

## **Study Guide: 1 John Lesson 59**

**April 22, 2026**

This study guide explores Lesson 59 of the First John series, focusing on how a relationship with God through Jesus Christ fundamentally changes a person's nature. It examines why true believers cannot continue in a lifestyle of habitual sin and highlights the role of the Holy Spirit in the process of "new birth."

### **Quiz: Reviewing the Lesson**

*Instructions: Provide a short-answer response of 2 to 3 sentences for each question based on the material provided in the lesson.*

1. According to the lesson, what is the primary result of becoming a "real" or "true" Christian?
  2. Why did the Apostle John write this letter to the churches in Asia Minor?
  3. What is the difference between a "change in status" and a "change in nature" regarding salvation?
  4. What are the two categories of tests John provides to help determine if someone is a true believer?
  5. How does the lesson distinguish between a Christian who sins and someone who "practices" sin?
  6. What does the "seed" of God remaining in a believer signify for their salvation?
  7. How does the Holy Spirit interact with the Word of God to produce the new birth?
  8. What is "monergism," and how does it relate to the process of being born again?
  9. Describe the "pop gospel" and why the lesson identifies it as a false teaching.
  10. Why is the "spiritual world" described as being more real than the physical world?
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## Answer Key

1. Becoming a true Christian results in a life that is dramatically changed from the former life. Because the Word of God is a changing element, a person cannot remain the same as they were before coming to the Lord.
  2. John wrote this letter to protect the church from false teachers who claimed to know God while living in unbroken sin. He wanted to ensure that believers were not deceived and could clearly identify who the true children of God are.
  3. A change in status only refers to a person's eternal destination or "legal" standing. A change in nature involves a complete transformation of a person's desires, motives, hates, and goals through the power of God.
  4. John provides doctrinal tests and behavioral tests. Doctrinal tests examine a person's view of Jesus Christ and sin, while behavioral tests look at their obedience to God's Word and their love for others.
  5. While Christians still stumble and sin, they do not sin habitually or in an unbroken pattern. When a true believer sins, it bothers them, leading them to repent and confess rather than continuing in a relentless pattern of iniquity.
  6. The "seed" refers to the divine life of God implanted in the believer at the time of the new birth. Because this seed is incorruptible and remains in them, it refutes the idea that true salvation can be lost.
  7. The Holy Spirit is the agent who produces the new birth, but He uses the Word of God as His tool. By hearing and believing the Gospel, the incorruptible seed of the Word plants new life in the believer's heart.
  8. Monergism is the theological belief that God alone is the agent of human salvation. Just as an infant does not cooperate in its own procreation, a person is made alive by the power of God's Spirit alone.
  9. The "pop gospel" is a version of Christianity that focuses on emotional moments or one-time events rather than life transformation. It suggests that a person can be saved without practicing righteousness or changing how they live.
  10. The spiritual world is considered more real because it is eternal and will go on forever. In contrast, the physical world is temporary and will eventually pass away or burn up.
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## Essay Questions

*Instructions: Use the information from the lesson to write a detailed response to the following prompts.*

1. **The Role of the Trinity:** Explain how God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit each contribute to the believer's incompatibility with sin.
2. **The Nature of Transformation:** Discuss the specific changes that occur in a believer's mind, emotions, and will during regeneration. Why is it impossible for a "new creation" to remain the same as the "old man"?
3. **Testing the Spirit:** Compare and contrast the characteristics of a "child of God" with a "child of the devil" as outlined in 1 John 3:10. Focus on the roles of righteousness and love.
4. **The Power of the Word:** Analyze why the Word of God is described as an "incorruptible seed." How does its eternal nature provide security for the believer?
5. **Confronting False Security:** Using the text, argue against the idea that someone can "have their salvation and their sin together." How does Satan use this deception to infiltrate the church?

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## Detailed Lesson Synthesis: Our Incompatibility with Sin

### The Reality of Transformation

The core argument of 1 John 3:9-10 is that true salvation results in a dramatically changed life. The lesson emphasizes that the Word of God acts as a changing element. If an individual claims to be a Christian but continues to live exactly as they did before, they have not experienced true salvation. This transformation is not merely a "change in status" (where one's eternal destination changes) but a "change in nature" (where one's internal desires and dispositions are made new).

