

## **“The Warning of Fellowship”**

**1 John 5:16-21**

### **Introduction**

A golden orb-weaver is a type of spider that spins a wickedly deceptive web. The silky strands of the web can appear yellow, which is an attractive color to bees, who end up trapped and eaten by the spiders. Sometimes, the golden-tinted strands of the web make it disappear into the background like camouflage. Other insects do not see the web and then become entangled. Similarly, sin can sometimes appear enticing to people or overtake them unexpectedly, even Christians. The only path to conquering sin comes through our relationship with Jesus Christ. Our intimacy with Christ allows us to address the sin in our lives and our fellow believers' lives.

In 1 John, we are warned about the effects and consequences of sin. Sin brings about spiritual and physical death, which is why we should seek to steer other believers away from sin in their lives. This is part of our responsibility to love them. We should care about their spiritual condition and be willing to intercede on their behalf. When we pray for other Christians, God will give life to them (1 John 5:16). By turning our brothers and sisters away from unrighteousness, we can save their lives.

Even though sin has power, so do we. First, our intimacy with Christ gives us authority over sin through the new nature we possess. Second, God has given us authority over Satan, who wants to move us in a direction divorced from God. Third, we have authority over the world, the system Satan uses to mislead us. If we do not pursue intimacy with Christ, we will not have the authority He wants us to have over sin. Christ is our key to overcoming sin, especially idolatry—any noun, person, place, thing, or thought we look to as our source. Any source other than Christ is a false god who tries to be a substitute for our Savior, His truth, and His principles. We must reject anything that conflicts with the person of Christ. He should be our focus, knowing that intimacy with Him is the basis of our victory over sin.

### **Getting Started**

1. What other ways do animals use deception to catch their prey or hide from predators?
2. As the saying goes, sin will always take you farther than you planned on going, keep you longer than you planned on staying, and cost you more than you planned on paying. What kinds of sins easily entangle people today?

### **Let's Get Personal**

1. What are some of the effects of sin in your life, past or present?
2. When have you exercised authority over sin, Satan, or the world? When have you felt defeated by sin, Satan, or the world?
3. What idols are currently blocking your intimacy with Christ?

### Take the Next Step

1. How can you help steer other believers away from sin in their lives?
2. How can you begin to address the idols in your heart? How can you make Christ your focus?
3. Want to go deeper? Take time to look at the following passages: 1 John 5:16-21; Proverbs 10:2; Proverbs 11:4; James 5:19-20; Luke 22:31-32; 2 Peter 1:4; 2 Peter 2:20-21; Galatians 6:1-5; Acts 5:1-11; 2 Corinthians 11:27-32; 1 Corinthians 2:14-16.

### Renew Your Mind

*“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. This is the true God and eternal life.”*

**1 John 5:20**

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