



## The *Pulpit Exchange*

It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. (1 Corinthians 1:21)  
So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. (Nehemiah 8:8) Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend. (Proverbs 27:17)

Volume 1, No. 5

May 2006

### The Sin Not Unto Death —1 John 5:16

The subject *A Sin Not Unto Death*, is found in I John 5. This is a Scripture that in a sense can be hard to be understood. I have read over this Scripture many times without really arriving at a conclusion what I thought is meant by a sin not unto death. As I studied it, I was impressed with a truth. I will present it as something for us to consider.

There is a special blessing in studying some of the portions of Scripture that God has given to us that are not immediately clear to us. We believe that our Bibles were given to us by God.

God knows all truth and He desires to reveal all truth to us. Everything He has said, He wants us to understand. If He has given it, it is possible to understand. God would not share something with us which we could not understand. I am sure this is not the last time this verse will be discussed. I trust we can be inspired. Many times we also find that when there is a verse given that seems to be veiled in some ambiguity, it is not because it is necessarily a complex truth. Rather, many times it is so simple, and it is hard to put into words.

#### IN THIS ISSUE

*Inspirational*

**The Sin Not Unto Death —1 John 5:16**

**77**

*Book Reprint*

**One Hundred Lessons In Bible Study**

**93**

In Romans 9, there is the concept of predestination. I give this as an example as an example of a subject that, in our small minds, can be extremely difficult to understand. However, it is so simple. We know that our God knows everything from the beginning to the end. God has ultimate knowledge. There is nothing that He does not know. God knows where each of us will be in eternity, but we do not.

Thus, this gives us the reality that God knows. The reality is that we do not. Men have got themselves in a lot of trouble trying to decide for sure where they will be before they are in eternity. I give this as an example of something that can be very simple. Take the time to read this whole chapter and get the spirit of the context, and the mind of the writer. The chapter opens by discussing how we can know. Notice as you read through,

Vol. 1 No. 5, May 2006. The Pulpit Exchange is a compilation of written sermons without commentary, published as often as possible, in the interests of promoting sound preaching in our conservative Anabaptist churches. All sermons have been transcribed and printed with permission. Names are removed so that we can focus on the message and content rather than on a certain speaker or style. (Names will be published in the next issue). Messages have been selected on the basis of topic rather than the speaker. Messages have been selected from congregations within the Conservative Mennonite Church of Ontario, Conservative Mennonite Churches of York and Adams Counties, PA., Eastern Pennsylvania Mennonite Church, Maranatha Amish Mennonite Churches, Mennonite Christian Fellowship, Nationwide Fellowship Churches, Ohio Wisler Mennonite, Washington-Franklin Mennonite Conference, and certain selected unaffiliated Amish Mennonite congregations. We welcome submission of recorded sermons, topics, school meetings, writer's meetings, and special conferences by ministry and laity (where recording is permitted) provided permission has been obtained by the speaker for the recording. Submissions must have a title, the name of the speaker and the congregation responsible for recording (date would be helpful).

Published by Door of Peace Publications/Les Editions «Porte-de-Paix»  
A conservative Amish Mennonite/Anabaptist publisher  
c/o Keith G. White, P.O. Box 104, Blyth, Ontario Canada NOM 1H0

Cost per Issue \$3.50 + \$2.50 p& h Canada/ \$3.50 p& h USA

many times it says, "We can know." Also the writer, through this chapter, emphasizes the importance of faith. In the verse which we are discussing (verse 16), it discusses the importance of our faith in prayer and that we should pray with faith. When we pray, we should have faith that God hears us. We should not pray, and after we are done wonder if God really was listening. The writer of John encourages us in assurance. A common theme through the book of John is assurance of salvation — how we can know we are saved.

"And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." (verse 15) Do we have the kind of faith that whatever we ask of God, we know God hears us? And, that if we ask something, we know that if it is God's will, we will have it? This is a challenge to our faith. In verse 16, I see an example, an illustration, of something John thought of, which was something we can pray for, and that we can know God will hear us. We have a few pronouns in verse 16. I will substitute two names — William and Robert. "If any man see his brother . ." that is how the verse begins. We will call "any man," William, and we will call his

brother, "Robert." We will read this verse and try to put their names in for the pronouns that are here to help make it a little clearer. "If [William] sees [Robert] sin a sin which is not unto death, [William] shall ask, and he shall give [Robert] life for [his] sin that is not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that [William] shall pray for it." I believe the second pronoun "he" is either God or William. It could be God working through William — William's intercession shall give Robert life.

