

Study Guide: 1 John Lesson 56: Our Incompatibility with Sin

April 1, 2026

Study Guide Quiz

1. According to the lesson, what are the two requirements or categories that characterize a true Christian?
 2. How does the focus of 1 John change from the first two chapters to the start of the third chapter?
 3. Describe the "perfectionist" viewpoint regarding sin and its association with Armenian theology.
 4. What is the "Antinomian" viewpoint, and how does it interpret the role of God's grace?
 5. How can the apparent contradiction between 1 John 1:8 (we have sin) and 1 John 3:9 (those born of God do not sin) be resolved?
 6. According to the teacher, what is the significance of the Greek tenses used by John when he writes about believers not sinning?
 7. How is "lawlessness" defined in this lesson, and why is it considered more than just a transgression of the law?
 8. What is the "doctrine of eradication," and which denomination is specifically mentioned as holding views related to it?
 9. In Romans 6, how does the Apostle Paul describe the transition of a believer's "slavery"?
 10. How does a believer's reaction to their own sin affirm the goodness of the law of God, as illustrated in Romans 7?
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Answer Key

1. The two requirements for a true Christian are the practice of righteousness and a measurable, dominant love for other Christians. These behaviors serve as the visible manifestations of a person's belief and fellowship with God.
 2. The first two chapters of 1 John emphasize fellowship. Beginning in chapter three and continuing through chapter five, the emphasis shifts to sonship, specifically defining what the children of God look like and how they behave.
 3. Perfectionists believe a Christian can eventually reach a state of total sinlessness through effort. This is often tied to Armenian theology, which suggests individuals are responsible for their salvation and can lose it by sinning, only to regain it through repentance and progress toward perfection.
 4. Antinomians are "against the law" and believe that because Christians are under grace, sinning does not matter. They argue that where sin abounds, grace abounds more, leading to a life lived without regard for the law of God.
 5. There is no contradiction because the Bible does not contradict itself. While chapter one acknowledges that humans have a sinful nature, chapter three refers to the habitual, persistent practice of sin, which is incompatible with a life regenerated by God.
 6. The Greek tenses used in these passages refer to continuous and habitual actions. Therefore, when John says a believer "does not sin," he means a Christian cannot habitually, persistently, and relentlessly live a life of sin.
 7. Lawlessness is described as an attitude of indifference or open rebellion against God and His law. It is the condition of living as if there is no law or lawgiver, characterizing the nature of an unredeemed heart.
 8. The doctrine of eradication is the belief that a Christian can completely remove or eradicate sin from their life to reach a position of sinlessness. This teaching is historically rooted in Methodist beliefs and is prevalent in Nazarene theology regarding "salvation lost."
 9. Paul explains that believers are set free from being slaves to sin and have instead become "slaves of righteousness." They have traded their submission to evil and the master of Satan for submission to good and their new Master, the Lord Jesus Christ.
 10. When a believer is brokenhearted and grieved over their sin, they are affirming that the law they violated is holy and good. By repenting, they agree with the law's righteousness even though they have failed to meet its standard perfectly.
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Essay Questions

1. Compare and contrast the theological implications of Calvinism and Armenian theology as they relate to the security of a believer's salvation and their daily conduct.
2. Analyze the three arguments for the holiness of believers provided in the text, focusing on the specific roles of the Trinity: the law of God, the work of Jesus Christ, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
3. Discuss the concept of "Carnal Christianity." Where did this term originate, and why does the teacher argue that it is a misleading way to categorize the life of a believer?
4. Explain the "New Nature" or "New Creature" theory regarding sin. Why does the teacher suggest this view is often used as a "cop-out" in modern church settings?
5. Using the lesson's definition of "habitual sin," explain how a person can be a "realist" about their own sinfulness while still claiming to be "born of God" according to the standards set in 1 John.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Antinomianism:** A viewpoint "against the law" (from the Greek *nomos*), suggesting that Christians are not bound by moral laws because God's grace covers all sin.
- **Armenian Theology:** A belief system stating that individuals are responsible for their own salvation and can potentially lose it through sin.
- **Calvinism:** A theological framework declaring that God is sovereign in salvation; He chooses the individual rather than the individual choosing Him.
- **Doctrine of Eradication:** The teaching that a believer can reach a state where sin is completely removed from their life.
- **Lawlessness:** A state of heart characterized by an attitude of rebellion or disregard for the law and the sovereignty of God.
- **Mortal Sin:** A term used in Roman Catholic teaching to describe serious sins that, according to their doctrine, would result in a person not being a Christian.
- **Perfectionism:** The belief that a Christian can and should reach a point of sinless perfection during their earthly life.
- **Practice of Righteousness:** The ongoing, habitual pattern of living according to God's standards, which serves as a mark of a true believer.
- **Venial Sin:** A term for minor or less serious sins, often contrasted with mortal sins in Catholic tradition.

Greek Language Study

Greek Word	Phonetic Pronunciation	Definition
Nomos ¹	NO-moss	The law.
Martia ²	mar-TEE-ah	Sin; literally "missing the mark," like an archer missing a target.
Idakia ³	ee-dah-KEE-ah	Unrighteousness; a failure to live a life of righteousness.
Pasco ⁴	PAH-skoh	All, every, or everyone; used to show that the rules of sin and lawlessness apply to all people without exception.

Footnotes

¹ **Nomos**: Referenced in the discussion of "Antinomianism" (anti-law). ² **Martia**: (Hamartia) Mentioned as the definition of sin as missing the mark of God's standard. ³ **Idakia**: (Adikia) Defined as the failure to achieve the standard of righteousness. ⁴ **Pasco**: (Pas) A term used six times in the text to emphasize that these biblical principles cover "everyone" or "whoever."