

# The Floral Heights Informer

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## Is Man Constrained to Sin?

By Luis Zamora

**Is man constrained to sin? Yes:**

Romans 3:9, "...for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin." Romans 3:23, "...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

These passages teach plainly that all people have sinned. The Scripture cannot be broken, so all future generations that may come to pass will also sin. It is an unavoidable fact from God that all people--whether brought up in a religious tradition or not--will sin and need salvation.

**But is man constrained to practice sin? No.**

I Jn. 3:4-10 teaches that a distinction between the practice, or habit, of sin versus the practice of righteousness. When he says, "No one who abides in Him sins," we are forced to reconcile it with his earlier statement, "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). How can both these statements be true?

The answer is that there is a difference between an occasion of sin and a habit of sin. One lie, while sinful, does not make you a *liar*. A *liar* is someone who *regularly* tells lies, whose *practice* it is to lie. Christians sometimes tell a lie because, "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves." But *faithful* Christians *cannot* be liars because, "No one *who abides in Him* sins."

This is why, "The children of God and the children of the devil are obvious." You can see what their habit of life is. Those who practice righteousness are righteous while those who practice sin are of the devil.

I Corinthians 10:11-13 teaches that we are able to escape temptation by the help of God. In fact, God will not allow us to be tempted beyond our ability. We can do the right thing.

**So, can man live a sinless life? No.**

We are *not* teaching that you can live a sinless life. We *are* teaching that you can live a life that does not *practice* sin (I Jn. 1:8, 10). Just because God has made a way of escape for us doesn't mean we will always take it. In fact, God has also said that we will *not* always take it.

**But can man walk in the light and know he is saved? Yes.**

## Local News:

**Welcome to all our visitors.** We pray that you will be edified by our service and that you will ask questions if things are not as you are accustomed to seeing. Please come back at your every opportunity.

We welcome back the **Winther family** to the Floral Heights church of Christ. They have been in California for the last 3 plus years.

Check out our **live chat line on Monday evenings at 8:00 PM!** <http://www.floralheightschurchofchrist.org/chat/>  
Although the chat line is designed to preach to the lost members of the church are encouraged to log on and participate in Bible discussion too.

**Continue to pray for our shut-ins:**

**Stella Davidson**  
696-1030 (Home)

**Verlon Powell**  
Rolling Meadows Health Care Room 31

**Calvin York:**  
692-0489 (Home).

**Bessie Murphy**  
4600 Taft Blvd, Apt. 538

The Scripture is plain: You can know you have eternal life (I Jn. 1:6-7; 2:1a; 5:13). We are to “walk in the light” in order to have forgiveness through His blood. The intent is, “that you may not sin.” It is clear that walking in the light means living a righteous life--following in the steps of the Savior. God intends for us to live a life that walks with Jesus and does not sin. At I Jn. 2:3-5a John telling us to keep the commandments--the word of God--in order to perfect our love of God. We now understand that walking in the light means living by the light of His word--doing the will of the Father as it has been recorded in the Bible.

### **Where does Jesus fit into this?**

Jesus had a human body as we do. He suffered hunger, cold, pain, loneliness--all the things we suffer. He had flesh as we have flesh. But He did not sin, where we have all sinned (Heb. 4:15). Matthew 4:1-11 and 1 John 2:15-17 show that Jesus was tempted as we are tempted. The three things in the world of sin that test us--the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life--were brought to bear against Him, and He was victorious through the word of God: “It is written....”

What does it mean to deny that Jesus came in the flesh (I Jn. 4:1-3)? To be sure, there were religious sects in the days of the apostles that were teaching Christ was a mere apparition or ghost, not an actual resurrected body. No one is teaching such a doctrine today.

However, if we consider their application, their doctrine becomes familiar today. They taught that Jesus could not have been real flesh because flesh is inherently flawed and sinful. Because of the flaws of the flesh, they reasoned, the only way to live a righteous life was to serve God in spirit while serving sin in the flesh. “My body may be engaging in any of a number of sinful activities,” they thought, “but my spirit belongs to God.”