"All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death. We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen." (verses 17-21)

What is the writer speaking of when he says, "There is a sin unto death?" Is it possible that there could be some sin, some unrighteousness, which we could do that we would not have to suffer a

punishment for? Is it possible that this is true? — "a sin not unto death." This raises some questions in our mind and it should raise questions, because from the beginning of time, God said that sin brings death. We remember God told Adam and Eve, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:17) Did God say, "maybe die?" No, He said "surely die." There was no question. Sin always brings death. Our verse says, "there is a sin not unto death." How do we understand this? Ezekiel 18:4 also says, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die."

We do not want to get far away from that. There is a simple truth in this passage which we want to catch, but "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Another question that faces us immediately as we study these verses is, "Is it possible for us to pray for the sin of someone else?" William was praying for Robert. Robert sinned. Is it possible for us to pray for someone else, and for God to forgive that person, because we prayed for them? Think about that also.

Another question we could ask is, "Why should we pray for a sin that does not have consequences anyway?" If the sin will not end in death why should we pray for it? This is another question we can think about. Now let us look at the

context a little bit more. The beginning of our chapter opened with the reality of the relationship that we can have with God. We can know that we are God's children, as we exercise faith. Verse 13 also, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life."

In verse 14, the subject of prayer is opened, and we have a very important truth which we want to remember right through our discussion. This is that all prayer must be according to God's will. If we do not pray according to God's will, God will not hear us. Right? The Scripture says that "if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us." This is why we should always pray, "if the Lord will." If we sometime would slip and ask God for something and we do not say, "the Lord's will . . . Thy will be done," I do not think that it means God did not hear what we said. God is still concerned with our request, but God will not be forced to do something for us that He does not want to do. We cannot force God into a box and say, if we pray for something, "You must do it." God will fulfill our requests according to His will and we always pray in His will. Let us remember that.

These verses give us a good lesson on how we should pray and exactly how we go about praying for something, maybe praying for a sin in someone else's life. How do we pray for sin in other people's life? In verse 15 we see another truth. We can know that God is pleased to answer prayers made according to His will. We know that God will answer us. God is not trying to be contrary. He does not try to withhold something from us that would be good for us, like Satan did when he came to Eve and said, "Yea, okay ... but if you would have a knowledge of good and evil, it would be better." Eve was better off the way she was with simply a knowledge of good. Satan tries to insinuate that God is withholding something from us, even today.

What is a "sin not unto death," in verse 16? I want to mention one thing here in opening. I do not believe the common interpretation of this verse simply because this has been suggested by many. I want to give a few reasons in case we have heard this interpretation and have used it for this Scripture. Some would say that the "sin that is unto death," is a very bad sin that we should not pray for which is sinning against the Holy Spirit. Therefore, there is no way for God

to forgive sinning against the Holy Spirit. Since it is a sin unto death, this is a sin that we should not pray for. These other sins, which are not unto death, are sins which people do that if they repent they can be saved. This interpretation has been used for these verses.

There is one simple reason why I cannot accept that and this: I know of no way of deciding if the person has committed the unpardonable sin. I do believe it is possible since the Bible says it. It is possible for a person to continually go against the voice of the Spirit, quench the Spirit, and despise the Spirit's voice till it comes to a time where the Spirit will not speak to that person. I believe there are people like that, but I do not believe we can decide who that is. Therefore, on that basis, how can we decide not to pray for them? I cannot accept that interpretation for this verse because I do not think we should come to a place, where we will say, "Okay, I think this person committed the unpardonable sin. I will not pray for him, because the Bible says we should not pray for him."

We should pray for everyone that has life. Maybe you have some other explanation of that for me,

but I think that interpretation of these verses, puts these verses in an exotic category that does not even pertain to us. God does not give us truth that does not apply to us. Another thing we want to mention at the beginning when we are trying to discern what this sin is, is that this sin, that is not unto death, is not to be confused with a sin that is unto death. We read in verse 16, "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death." Immediately following this we read, "There is a sin unto death." He wants us to be very sure that we understand that a sin that is not unto death, which we are talking about is never to be confused with sin that God will judge. We do not want to get that mixed up. The writer John gave this truth with some reservation. He continues, immediately following it with truth to establish the truth of other Scripture which says, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." He says, "There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it." Again in verse 17 he says, "All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death." He said, "There is a difference."

1) A sin that is not unto death is not to be confused with a sin that is unto death. 2) We would say

that this sin that is not unto death is a sin that you can pray for. He says that we are to pray for this sin. I do not believe it is right, according to the Scripture, to ever pray for a sin in someone else's life that they have committed against God when they know they have committed it against God and they are convicted in their hearts that it is sin. When they know they have sin in their lives, it is never right for us to pray and ask God to forgive them of that sin.

