

---

# BIBLE TALK

---

This week the question is: **What is the "sin unto death" mentioned in 1 Jn 5:16?**

## **1 John 5:16-17**

<sup>16</sup> If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, 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.

<sup>17</sup> All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not leading to death.

First, let it be remembered that this passage is written to Christians. This passage is not describing the actions of sinners who have never been saved to begin with. "Alien sinners" are forgiven when they are baptized in water "*for the remission of their sins*" (Acts 2:38).

Verse 16 speaks of "*a sin which does not lead to death.*" What does this refer to? By letting scripture interpret scripture we can easily determine what this means. In the first chapter of this very epistle, notice what is said:

## **1 John 1:8-9**

<sup>8</sup> If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

<sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Here we read of a sin which the Lord will forgive – a confessed sin. In other words, if a Christian commits a sin and is willing to repent of that sin and confess that sin, the Lord is willing to forgive the sin. Repentance means the Christian makes a resolve to never commit this sin again. Confession means to admit the sin was committed.

Repentance and confession are the first steps in the healing process of any sin. Alcoholics Anonymous requires that participants must admit they have a problem with alcohol before they can offer any help. If a person is an alcoholic and refuses to admit his drinking problem, there is no hope for this person. Likewise, if we refuse to admit our sins when we do sin, there is no hope for us.

Going back now to 1 Jn 5:16, the scripture says:

**1 John 5:16**

<sup>16</sup> If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. ...

A sin that does not lead to death in hell is a sin which a Christian is willing to forsake, confess, and ask for God's forgiveness. In this case, the sin does not lead to death. God will answer the prayers offered on behalf of one repenting and confessing.

However, notice the second half of the verse:

**1 John 5:16**

<sup>16</sup> ... There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that.

A "*sin leading to death*" is a sin which a Christian will not repent of or he will not confess it – or both. Being stubborn means no forgiveness. Fellow Christians may not pray for the forgiveness of a brother or sister who refuses to repent or confess their sins.

**Jeremiah 7:16**

<sup>16</sup> "Therefore do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry or prayer for them, nor make intercession to Me; for I will not hear you.

This is an amazing passage. God is telling the prophet Jeremiah to NOT pray for the people of Judah. Why does God say this? Because the people of Judah are worshipping idols and they refuse to stop. Since they will neither repent of their sins nor confess their sins, Jeremiah is warned to NOT pray for them. God warned Jeremiah that if he DOES pray, his prayer will not be heard.

How important repentance and confession are!

The passage we began with concludes with this warning:

**1 John 5:17**

<sup>17</sup> All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not leading to death.

We are reminded that all wrong-doing is sinful. Every sin can potentially lead to eternal lostness, but there is a "*sin not leading to death*" – a sin which is repented of and confessed.

**Isalah 55:7**

<sup>7</sup> Let the wicked forsake his way,  
And the unrighteous man his thoughts;  
Let him return to the LORD,  
And He will have mercy on him;  
And to our God,  
For He will abundantly pardon.

**Proverbs 28:13**

<sup>13</sup> He who covers his sins will not prosper,  
But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Well ... thanks for listening to our message this week. We invite you to visit our website [www.WillOfTheLord.com](http://www.WillOfTheLord.com). There you may download the notes and the audio file of the message you just listened to.

Call again next week when we consider a new subject on *Bible Talk*.