

Do You Mean I Can't Sin At All?

1 John 1:7-2:2

The second chapter of John's first epistle begins with these startling words: "My little children, these things write I unto you, **that ye sin not.**" How shocking! It was God who directed John to write these words. Does God really demand that I not sin? Is God really telling me not to sin at all? How could I ever measure up to this high standard? To the woman accused of adultery, our Lord said, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and **sin no more**" (*John 8:11*). Wasn't He telling her to do the impossible?

Let's think this through. What do we think God should have said to her and to us? Should He say, "You can sin, but just sin a little bit. Don't sin too much." No, God is absolutely holy, and He tells us to not sin at all! Consider the command against worry: "Be careful for nothing," that is, do not worry about anything. God doesn't say, "Just worry a little bit." No, He says, "Don't worry at all." Did Jesus say, "You can lust after a woman, but just lust a little bit" (*Matt. 5:28*)? Did God say, "You can covet what other people have, just keep it low key; don't let your coveting be over the top"? No, God doesn't want us to sin at all.

What kind of God would He be if He wanted His children to sin? Indeed, God **prohibits** sin—all sin, any sin. Yet, blessed be His holy Name, God, in the same verse, recognizes the **possibility** of sin: "And **if any man sin**, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (*1 John 2:1*). We have a Helper in court, a defense attorney, who can answer all of the charges of the accuser (Satan), because all of our sins were paid in full (*1 John 2:2*)!

~George Zeller: www.middletonbiblechurch.org



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