An example of this is if we have a family member who may be divorced and remarried, and we have testified to them that it is sin to live in a divorce and remarried state. We cannot go to God and say, "God, forgive my brother who is living in sin." We cannot pray for that kind of sin. This is not what this verse is speaking about. It would not be according to God's will to ask God to forgive someone who is guilty. God is merciful and longsuffering, but He will "by no means clear the guilty." (Exodus 34:7) There is no way God will forgive a guilty person, understanding by this, that when we repent, we are no longer guilty. If we repent of our sin, we are no longer guilty and God will forgive us. God never forgives someone unless they first repent.

We cannot pray for people to be forgiven in that state. This is one thing we are sure of — we cannot pray for a person who is willfully, knowingly sinning against God. We may pray for sinners, but we do not pray for their sin. I think maybe this would be another way to understand this Scripture.

This brings us now to my making a suggestion of a sin that we cannot pray for. In Romans 5 we have some other hard things to be understood in some ways. Paul helps us understand in Romans 5 how we can be justified in God's sight, and how we really can be saved. I will "break into" the middle of verse 18, trusting some of your knowledge of the context, "Therefore as by the offence of one." This speaks of the offense of Adam. Since Adam sinned, all men have come under the curse of sin. "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." The "free gift" that came here, and this one, "the righteousness of one," is Jesus.

Jesus was that righteous One. By His righteousness, this free gift, or we would say salvation, "came upon all men unto justification of life." Do we believe this? Some people believe that since

Adam died, all men became sinners, and since Jesus died, all men become saints. Is this what this Scripture is saying? Some of you are shaking your heads 'no.' I would like to say that it is saying that.

Okay, now wait a minute. I will give this as an illustration. When a man and woman in your neighbourhood live in sin (both of them) they are both sinners. When they have a child born into the world, is the child saved or lost? We would say that the child is saved. Why is the child saved? If it had not been that Jesus came to this world, and suffered and died for us, the child would be lost. However, since Jesus came, suffered and died, all innocent people are saved. This innocent child, who did not rebel against God, is a saved person. I believe that is what the writer of Romans is saying, that as by the offense of one, every one of us has a taint of sin in our lives, even so, every one of us that have been born into this world, has been saved. The blood of Jesus atones for every child who is born into this world.

When do we become unsaved? It happens when we begin to resist and rebel against God. That child of the neighbour's will come to a place in its life, where they are

made aware of the knowledge of right and wrong, and they will personally need to make a decision how and what they will do with Jesus. At that place, they may become lost, unless they repent and acknowledge that they are born a sinner, and that they need the work of Jesus.

Thus, we could say that 1) a sin that is not unto death is a sin of innocence. This is what we will call it. For instance, we may have a child who is five years old. One day while you are about the house, he goes to the cookie jar, takes cookies out of the jar, and eats them. He knows that he is not to take cookies out of the jar, when he is not allowed to, and we are made aware that he took cookies out of the jar. He took the lid off. Therefore we go to "Johnny" and say, "Johnny did you eat cookies?" He replies: "No." Now, Johnny did two things wrong. Number one, he disobeyed. Number two, he lied. Did Johnny sin? Now, wait a minute. We have to be clearer than this. The Apostle John says, "All unrighteousness is sin." Johnny sinned. Johnny did something that was exactly the opposite of the nature of God. "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft," (I Samuel 15:33) and what

he did was wrong.

It was unrighteous. So, we could say, as John says right here, "All unrighteousness is sin." The reason we are so hesitant is because I need to ask another question, was Johnny a sinner? No. Johnny is not a sinner. Why not? It is because he is innocent. He is not a sinner before God. God does not think of what he has done as something that requires eternal punishment, because Johnny is not of the age of accountability. Johnny does not understand that his taking of cookies will result in going to hell, and he should not understand that because a child that age is not accountable. He is accountable to his parents.

Johnny has transgressed against the authority of his parents. If Johnny grows up and continues to disobey and lie, he will be a sinner, but at five years old. Johnny is not a sinner, but he has sinned. I give this as an example, number one, of a sin that is not unto death. Johnny sinned, but he will not die. He is not guilty before God. He is guilty to his parents. His parents need to take care of that problem and help him, so that when he gets to age of accountability, he will respond to God in a right way. This is a sin of innocence.

In Romans 5:13, we see another sin that was not unto death

This passage speaks about before the flood and up to the time when God gave the law at Mount Sinai. It says, "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law." Before the law came, sin was in the world. God never holds a person guilty of sin unless he has revealed His law to that person. Someone may not have a knowledge of right and wrong, like Johnny in his innocence. Johnny could have had a knowledge of right and wrong, but not in his relationship to God. This verse says that before the law, there was sin in the world, but sin was not imputed. That word imputed means simply, "to think." Sin was not thought to people. God did not think of man as sinners before he gave the law. God is just and really very fair, when we really come down to it. God gives everyone an opportunity, and God never holds someone guilty who had no knowledge that it was right or wrong. And so we have situations in the Bible like David, a man who was after God's own heart, who was living in some marriage relationships that would be sin for us. Was David a sinner before God? No, because God had not condemned that nature of sin at that time.

We have various Scriptures to help us understand this.

Acts 17:30 says, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." There were some things in the Old Testament that we should not say, "Oh, they did it so it is okay for me right?" No, God says He winked at them then, but now, since we know that it is wrong, God says, "You repent." This verse says, "the times of this ignorance God winked at." I will call this kind of sin, the sin of ignorance. This would be a sin that was not unto death. There would be more illustrations we could give of differences of the Old Testament to the New Testament — things we see that saints did in that time that we know if we would do, would be sin. We will call this a sin in ignorance. It is because of this principle that God does not think of a person as a sinner when they do not understand they are sinning. When those very religious people were mocking and spitting and ridiculing Jesus, and they hung Him up on the cross, what did Jesus say? Jesus prayed a prayer that is the best example I can think of to help us understand our text in 1 John. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34)

Remember we said we can never ask God to forgive a person when they are living in rebellion

to what they know is right. We could say, "Wait a minute. Do we not think that they knew that it was wrong for them to crucify Jesus?" Jesus said, "for they know not what they do." I think for our understanding we need to acknowledge that Jesus was giving them the benefit of the doubt. Maybe they did not understand as much as what we think they might have understood. Some of them may have been like Saul who was travelling to Damascus and was "yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord." (Acts 9:1)

Paul was "kick[ing] against the pricks." Something was bothering him about this whole thing, but he believed he was doing God's service. He was sinning. However, God in His mercy for Paul, since he was sinning, and going against God, but having a desire to serve God, God worked in his experience until Saul came to the place where he was called Paul and he had knowledge that it was sin. Then he ceased sinning at that point. We do not have Saul, or Paul doing a lot of turning around in life. When God revealed His will to Saul, he turned right around and he was

Paul. I believe this would be a situation of a sin in ignorance.

Let us look again to Jesus in His prayer. I mentioned the verse in Acts where it says where Peter said, "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." (Acts 3:17) Peter continued and said "You have killed and destroyed the Just." Peter laid it down at their feet and two verses later he said, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it." Peter said, "Repent ye therefore." (verse 19)

I want us to understand clearly that God is never happy with us living in sin, even sin in ignorance. We do not want to come close to placing a benediction on the concept that ignorance is bliss, because ignorance is not bliss. Sin always has consequences. It may not be death, if we do not have knowledge, but sin always has consequences. Sin is always against the nature of God, and sin is always against us. It will always hurt us in this life, and much more in the life to come. God, in His mercy and grace, reaches out to us. If we are living in sin, in ignorance, God continues to work and His Spirit strives within us, to bring us to knowledge so that we can be made better — be made like Christ. This is God's will and He works in our heart to that end. Thus, there is a sin in ignorance

These may overlap a little bit. The next sin I will mention is again a little bit of crossover. It is a sin in ignorance but I will think about it in a little different sense to help us apply it to our lives. We will call this a sin in development. This is another sin which the Bible acknowledges. Our text verse says, "If any man see his brother sin a sin." We see the very clear picture that William, who is praying for Robert, saw what Robert did as sin. Bill knew it was sin, but Bob did not know it was sin. It was an area in Bob's life where maybe he was a new Christian, or maybe he was simply careless. He committed some sin that he was not aware was sin. We could say it was a sin in ignorance. We will refer to this as a sin in development.

In John 16:12, 13 Jesus says, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." Remember, "All unrighteousness is sin." "Are we 100 percent right-eous? No. I think we all have areas that we need development. Sometimes we have a hard time deciding in our lives, in our struggling with Christian graces and improving and growing more like Christ to know exactly what is sin and what is not

sin. I hope this study can help us in our lives and our understanding of assurance of salvation, as John would have liked to help us. I hope this will help us understand this a little bit better. I believe that there is something like a sin in development. Jesus acknowledged, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth."

Jesus did not say, "Since you do not know about these things, I guess we will just forget about them." No, He said, "My will is that these areas in your life would be perfected and as you are able, the Holy Spirit will continue to work in your heart, and He will speak to you about things." There will be times where we are doing our normal days activity and the Holy Spirit will speak to us about something we did yesterday, or five minutes ago. The Holy Spirit will say, "This is sin. This was unrighteousness." Before the Holy Spirit did that, we could say it was a sin not unto death, because we were not aware of it, but at that point, that sin changes from a sin that not unto death, to a sin that is unto death because God saw fit — he evidently thought that we were able to handle it.

Therefore, His Holy Spirit revealed it to us, "Here is an area that is sin," and so we need to, grow.

