

## QUESTION: What is "sin unto death" in I John 5:16?

### ANSWER:

- **I John 5:16** "If anyone sees his brother (another Christian) commit a sin which does NOT lead to death, he will ask [God], and He will give him life for those who commit sin NOT leading to death. There is **SIN leading to DEATH**. I do not say that he should pray about that."

This refers to Christians only, because it says "his brother", which means another Christian. What this means is that a Christian may DIE PHYSICALLY before their time **as a result of CONTINUED SIN**. There comes a point where **PRAYING for such a person is wasted prayer**. There is no particular sin that is "the sin unto death" on a list of sins. It is **whatever sin in that particular person's life** that has a HOLD on them, and which they will not surrender to the Lord. It could be drunkenness for one person, and sexual sin for another person, and pride and materialism for another person. Whatever it is, they have already set their course on a particular path or direction of life, and have resisted the Lord's warnings. If they WILL NOT REPENT, they will have to **SUFFER the CONSEQUENCES** for their sin (see I Corinthians 5:1-5). They are still saved and going to heaven (see I Cor. 3:15), but God has had to remove them from the earth before they cause more damage to other Christians and bring reproach to the name of Christ. However, we don't know who has committed that sin, only God knows, so you should not give up on praying for someone. Bottom line - you can't judge a person and say they've committed the sin unto death **until they DIE**, in spite of all your prayers for them. As long as a Christian is alive and in their right mind, they can REPENT at any time, and God will forgive them, and may spare their life. But remember, **there will ALWAYS be consequences to a life of sin and disobedience**, even if God spares the person's life.

- **Galatians 6:7-8** "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh (the "old man", our SIN NATURE) will of the flesh reap CORRUPTION (sin and DEATH), but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life."

**Definition: "MOCK"** -- To treat with CONTEMPT, to insult; to DEFY or CHALLENGE.

**Definition: "SOWING and REAPING"** -- Sowing means planting seeds, and reaping means harvesting or gathering the crop that has grown from those seeds. We may still have to suffer the CONSEQUENCES of our sinful behavior ("seeds" we have "planted"), even though God has FORGIVEN us. Sowing and reaping is mostly referring to our time HERE ON EARTH, although it may mean a LACK of REWARDS in heaven, as well.

- **Hosea 10:12-13** "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, REAP in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till He comes and rains righteousness upon you. You have plowed wickedness, you have REAPED iniquity; you have eaten the fruit of lies; because you trusted in your own way...."
- **I Corinthians 9:27** "But I DISCIPLINE my BODY and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, **I myself should become disqualified.**"

**Definition: "I myself should become DISQUALIFIED"** -- This verse has nothing to do with going to heaven, but Paul is talking about "preaching to others" and what kind of testimony we are to others. If we have sin in our lives, we will be "disqualified" as far as being a witness for Christ is concerned, and we will appear as HYPOCRITES if we try to preach to others.

- **II Corinthians 5:10** "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive [rewards or judgment for] the things DONE in the BODY, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."
- **Matthew 16:27** "For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will REWARD each according to his WORKS."
- **I Corinthians 3:11-15** "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become manifest; for the Day (of judgment) will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's WORK which he has built on it endures, he will receive a REWARD. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but **he HIMSELF will be SAVED**, yet so as through fire."
- **Romans 8:13** "For if you live according to the flesh **you will die**; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the flesh, you will live."

**Definition: "The DEEDS of the BODY"** -- The "ACTING OUT" of the SINFUL DESIRES of our BODIES. Read chapters 6 and 7 of Romans. Romans 7:23 "But I see another law in my members (BODY), WARRING AGAINST the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of **SIN which is in my members [of my BODY]**."

- **Colossians 3:2 & 5** "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." "Therefore put to death your members (fleshly desires) which are on the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry."
- **I Corinthians 6:18-20** "Flee (run away from) sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the BODY, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own BODY. Or do you not know that **your BODY is the temple of the Holy Spirit** who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your BODY and in your SPIRIT, which are God's."

**Definition: "YOU WILL DIE" and "PUT TO DEATH"** -- We have a CHOICE! We can PUT TO DEATH, or **KILL those impulses** and temptations coming from our FLESH (the "deeds of the BODY"), or we can GIVE IN to the temptations, ACT OUT on the impulses, and SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES. The ultimate consequence of SIN is DEATH. For the CHILD OF GOD, a true, born again **Christian who CONTINUES TO LIVE IN SIN** and for the desires of his FLESH, it may mean an EARLY physical DEATH. God may CUT SHORT the life of one of His children who continues in DISOBEDIENCE, but they will still go to HEAVEN (see I Corinthians 3:15). Disobedience to God eventually leads to death, but obedience to God brings the promise of long life.

- **James 1:15** "Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."
- **Deuteronomy 6:2** "That you might FEAR THE LORD YOUR GOD, to keep all His statutes and His commandments..... that your days may be PROLONGED."
- **Psalms 91:14-16** "Because he has set HIS LOVE UPON ME, therefore will I deliver him..... with LONG LIFE will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation."