



**That You May Know Series, Part 8: Steering Between Deception and Despair, I John 3:4-10**

*Kent Vincent ~ July 14, 2019*

**Intro-** The Strait of Messina today is less than 2 miles wide between the island of Sicily and the toe of Italy in the Mediterranean Sea. The Greek poet, Homer, depicts Odysseus and his men as passing between maritime hazards in the strait known as **Scylla and Charybdis**. **The phrase** to be “between Scylla and Charybdis” came to mean ‘to be caught between two equally unpleasant or dangerous alternatives’. Today, we address how to avoid or steer between the ‘Scylla’ of deception and presumption and the ‘Charybdis’ of doubt and despair due to our awareness that we all sin. Romans 7:22-25

**John’s purpose:** to impart assurance of salvation. I John 5:13; John 5:24

**Context:** False teachers in early church were spreading heresies.

**Heresy:** ‘Jesus was not fully man.’

**Response:** *...test the spirits... By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that **Jesus Christ has come in the flesh** is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. I John 4:1-3*

**Heresy:** ‘You can be righteous without doing righteousness.’

**Response:** *If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who **practices righteousness** has been born of Him. I John 2:29*

*Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as He is righteous. I John 3:7*

**Heresy:** ‘Christians do not sin.’

**Response:** *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. I Jn 1:8.*

*My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. I John 2:1*

**Practical Application:** John clearly warns against hypocrisy, which is claiming to be a Christian while your life shows otherwise. He also wants true believers to be secure, despite their sin.

**The Test: How does one respond to John's words?** *No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.*

I Jn 3:9

**-Positive Response:** Runs to Jesus.

**-Negative or No Response (Deceived):** It is evident that what is needed is the gospel. What is not needed is our presumptuous affirmation that we think he or she is saved in the face of unrepentant, persistent, deep-rooted sin.

**Doubting and Despairing Believer:** Find the 'Key' called 'Promise'. *My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.* I John 2:1

**What to do when we encounter others whose walk does not match their talk?**

**-Remember:** the salvation of another is not our call. However, we all must make decisions about where another stands in order to love that person.

*<sup>10</sup> By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.* I John 3:10

**-If we care about others, we will not ignore their persistent sin.** *if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.* Galatians 6:1

**-A lack of a positive response is a call for the gospel.**

**-Rejection or offense at the gospel of one who claims to know Christ yet is unrepentant requires the church to remove that person "from among you".** I Corinthians 5

**--Why?**

1. Out of love: *so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.* I Corinthians 5:5
2. To protect the Bride of Christ: *Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? <sup>7</sup> Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened.* I Corinthians 5:6-7

**- We must all guard against presumptuous sin.** Psalm 19:13

**Question:** <sup>24</sup> *Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?*

**Answer:** <sup>25</sup> *Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!* Romans 7