton”* that is a motion towards death. The goal, **realised or not**, is going to be death, eternal death, if a person persists in this sinful way of life.

It is a fact of life that there are two kinds of sinners.

There is the person who we could say sins against their will. Being swept away by a passion or desire, that for a moment is too strong for them to resist.

There is also a person who sins deliberately, in cold blood, with their eyes wide open, even though they are aware what they are doing is wrong.

Having sinned such a person has **no regrets** whatsoever, nor are they ashamed of their sin.

Such a person may even boast about their sin, and considers they will get away with it.

Having once allowed themselves to sin in this way all future sinful thoughts and actions will become easier. **Such a person has lost all sense of the terror and awfulness of their sin.**

Such a person is on the way to a state of mind where the idea of repentance **will not, and cannot** enter their head.

Our prayers for such a person will be of little or no avail.

1 John 5:19 [NIV] *“We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.”*

With so many people who are at this time deceived by Satan and are on that pathway of sin that is leading to death, it is very clear who God is allowing to rule this world at this time.

Thankfully this is also part of God’s great plan for all of humanity.

People will experience first hand what it is like to live in a world without knowledge or influence of the true Creator God.

The revelation given by Jesus Christ, through the apostle John, recorded at the end of the Christian Bible, tells us how the Creator God will resolve this natural rebellious nature of humanity.

The apostle John starts three comments with the words *“we know.”*

This tells me that I must be honest with myself and make sure that I do really *“know.”*

1 John 5:20 [NIV] *“We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.”*

Can we be sure that we are convinced in Who Jesus Christ is and how we are totally dependant on Him to be assured what is true. For us to receive the gift of eternal life we must have this total assurance that we have received what is true about human existence.

1 John 5:21 [NIV] *“Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.”*

The Greek word translated *“idols”* is *“ēldōlōn”* meaning a likeness that is unreal.

In the broader sense it is anything that takes the place of our very real Creator God.

A person creates an idol of anything they worship instead of the Creator God.

This could be money, career, security or pleasure. Whatever involves the major part of our life can become an idol we worship.

A Christian must always avoid being infected by false faiths that will take the place in their life and mind that should be devoted to the true God.