### Identifying False Teachings

John wrote his letter to supervise churches in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey) that were under assault by false teachers. These teachers claimed to possess eternal life while living in "unbroken sin." In the modern context, this is referred to as the "pop gospel"—a teaching that emphasizes emotional moments or signing papers over actual life transformation. Such teachings provide a false sense of security and are described as a "devil's lie" intended to lead people away from the truth.

### The Tests of a True Believer

To distinguish between true believers and those who are deceived, John provides two categories of tests:

- **Doctrinal Tests:** Assessing a person's understanding of Jesus Christ and their view of sin.
- **Behavioral Tests:** Observing a person's conduct. This includes:
  - Submission and obedience to the Word of God.
  - Righteous patterns of behavior.
  - Love for other believers (the brethren), for God, and even for the unconverted.

### The Role of the Trinity in Sanctification

The lesson highlights how all three members of the Trinity make sin incompatible with the life of a believer:

1. **God the Father:** He brings believers under His law, changing their attitude toward it so they no longer worship lawlessness but desire to adhere to His commands.
2. **Jesus Christ the Son:** He lifts away the believer's sin, joins them to righteousness, and destroys the sovereign dominance of Satan in their lives.
3. **The Holy Spirit:** He is the agent of the "new birth" (regeneration), planting the divine seed of God within the believer.

### Regeneration and the "Seed" of God

The Greek concept of the "seed" (*sperma*) is central to understanding 1 John 3:9. When a person is born of God, a new life is embedded in them, similar to how a seed grows into a human life.

- **The Tool of the Spirit:** The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to trigger this new birth.
- **The Nature of the Seed:** The seed is described as "incorruptible" and "imperishable." Because this divine life abides within the believer, they cannot continue in a relentless, unbroken pattern of iniquity.
- **Vivification:** This is the work of divine power where the Holy Spirit makes a person who was "dead in trespasses" alive in Jesus Christ.

### Scripture References (NKJV)

- **1 John 3:9:** "Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God."
- **1 John 3:10:** "In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother."
- **2 Corinthians 5:17:** "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."

- **Galatians 5:13:** "For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."
  - **Ephesians 2:8-10:** "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works..."
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### Glossary of Key Terms

- **Brethren:** Fellow believers in Jesus Christ; members of the Christian family.
  - **Disposition:** A person's inherent qualities of mind and character; their natural outlook or mood.
  - **Incompatibility:** The state of two things being unable to exist or happen together; in this context, true faith and a lifestyle of habitual sin.
  - **Incarnate:** Something that cannot perish, decay, or be destroyed; refers to the eternal nature of God's Word and the new life He gives.
  - **Manifest:** Clearly revealed, made obvious, or easy to see.
  - **Monergism:** The doctrine that the Holy Spirit is the only agent in regeneration, and that the human will does not cooperate in the initial act of salvation.
  - **Regeneration:** The spiritual transformation or "new birth" brought about by the Holy Spirit.
  - **Sanctify:** To set apart as holy; the process of being made more like Jesus Christ in character.
  - **Vivification:** The act of being made alive or invested with life; the quickening of the spirit by God.
  - **Workmanship:** The degree of skill with which a product is made; the lesson refers to believers as God's "masterpiece."
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## Greek Terminology

The following terms were used in the lesson to provide deeper insight into the original biblical text:

<b>Greek Word</b>	<b>Phonetic Pronunciation</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Sperma</b> [ <sup>1</sup> ]	SPER-mah	Seed, offspring, or descendants; the divine life-principle implanted by God.
<b>Theos</b> [ <sup>2</sup> ]	THEH-os	God; the supreme divine being.
<b>Gennaho</b> [ <sup>3</sup> ]	gen-NAH-oh	To be born, begotten, or brought forth; used to describe the second birth.

[<sup>1</sup>]: Used in 1 John 3:9 to describe the "seed" of God that remains in the believer. [<sup>2</sup>]: Combined with "sperma" (Sperma-theos) to denote the "seed of God." [<sup>3</sup>]: Often used in the New Testament to describe being "born again" or "born of the Spirit." (Source reference: "ganelo ana ganelo").