him. "Abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink away from him in shame at his coming" (1Jn 2:28). "Everyone who has this hope fixed on him, purifies himself just as he is pure" (1Jn 3:3).

3. Whole world in the grip of sin

"The whole world lies in the power of the evil one" (1Jn 5:19). This is why we are warned, "Do not love the world, nor the things of the world" (1Jn 2:15-17).

4. Every Christian must confess sin

Every Christian must acknowledge personal sin. "If we say we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves... If we say we have not sinned we make God a liar" (1Jn 1:8,10). "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1Jn 1:9).

5. True Christians don’t practise sin

The previous point does not mean that Christians MUST sin. On the contrary, they should be overcoming sin, not practising it. "Everyone who practises righteousness is born of him... No one who is born of God practises sin... The one who practises sin is of the devil" (1Jn 2:29; 3:6-10).

Christians have the power not to practise sin.

"No one who is born of God sins; but he who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him" (1Jn 5:18).

6. Jesus provides the way to forgiveness of sins

Jesus is our advocate and the means of atonement for our sins, and no sin is unforgivable. "The blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanses us from all sin" (1Jn 1:7). "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And he is the [offering of atonement] for our sins..." (1Jn 2:1-2).

Jesus came to save us from our sins. "He appeared in order to take away sins" (1Jn 3:5).

7. Jesus was without sin

John describes Jesus as "Jesus Christ the righteous" (1Jn 2:1). "In him there is no sin" (1Jn 3:5).

This fact made it possible for Jesus, and Jesus alone, to be the propitiation or atonement for our sins. The darkness in us can be taken away through him who had no darkness in himself.

8. Sin and death

John makes a distinction between "a sin unto death" and "a sin not unto death" (1Jn 5:16).

"All unrighteousness is sin", however, a Christian is different to a godless person whose sin leads to more sin, entrapment by the evil one, and spiritual death.

In the Christian, sin is out of character, is recognized as such, and dealt with. Especially, it becomes the subject of prayer. The sin is confessed and forgiveness is sought. The sin does not result in spiritual death but is forgiven. By this process, a person can "overcome the evil one" (1Jn 2:13).

One should understand that this process does not rely on our own strength (for example whether we can perfectly account for every sin we commit). It relies on our placing ourselves in GOD'S strength.

When John says, "You are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one" he has in mind that "you abide in him" and that's what makes the overcoming possible (1Jn 2:14,27).

We should also understand too, that we Christians don't jump in and out of condemnation. When John says that Christ's blood "cleanses us from all sin" (1Jn 1:7-10) he speaks of a continuous process in which we deal with our sins within God's fellowship and protection. Only if we persist in sin willfully and unrepentantly do we lose our fellowship and forgiveness.