

# When the Spirit Says No

*Ray Stedman*

## I. Introduction.

A. Text: I John 3:9.

B. Triumphalists read this verse and suggest that it is possible to come to the place where a real Christian cannot sin.

## II. Views on this verse.

A. The triumphal view. This view holds that there comes a time when a Christian cannot sin.

B. The Catholic view. This view holds that there are certain sins a believer will never commit (mortal sins), but believers in the Bible commit these.

C. Another view holds that a Christian will not commit willful sin, but David deliberately and willfully murdered and committed adultery.

D. Some argue that sin is not considered sin if it is done by a believer.

E. Others say that John is describing the ideal condition and not the true one.

F. The two-nature view. This view holds that John is contrasting the Adamic nature and the new nature the believer receives from God.

1. The problem with this view is that the whole person is involved in the act of sin.

2. The believer struggles with the flesh. (Romans 7)

G. The final view is that the believer cannot struggle habitually with sin without ultimately forsaking it.

1. John is declaring that sin is no longer true to the believer's nature.

2. The one born of God cannot persist in sin because it is contrary to him.

## III. There comes a time when God asks us to remove things from our lives.

A. God will complete the good work of maturation in the believer. (Romans 8:29)

B. The flesh and the Spirit within are opposed to each other. (Galatians 5)

## IV. The reason for this condition is the believer has been radically changed.

A. We are joined to Christ by regeneration.

B. However, our attitude may not be right in that.

C. The Spirit of God is trying to teach us to rest in that change within us.

D. God forces us into circumstances, which we must rely upon the Spirit.

1. Trust makes us abide--in desperate moments we find ourselves abiding in Christ.

2. Breaking from habitual sin is proof of the new life in Jesus Christ.

**Application questions:**

1. Explain the different views on this verse with regard to sin.

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2. Which view do you find most convincing? Explain.

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3. How can living a holy life be characterized by “rest in that change within?” How can knowing this impact a believer’s spiritual growth?

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