In Luke 22:32 Jesus told Peter, "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Jesus said, "Peter, you have a ways to go and I am praying for you that your faith does not fail, but rather it grows, and when you are strengthened, (in other words when the Holy Spirit reveals more sins in your life, and you repent and you become stronger and you have more of those areas in your life behind you) strengthen your brethren." How do we think Peter could strengthen his brethren? One thing he could do was to do what Jesus did and pray for his brother who is sinning not unto death. This is what our passage asks us to do. If we see our brother or sister do something, which if we did it, it would be sin. However, it appears like your brother or your sister does not perceive it as sin.

Sometimes there is more we should do besides simply praying for them. Sometimes we should go and speak. However, maybe sometimes before we are too hasty to speak, we should begin praying, and ask God to do with that brother as He did to us by allowing His Spirit to work in their

heart, revealing that sin to that person, and guiding them into truth — because we desire to see all men freed from sin as God does. Therefore, we have a burden. Whenever we see sin, we have a personal obligation to decide how we will relate to it. If we see it in our brother, depending on what it is, we maybe should go speak to them. Maybe we should go speak to them and take a brother with us and then take it to the Church. Maybe he needs to go that far. Maybe first we can pray about it, and pray for our brother who has sinned not unto death.

This is what we refer to sometimes as progressive sanctification. Another verse that hints at this is I Corinthians 3:2 where Paul said, "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able." We can refer to this as a sin in development. Again we can back right up and say that a sin in development is a sin in ignorance. I do not necessarily say this is different. I have only described it like this to help us understand a little bit more.

Next, we would say, a sin that is not unto death, is unrighteousness that we will not be held accountable for. This fairly reinforces what we have said already.

It is a sin God will not judge us for because we are not guilty at this point. This is what a sin is that is not unto death. I tried to think of some practical examples to make this a little more concrete for us. However, it is really hard because as soon as I tell you that this could be a sin not unto death, immediately the Holy Spirit might work in your heart and it might become a sin unto death. Therefore, I cannot give you a whole lot of illustrations.

One that I think that many people have fallen into is the problem of talking too much. I give this illustration because I think it is a good thing to pray for our brother for. As we go along in life, our brother or someone (maybe it is not our brother) may say something about us that is not true. It is altogether wrong. They say that I went and I did this and I had bad attitudes and they defame our name and we look at that and say, "That is sin. That brother is destroying my name. The Bible says that is like murder. That is a terrible sin." Did you ever receive some wrong information and pass it on? Maybe that person thought that the source was reliable.

As we relate to things like that which come to us, there is one thing that we can do about it, and that is, we can pray for him. Here

is a sin. It is like Jesus on the cross, and we should say, "Father forgive them." We should first try to give them the benefit of the doubt. We should try to say, "Maybe this person does not understand. Maybe they really think that what they are saying is right. They are not trying to do it against me." Pray for them. I think it could be a sin that is not unto death. God can help them in that.

However, like the Bible says, "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin." (Proverbs 10:19) There is the problem of talking too much. We get ourselves in that position too often, God says, "by thy words thou shalt be condemned." (Matthew 12:37) Again, I cannot really tell you, what would be a sin unto death in your life. I cannot do that. "He that refraineth his lips is wise." Maybe we could think of areas in our brother where there is maybe a lack of discipline. He may arrive at church late nearly every Sunday and he or she sleeps in church nearly every Sunday, and we say, "This person has a spiritual interest problem." We can "wax very eloquent" on the weaknesses that are not our problem. We can say, "This is sin." It may be sin. I will not say it is not, but it may be a sin that is not unto death

It may be something that we should pray for, that God would give them victory in that area and would reveal to them how serious that problem really is.

Another description we could have for this sin is a sin that hinders our life but does not cause death. I remind us again that all sin has consequences. This is why we should pray for a sin that is not unto death, even though the person may be, (I do not like to say it) "blissfully ignorant" or simply ignorant at that point. The Spirit has not yet worked with them but that sin will have a consequence with them in their life. That sin will be a wrong witness to other Christians and will ruin the testimony of the church. We desire that this sin would be reconciled in our brother or sister's life. Therefore it is a sin that hinders, but it may be a sin that they are not guilty of at that time. It is an area where God wants to give them life. Another way to see this may be what we would call a sickness of a spiritual condition. Looking again at 1 John 5:18, another way that we could define this sin is that it says, "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not."

A sin that is not unto death is a sin in which Satan cannot touch us. "Whosoever is born of God sinneth not." We have been saying that a Christian, may have a sin in their life that is not unto death. I place a lot of emphasis to understand this verse on the word, "sinneth." That usage (the tense of that word) implies an ongoing knowledgeable sin. We know again, he backs up and wants to help us understand. "We know," this is absolutely certain, no question, that a Christian that is born of God cannot continue on and on in sin, that they have knowledge of. They cannot do it. It is impossible.

