

Fast Facts #8 1st John 3:6-9

1. It's important to remember to whom and why John is writing this letter. We don't know the specific congregation, but they are Christ followers and well known to John. It was written to correct the erroneous teaching of the Gnostics, who denied the incarnation of Christ. They had been members of the congregation, but obviously did not really know Christ.
2. Verse 6: It's important to understand what the Bible means and what it does not mean. When it says, "does not sin", in the verb tense John uses it, it literally means not to live a lifestyle of habitual sin. John told us in 1:8, "That if we say we have not sin, we deceive ourselves". So here he is speaking of a continued lifestyle of sin. He is not teaching the possibility of sinless perfection – only Christ achieved this.
3. Verse 7: John is writing to warn them against the deceivers of that day, the Gnostics. We are made righteous before God through faith in Jesus Christ and that righteousness in Jesus will be evident in our lives. Some of the deceivers were teaching that you could be righteous with no evidence in your life. John rebukes this idea. If we've been saved, there will be evidence in our lifestyle.
4. Verse 8: John is saying that those who participate in habitual sin, with no remorse or repentance, are of the Devil. Jesus came, John said in verse 5, to take away our sins. Now he gives another reason "to destroy the works of the devil".
5. Verse 9: Again, we have the same verb tense as in verse 6. Yes, we will all sin, but not the continual practice of habitual sin. Being born again means a real change.