

**1 John 3:4-6**  
**“Practicing righteousness”**

- I. Intro**
- II. Vs. 4-6 Destroyed roots**

**I. Intro**

The start of chapter 3 makes it abundantly clear that John is address the true child of God who is enjoying the benefits of their relationship with God. As we noted last week in 2:28 John used *three words that spoke of the advantages of the Child of God: ABIDE, APPEARS, and ASHAMED!*

*ABIDE*: Is John’s primary exhortation to believers, “*stay where you are at!*” The believer’s calling in maturity, their advancement is to “*STAY PUT*”. “Stay put”, in believing truth, stay put in living that truth out towards others in love, stay put in obey the truth by dying to self-centeredness.

*APPEARS*: Next John wrote, “*WHEN, He appears*” not “*IF, He appears*”. John states the return of Christ as a FACT, a certain expectation. This reminds the believer that any such test taken now is to make certain that you will *PASS the FINAL EXAM!* It is clear that John wanted this exhortation of Jesus soon return to produce, “*confidence*” in the present!

*ASHAMED*: The final word John used was “Ashamed” and in context speaks of the “sorrow at our unfaithfulness” is related to His coming! John is NOT speaking to the loss of salvation instead it speaks of the LOSS of joy that a groom or bride may feel at their wedding knowing that they have been unfaithful to the love of their life! In the first three verses of chapter three John’s focus was:

1. Vs. 1 *What we are*
2. Vs. 2 *What we shall be*
3. Vs. 3 *What we should be*

Now as we move onto this section John moves back to “*What we are NOW*”. His words are to remind the believer of the transformation granted the person of faith because Jesus was “*manifested to take away our sins*”. Our fellowship with God that John wrote of in the first three verses of chapter three where God’s love was bestowed upon us, transforming us into the children of God also took away our sins making this fellowship possible. Sin separates us from enjoying this fellowship, it disengages us from the benefits of God’s bestowed LOVE! The true Child of God will NEVER want that to remain for any length of time. Our obedience to God is not because we are afraid of Him it’s because we LOVE Him because He first loved us. I remember hearing a story of a young boy who had been adopted. He had come from a very abusive home and had also been abandoned and left to fend for himself. When he was rescued he was placed in an emotionally cold orphanage where he remained for several years. One day he was told that he had a visitor who wanted to meet him, he had gone through this before only to be rejected. But when he meet this man he saw someone that wanted him, was interested in him. The papers were signed, and he left to live with this man and his wife, he never knew what LOVE was until he went to live with this new family, and it didn’t take long for him to grow in love with them because they had first loved him. It wasn’t but a few years when he was in high school that the true value of this relationship was put to a test. He had been invited to a party and didn’t know that they would have alcohol drinks and drugs. His friends invited him to enjoy the party, but he refused to participate. This made his friends uncomfortable who continued to encourage and even make fun of him for not doing what they were doing. Finally, someone asked why he wouldn’t get drunk and smoke pot. And He told them, “My mother father wouldn’t approve of this!” The friends misunderstood his fear, as they thought it was that he was afraid of his father hurting him, but he corrected them when they suggested this and instead said, “*Oh I’m*

**NOT afraid of my father hurting me, I'm afraid that my actions would hurt him and love that I've enjoyed these last few years and I don't want to ever be apart from their love.** That's the

point of John's words now!

Vs. 4 John takes up the issue of what separates us from enjoying God's love and that is our sin.

Notice in verse 4 that John defines two things about sin:

1. Vs 4 **Whoever commits sin**: First John describes **sin as an action as he uses the word "commits" and in the Greek means a completed action.** This word speaks of "**practicing sin**". In using this word, it speaks of a person whose behavior has a disregard to the moral law thinking that it doesn't apply to them. Secondly, **John uses the word "SIN" and not "SINS". John's point of view in this is the "ROOT" of the person who is practicing sin and not the individual "FRUITS" that are being produced by that root!** In other words, the person that John is addressing is practicing sin at the root of their life as the "**root always determines the fruit**".
2. Vs. 4 **Sin is lawlessness**: Next John connects this action of practicing sin to living a life that doesn't think that the "moral law" applies to them. They may hold others to a moral standard but don't believe they are under the same obligation. This person isn't ignorant of the truth instead they just don't believe that this truth applies to them. To which John declares that it doesn't matter if they "think" it doesn't apply to them, they will be held accountable.

Vs. 5 To make matters worse such a condition need not be the Child of God's experience as we are told in verse 5 that one of the reasons for Jesus' "manifestation" was to eliminate this condition from those that believe in Him. Practicing sin at the root of our life should never be admitted into our Christian life as Jesus came to destroy "sin" at the very root! Furthermore,

since Jesus has destroyed the “root” of sin and has given us a new nature then we shoot no longer of the “root of sin”. Oh, we may very well still have some branches and leaves, but we need to recon them dead in Christ. Since Jesus has dealt with the root then there ought not be any fruit of sin being continually harvested in our lives! Notice that such work of Jesus is completed as we. Are told in verse 8 that part of the purpose of Jesus was to “*destroy the works of the devil*”. As children of God, those who have experienced His love lavished upon us doesn’t mean that God now has “no rules” instead it means as a part of His family we have a higher standard than the law as our motive is Love and not fear! Since we have been transformed SIN is a matter of the will now. When we assert our will above God’s Word then we are in rebellion and this rebellion is at the root of all sin, believing that our way is better than God’s! We can be outwardly compliant but inwardly still be rebellious to God. There was a child riding with her father who refused to put her seatbelt on, the discussion continued until the dad told his daughter if she didn’t comply he would pull over and spank her for her disobedience. She believed him and put on her seatbelt but about 5 minutes later she turned to her dad and said, “*Papa, I just want to let you know that inside I’m still standing up!*”

Vs. 6 John connects the work of Jesus at removing the root of sin within us with our “staying at home with him”. If we have truly united our hearts with Jesus then we won’t want to be anywhere that He isn’t. A man can get married to a woman but then not stay at home and be out with our women, now they may say that they are married but the “root of their behavior” shows that they are not! That’s John’s point in verse 6. It seems as though there were some in the church that said that as long as you said I do to Jesus it didn’t matter if you didn’t act as if you were married to Him. John says that when we said yes to Jesus we said no to all others, and we will stay at home with Him and not practice sin anymore. ***The whole work of the Cross of Christ***

*is denied when a professing Christian practices to deliberately sin.* The person who deliberately and habitually practices sin is proving that the root of sin remains intact and either does not know Christ or at very least are not abiding in Christ!