So we could say that it is a sin where Satan cannot touch us. He cannot get at us because it is a sin which we would say we are ignorant of. It is a sin that is lacking in rebellion to God. Once we choose against God, then we choose for Satan. When we choose for our flesh, we rebel against God and Satan has touched us. Jesus, while living on the earth, even to the time of the crucifixion, had lived a perfectly pure sinless life. Jesus said, "The prince of this world . . . hath nothing in me" (John 14:30). Satan could not touch Jesus. When Jesus died, there was no sin there. Satan had no right to stand

before God and say, "Jesus is worthy of death," because Jesus was perfect. Jesus was sinless. God wants us to be sinless also. God wants us to be at a place in our Christian lives, where we know of nothing in our life, where Satan could say, "This person knew this was wrong, and they continued on." We need to take this seriously, because we know this is possible. When that exists, somewhere along the way, we cease to become born of God and we are born after Satan. We are following him rather than God.

A sin that is not unto death is a sin that Satan cannot touch us for. Verse 19 says, "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." This truth is nearly the same as the last one. A sin that is not unto death is a sin that we are not laying in. "The whole world lieth in wickedness." Again, we see an ongoing state of rebellion and rejection of God. The world is that way. We are of God and a sin that is not unto death is a sin that we are not laying in. The Christian life is constant battle with sin. There is no time to lay down. We need to be constantly striving and working because the Spirit will be continually revealing things in our life, and trying to help us on, to get rid of those sins that are not unto death.

Some people conclude (I think very wrongly) that we all sin every day. Do we all sin every day? I think that we do not sin a sin unto death every day. I think if they are saying that, we can maybe understand that there are areas of weakness, or areas of development in our life, areas where we need to grow and they could be sins not unto death. We do not rebel against God every day, and do something God knows that we know is wrong. We cannot do that. If we are in that state, we are not saved.

Conclusion. One thing that is very much emphasized in this passage is a love for our brother. As Jesus gave us the benefit of the doubt, so we pray for our brother in his spiritual condition. We somewhat, "To his own master, he standeth or falleth." (Romans 14:4) We attempt to help and we pray. Let us also be reminded to allow this to work the other direction. Let us remember that we might be Bob. Let us allow our brethren to intercede on our behalf. Let us also allow them to come, and allow the Holy Spirit to work through them to help us overcome these and rid our lives of these sins that are not unto death. Let us also remember that God hears and answers prayer. Let us remember that this was the lesson.

God hears all prayer. One "classic" example of it is that we can pray for our brother, or someone and we can know absolutely 100 percent that God heard us.

We might say, "Wait a minute, I have family members whom I have been praying for, for twenty years." Yes, we know that God hears us, and "we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." (verse 15) What did you ask God to do with the brother that you are praying for? Did you tell God that He must save him? How did you pray for him? It is not God's will to save a person if they will not repent. We can have the confidence that if we ask God

to work in the life of a person, God will speak to them. God will in some way work in their conscience. We cannot see that, but we can know it. Let us have faith that God is working, that prayer is real, that God is real, and that sin is real. Let us allow God to continue to work in our lives and be faithful in interceding for those about us because, "we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

Note: This sermon is very closely intertwined with the doctrine of Assurance of Salvation, Progressive Sanctification and Christian Perfection

From the Previous Issue:

**Distinctive Anabaptist Beliefs**

From a message by Kenneth Kreider

Sunday, September 26, 2004

White Oak Mennonite Church

One Hundred Lessons  
IN  
BIBLE STUDY.

SETTING FORTH BY MEANS OF  
OUTLINES AND NOTES

The Biography, Doctrines, etc. of the Holy Scriptures.

BY  
DANIEL KAUFFMAN.  
Author of "Manual of Bible Doctrine."

"Prove all things: Hold fast that which is good."

PUBLISHED BY  
MENNONITE BOOK AND TRACT SOCIETY.  
SPRING GROVE, PA., AND ELKHART, IND.