### **The writings of John were meant to counter exactly this false conclusion.**

This doctrine, however, is alive today. Many today erroneously teach that flesh is inherently sinful and is incapable of obedience to God. Their teaching leads to the false doctrine of “salvation by faith alone,” in which a person may lead a sinful life but still be finally saved. In fact, some teach that once a person has been saved, there is no sin he may commit that can cause him to lose his soul afterward! We hope you can see how diametrically opposed this doctrine is to the writings of John.

No single passage outlines all the themes of this study better than II Jn. 1:4-8. Walking in truth and walking according to His commandments are clearly analogous to walking in the light as He is in the light. Loving one another is keeping the commandments and walking in them.

The deceivers (reference 1 John 4) are teaching the opposite. John warns that the false doctrine of these deceivers can cause the loss of what has already been accomplished--the salvation of souls.

We are taught to obey God, to love one another thereby, and to keep watch so that we do not lose our souls. The Bible is clear that all will sin at some point, but it is equally clear that the Christian life does not make a practice of sin.

Set your heart today to serve God acceptably in this crooked generation!

# The Hope of Heaven

## Introduction:

The world we live in has much to offer; however, the benefits are temporary (see I Jn. 2:16-17). When my life is over none of the world's goods will profit me into eternity (Matt. 6:19-20). Why should I be interested in eternity? The Word of God reveals that one day the Lord Jesus will descend from the heavens with the voice of an archangel and the sound of the trumpet and all humanity will be resurrected from the dead (cf. Acts 24:15; I Thess. 4:13-18). Each man and woman will give an account of their life deeds in accordance to the word of God (Jn. 5:26-27; Rev. 20:12). Those who go to heaven will be eternally glorified with the Father (cf. I Cor. 15:39-44; Phil. 3:20-21; I Jn. 3:2-3). Those who walk by their own fleshly desires will be suffer eternal destruction (II Thess. 1:9). The hope of eternal heaven is what keeps every Christian pressing forward through life.

## I. What is Heaven?

- A. An eternal place (Jn. 17:1-5).
- B. A place where God lives (Matt. 5:16, 45, 48 etc.).
- C. A place made possible by Christ (Acts 4:12).
- D. A place that will be occupied by those who have been forgiven of sins (June 24; Rev. 21:27).
- E. A place of the resurrected who have died in the Lord (Rev. 14:13; Jn. 20:16-18; I Cor. 15:16-17) (spirits of just men made perfect / Heb. 12:23).
- F. A place where there will be no sorrows, pain, crying, and death (Rev. 21:3-6).

## II. Heaven Motivates the Christian to Press Onward in this Life:

- A. Heaven is the principle objective, goal, and prize for the Christian (Phil. 3:14, 20).
- B. Knowing the beauties of heaven and the dreadfulness of hell we "strive" to enter into the kingdom of God for eternity (cf. Matt. 10:28; Lk. 13:24; II Cor. 5:11).
- C. Heaven motivates us to endure hardships (Acts 14:22; II Thess. 1:7-8).
- D. Heaven motivates us to assemble as the Lord's church (Heb. 10:24-25).
- E. Heaven motivates us to edify one another (Heb. 10:24-25).
- F. Heaven motivates us to obey the words of Jesus (Matt. 7:21-22).

## III. Who will be in Heaven?

- A. No un-forgiven sinner will have a place in heaven (Gal. 5:16-21; Eph. 5:5; I Cor. 6:9-10; Rev. 21:27).
- B. Heaven will be a place for those who learned to separate themselves from the lust and pride of this life (Jn. 12:25-26; I Jn. 4:5; 5:5).
- C. Heaven will be a place filled with people who were willing to hear, learn and obey God's truths (Col. 1:1-7).

## Conclusion:

How real is heaven and hell to you? Our efforts to attend worship, edify one another, faithfully endure hardships, and obey gospel instructions speak volumes in relationship to our faith. The author of Hebrews (chapter 11) gives us examples of men and women who believed in the reality of heaven and hell. Why not put your faith in God's promises today and start living a life of purpose?