

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

# What Does It Mean to Continue in Christ?

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I John 2:28-3:10

## **1 What does it mean to continue in Christ?**

**Our scripture today Has created controversy in Christian circles. Let's take a look at it and then, I will give you my insights.**

**From First John, chapter 2, verse 28 through chapter 3, verse 10. 2**

**And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming. If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him. 1 3**

**How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.**

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**<sup>1</sup> | John 2:28-29.**

**Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.<sup>2</sup> 4**

**Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.<sup>3</sup> 5**

**Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. He who does what is sinful is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.<sup>4</sup> 6**

**No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do**

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<sup>2</sup> | John 3:1-3.

<sup>3</sup> | John 3:4-6.

<sup>4</sup> | John 3:7-8.

**what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.** <sup>5</sup> <sub>7</sub>

**Is it possible for a Christian to turn his back on God; to walk away from His grace and be lost?**

**Let's look at a couple of other passages that seem to state that it is.** <sub>8</sub>

**First Timothy, chapter 4, verse 1, The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.** <sub>9</sub>

**Another is Hebrews, chapter 6, verses 4 through 6, It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying**

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<sup>5</sup> | John 3:9-10.

**the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.**

**This letter of First John was written for the express purpose of showing Christians whether they have turned away from God's grace or not!**

**Do you know that you can go to church, be baptized and observe all the formalities of church but still not have fellowship with God? <sup>10</sup>**

**God wants you to come and know Him as Lord and Savior. But you need to **continue in Him** <sup>6</sup> and grow to develop into His **workmanship**. <sup>7</sup>**

**My friend, Bill Barker, is a professional artist. He does beautiful canvas oil paintings. When he finishes, he stands back and says, "Yeh. That is what I want. I'm proud of it".**

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<sup>6</sup> I John 2:28 - And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

<sup>7</sup> Ephesians 2:10 - For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

That's what God wants to do with you! <sup>11</sup> But you must continue in Him for that to happen! <sup>12</sup>

## I. Why is It Necessary to Continue in Christ?

- 2:28-3:3

Why is it necessary to continue in Christ? <sup>13</sup>

The answer: because **the Second Coming is going to happen!** And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming. <sup>8</sup> <sup>14</sup>

The word **continue** in the original language <sup>9</sup> means to remain, abide, set up residence, to dwell. It means to stick around!

When Lord Jesus returns, He wants to showcase you to the unbelieving world! “Look at what I made of her! She was a dirty, rotten sinner. But look at what I was able to do with her!” Again, “Look at him! I was able to completely transform his life!” <sup>15</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> I John 2:28.

<sup>9</sup> μένω.

When Lord Jesus returns, He wants you to welcome Him with confidence and not be ashamed. <sup>16</sup>

The word **confidence** <sup>10</sup> literally means to speak openly and honestly; so, to be frank and courageous.

<sup>17</sup>

The words for **unashamed** <sup>11</sup> means not having a fear that would keep you from doing something or being disgraced. <sup>18</sup>

Another reason to continue in Christ is because **you are called children of God**. Chapter 3, verse 1 continues, **How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.** <sup>19</sup>

The name “Christian” sets you apart in the eyes of the world. So, be careful how you behave. You are being observed. People, correctly, expect you to live on a higher standard than they do. <sup>20</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> παρρησία.

<sup>11</sup> μὴ & αἰσχύνω.

But this does not mean you have to walk on eggshells! When you stumble, confess it to the Lord. He forgives you. <sup>12</sup> You're not perfect; just forgiven. So, strive to live better to honor Him as Lord! <sup>21</sup> Your purpose for existence is to grow to the point where you are a positive witness by the way you live. <sup>22</sup>

Another reason to continue in Christ is because **you are children of God**. Continuing with verses 2 and 3, **Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.** <sup>23</sup>

When you are God's child it is natural for you to enjoy continuing with the family. <sup>24</sup> We are growing children in the process of becoming like the Lord. The Bible calls this sanctification! <sup>25</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> I John 1:9 - If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.



We will know what the finished product is like at the Second Coming! <sup>26</sup> The word **purify** <sup>13</sup> is the word for ceremonial cleansing in the Jewish sacrificial system. It means to purify from having been defiled; hence, having moral virtue.

So, expecting and looking forward to the Second Coming is like putting yourself through the ceremonial cleansing process! <sup>27</sup>

So, the next logical question is . . .

## II. How Do You Go About Continuing in Christ? - v4-10

How do you go about continuing in Christ? <sup>28</sup>

**Get out of the sin-oriented life!** Verses 4 through 6 continue, **Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one**

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<sup>13</sup> ἀγνίζω.

**who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.**

**Notice the three things here. <sup>29</sup>**

**Sin is lawlessness; verse 4. It is rebellion! It is the deliberate choosing not to do it God's way! This is not occasional stumbling. This is a sin-oriented life! <sup>30</sup>**

**Second, notice in verse 5, the Lord's purpose for dying on the cross was to deliver you from that lifestyle. <sup>31</sup>**

**Third, in verse 6, apostacy, turning your back on the Lord, is a deliberate choice! If you're worried as to whether you've left the Lord; you haven't! <sup>32</sup>**

**Next, **get into the righteous oriented life!** This is in verse 7, **Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. <sup>33</sup>****

There are only two camps: God's and Satan's! <sup>14</sup> There is no in between arena. <sup>34</sup> Verse 10, **This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God.** <sup>35</sup> It's what you continue doing, your lifestyle, that determines which camp you are in, whether you are righteous or of the devil. <sup>36</sup>

God wants you to leave Satan's camp, the world and its lifestyle, and live in God's camp, the righteous life! **The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.** <sup>15</sup> <sup>37</sup>

What is the righteous oriented life? <sup>38</sup>

First: **obeying the Lord's Royal Law! Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest**

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<sup>14</sup> I John 3: 7-8 - He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

<sup>15</sup> I John 3:8.

commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' <sup>16</sup> <sub>39</sub>

Second: **putting your faith into action!** <sup>40</sup> James, chapter 2, verses 14 through 18, describes what this is. What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. <sup>41</sup>

So, verse 9 wraps this up, No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. If you are born again into the righteous oriented life you won't be in the sin-oriented life! <sup>42</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Matthew 22:37-39.

**Don't be in doubt about where you are with the Lord.**

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**If you left the world and its lifestyle, you are in the Lord's camp. <sup>44</sup> If you are still living the world's lifestyle, you are still in the world! Get out of it and commit your life to the Lord! <sup>45</sup>**

**It's living the life that makes the difference!**

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