COPYRIGHT, 1899,  
BY  
MENNONITE BOOK AND TRACT SOCIETY

This Edition Copyright 2006

## Table of Contents

### OLD TESTAMENT.

1. The Creation.
2. The Fall of Man,
3. Sons of Adam.
4. The Deluge.
5. Abraham.
6. Jacob.
7. Joseph.
8. Job.
9. Children of Israel - Servitude in Egypt.
10. Children of Israel - The Deliverance.
11. Children of Israel - Wanderings in the Wilderness.
12. Children of Israel - The Captivity.
13. Moses.
14. Joshua.
15. Samson.
16. Samuel.
17. Saul.
18. David - The Crown Prince.
19. David - The King.
20. Solomon.
21. The Kingdom Divided.
22. The Kingdom of Judah.
23. The Kingdom of Israel.
24. The Ten Commandments.
25. The Levitical Priesthood.
26. Levitical Ceremonies - Sacrifices.
27. Levitical Ceremonies - Sacrifices (concluded).
28. Levitical Ceremonies - Sabbaths.
29. Levitical Ceremonies - Feasts.
30. The Tabernacle.
31. The Tabernacle (concluded).
32. The Temple.
33. The Temple (concluded).
34. The Elder Brother.
35. Noted Heathen Rulers.
36. Noted Heathen Rulers (concluded),
37. Noted Women of the Old Testament.
38. Noted Women of the Old Testament (concluded).
39. Elijah.

40. Elisha.
41. Isaiah.
42. Jeremiah.
43. Ezekiel.
44. Daniel.
45. Minor Prophets.
46. Old Testament Prophecies Fulfilled.
47. Old Testament Prophecies Fulfilled (concluded).
48. The Land of Canaan.

#### NEW TESTAMENT.

1. The Advent.
2. The Ministry of John.
3. Early Life of Jesus.
4. Calling of Disciples.
5. Our Lord's Miracles.
6. Our Lord's Miracles.
7. Our Lord's Parables.
8. Our Lord's Parables.
9. Our Lord's Discourses.
10. Sermon on the Mount.
11. Sermon on the Mount.
12. Sermon on the Mount.
13. Our Lord's Prayers.
14. Our Lord's Prophecies.
15. The Transfiguration.
16. The Crucifixion.
17. From Grave to Glory.
18. Pentecost.
19. The Primitive Church - Organization, etc.
20. The Primitive Church - Opposition.
21. The Primitive Church - Missions.
22. Life of Peter.
23. The Sons of Zebedee.
24. Life of Paul.- Saul of Tarsus.
25. Life of Paul.- The Apostle to the Gentiles.
26. Women of the New Testament.
27. Women of the New Testament.
28. Plan of Salvation.- Faith.
29. Plan of Salvation. - Repentance.
30. Plan of Salvation. - Justification.
31. Plan of Salvation. - Conversion.

32. Plan of Salvation.— Redemption.
33. Plan of Salvation.— Regeneration.
34. Plan of Salvation. — Sanctification.
35. Ordinances.
36. Ordinances.
37. Ordinances.
38. Ordinances.
39. Restrictions.
40. Restrictions.
41. Restrictions.
42. Christian Duties.
43. Christian Duties.
44. Christian Duties.
45. Christian Graces.
46. Christian Graces.
47. The Prodigal Son.
48. Twelve Important Events.
49. Sin./ Righteousness.
50. Death./ Resurrection.
51. Hell.
52. Heaven.

## **PREFACE.**

At a Bible conference held at Tub, Pa., December 27th, 1898, to January 6th, 1899, a motion, was made and unanimously adopted, that a committee be appointed to arrange a course of study suitable for use in Bible Conferences, Young People's Meetings, Bible Readings, or, individual use in searching for Bible truth. The committee appointed were J.S. Hartzler, Elkhart, Indiana, D. H. Bender, Tub, Pa., and Daniel Kauffman, Versailles, Mo. The last named member was chosen to write the book.

This volume is not intended to be read or looked over, for mere pastime, but in order to be interesting, must be carefully studied. It is a fact generally acknowledged that of all books the Bible is least understood, when considered from the standpoint of its importance. "Search the Scriptures, for in them Ye think ye have eternal life." Many books have been written which were intended to simplify that precious Book, yet with all these, many treat it as though it were a sealed volume which they have no power to understand.

The author has brought together the leading texts bearing on the subject under consideration, thus aiding in the power of associating thoughts, which is a great aid to the memory as well as to the understanding. He also treats several subjects which are generally left out of similar books but which are taught by Christ and the apostles. This, in fact, was the cause, in a large measure, for the writing of this book.

An open Bible and a prayerful are essentials to a successful study of this book. Peruse those pages with care, not for the sake of

knowing what the author has in mind, but for the sake of knowing what God says to YOU. Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15.

With the hope that this little volume will at least awaken a greater zeal in the Master's service, and as a result, a few souls be led to study and accept the Gospel of Christ in its fullness, we submit it for the prayerful consideration of the earnest seekers after truth.

THE COMMITTEE.

