

¹⁶ If anyone sees his brother¹ committing a sin not leading to death,
he shall ask²,
and God will give him life—

to those who commit sins
that do not lead to death.

There is sin that leads to death³;
I do not say
that one should pray for that.⁴

¹⁷ All wrongdoing is sin,
but there is sin
that does not lead to death.

¹⁸ We know
that everyone
who has been born of God
does not keep on sinning⁵,
but He
who was born of God
protects him⁶,
and the evil one does not touch him.

¹⁹ We know
that we are from God,
and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one⁷.

²⁰ And we know
that the Son of God has come
and has given us understanding,
so that we may know Him who is true;
and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ.
He is the true God and eternal life.

¹ Cf. 1 John 3:17-18. Are we our brother's (or sister's) keeper? (Gen. 4:9) Why or why not? How does this compare with Gal. 6:12?

² Cf. Rom. 8:26-27, 34; Heb. 4:14, 7:25-26.

³ What does this mean? 1) The seven (pride, greed, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, sloth) deadly sins? This presumes a system of serious (mortal) and minor (venial) sins. 2) The "unforgiveable sin" (i.e. blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, cf. Matt 10:33 and 12:32, Mark 8:28 and 3:29, Luke 9:26 and 12:9-10). 3) Some sin that has led to the punishment of physical death (e.g. think someone on death row for committing murder)? 4) Very specifically John's opponents in this community who have been trying to get others to follow their false teaching? See John's opinion of them in 1 John 2:18-19; 3:14-15, 17; 4:1, 4:5. In John 17:9 notice how Jesus prays for His own, but very specifically not for "the world".

⁴ 1 Sam. 2:22ff.

⁵ 1 John 3:6, 9. Remember it's not that we do not sin (only Christ is sinless), but that when we sin, we repent (1 John 1:8). To not repent is to dwell in that sin, to move further and further away from God. Because of our life in Christ, we share His life and it's this new life that brings forth desires to do His will, that is, to not sin (1 John 3:9, 5:18).

⁶ E.g. John 10:28.

⁷ John 12:31, but contrast this with Matt. 28:18.

1 John 5:16-21 (ESV modified)

²¹ Little children, keep yourselves from idols⁸.

⁸ Remember all of John's talk about the antichrist(s). We have the real, true Son of God, God in flesh who has come to save us. Don't settle for what is a fraud, a fake, or a cheap imitation! All of John's teaching here has truly been a defense against the 1st Commandment – "You shall have no others gods," as we know it in its shortened form, but that also included the specific command against idols.