## **LESSON 1.**

### **The Creation.**

- I. Story of the Creation. — Genesis 1.
  - 1 The first day (1-5).
  2. The second day (6-8).
  3. The third day (9-13).
  4. The fourth day (14-19).
  5. The fifth day (20-23).
  6. The sixth day (24-31).
11. Facts impressed upon the mind by the reading of this story.
  1. The power of God: He had only to speak the word, and all matter sprang into existence. When God speaks, all nature obeys. His word is law, and stands forever.
  2. The perfect order in which God performs all His work. System is written upon every page of God's handiwork.
  3. Separate and distinct creations. No gradual development into higher forms of life, but a distinct creation for every species. No one can embrace the theory of evolution without denying the Bible.

### III. Man,

1. Created in the image of God. - Genesis 1:27,
2. Male and female. - Genesis 1:27; 2:7, 21, 25.
3. Named the lower animals. - Genesis 2:19, 20.
4. Had dominion over all the earth.- Genesis 1:26-30.
5. The vegetable kingdom for his meat.- Genesis 1:29.
6. The institution of marriage.- Genesis 2:23, 24, (Matthew 19:4-6).

### IV. The Garden of Eden.

1. Location and description.- Genesis 2:8-14.
2. Man to have charge of the Garden.- Genesis 2:15.
3. The "tree of knowledge of good and evil." - Genesis 2:17; 3:2, 3.
4. The "Tree of life." - Genesis 2:9; 3:22.
- V. Condition of things at the creation.- Genesis 1:31.
  1. Describe the condition of man in the Garden of Eden.
  2. Discuss the relation of man to the lower animals at this time.
  3. Distinguish between the "tree of life" as mentioned in Genesis and the "tree of life" mentioned in Revelation.
  4. Was man created immortal?
  5. In what sense was man created in the image of God?

## **LESSON 2.** **The Fall of Man.**

- I. The fact of the fall. - Genesis 3:1-6.
- II. Steps in the fall. - Genesis 3:1-6.
  1. Entrance and temptation of Satan (1-5).
  2. Indifference. - Giving place to the devil (2).
  3. Unbelief. - Doubting God's word (6).
  4. Emulation. - Wanting to be like God (5).
  5. Covetousness. - Lusting for what God had prohibited (6) (1 John 2:16).
  6. Disobedience. - Breaking God's commands (6).

NOTE.— These same steps are noticeable in almost every other transgression. The surest way to keep from sin is to cling tenaciously to the right, and absolutely refuse to entertain ideas of doing wrong.

#### 111. Consequences of the fall.

1. Immediate.
  - a. Their eyes were opened.— Genesis 3:7.
  - b. Caused shame (Genesis 3:7); fear, (Genesis 3:10); sorrow (Genesis 3:16, 17).
- C. Banishment from paradise.— Genesis 3:24.
2. Upon humanity in general.
  - a. Sin entered into the world. (Romans 3:9, 23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:3; 1 John 1:10.
  - b. Death.— Genesis 2:17; Ezekiel 3:18.
    - i. Moral or spiritual.— Romans 6:16, 21, 23; 8:13; James 1:15.
    - ii. Physical. — Genesis 3:19, 22; 1 Corinthians 15:21, 22.
  - C. Depravity of man.
    - i. In mind. — Romans 8:5-7.
    - ii. In thought. — Psalm 94:11; Isaiah 59:7
    - iii. In heart. — Jeremiah 17:9; Mark 7:21, 22.
    - iv. In conscience. — Titus 1:15; Hebrews 10:22.
    - d. Man fell into bondage of sin and Satan — John 8:44; Acts 13:10; 1 John 3:8-10; Romans 7:14, 23; 2 Timothy 2:26; Hebrews 2:14, 15.
    - e. A curse upon all creation. - Genesis 3:14, 17, 18; Romans 8:19-22.

NOTE — All this was the result of man trying to improve upon the ways of God.

#### IV. A Redeemer promised.— Genesis 3:15.

NOTE — God's love for man moved Him to open a way of escape.

Do we appreciate and reciprocate this love as we should?

1. Was Adam deceived?
2. Are we responsible for the Adamic sin?
3. What was the forbidden fruit?
4. Did Eve have the greater sin?
5. What lesson may be drawn from Genesis 3:12, 13?

## **Catalogue:**

Sermons transcribed and available on various topics.

Book Reprints are available

- The Ministry
- Christ, The Apostles and Wine
- Bible Wines: Laws of Fermentation
- A Talk With Church Members
- The Ideal Christian Home
- The Temperate Life
- Wordly Conformity in Dress
- Dress: A Brief Treatise

## **New Series:**

### ***Practical Nonconformity***

Vol 1 — The Christian, Cards, Contests, Games, and Other Amusements.

Back Issues Available.

Sermon Series also available.

- Mennonite Christian Fellowship  
KY/TN Christian Life Conference  
2004

*Messages include,*  
Christian Leadership in the Home  
The Need for Purity  
The Proactive Christian Nurturing  
Constructive Relationships  
Balance for the Breadwinner