

JESUS...Our Advocate

I John 2:1-2

One of the foundational purposes why God created man was for *relationship* and *fellowship*. We see that *relationship emphasized* and *fellowship initiated* between God and man in the Garden in **Genesis 2** and **3** before man sinned. Here in **I John** we see enunciated a fundamental principle which lies at the root of a *genuine relationship* and *intimate fellowship* with God...*forgiveness of sin*.

An *unbeliever sins* because of their *fallen nature*...they do what is natural. When a *believer sins*, it's because they choose to *go against their new nature*...being a new creation...and they *choose to sin*.

When an unbeliever sins, they have an *accuser*...the *devil*. But when a believer sins, they have an **Advocate** that will forgive their sin and restore them to complete fellowship with God the Father.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (**vs. 1**)...

*“Even now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my *advocate* is on high.”*

~Job 16:19

I. OUR ADVOCATE...THE PERSON:

Jesus Christ Is Our Advocate...

Advocate...Gk. *parakleton*, literally means *defender* or *witness*... *one who speaks in our defense* or *one called to come alongside to help, counsel, protect, or pardon in a legal matter*. It has a legal emphasis. It's the picture of a lawyer standing next to you arguing your case on your behalf. We have One pleading our case before God...**Jesus Christ the righteous**.

This term is used only by **John** in the New Testament. He used the same word in **John 14:16, 26; John 15:26**; and in **John 16:7**. In these passages the word is translated **helper, counselor** or **comforter** and is describing the work of the Holy Spirit. Here we see the work of Christ as our **Advocate**.

Jesus' own *personal righteousness* is what uniquely suits Christ for His role as a **Christian's Advocate** after he sins. Jesus is the

“Righteous One” (I John 2:1)...God is the one who is *“just”*...the One who must punish sin.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

~I John 1:9

II. OUR ADVOCATE...THE PICTURE:

The picture is of a *defense attorney* who takes up the case of his client before a court hearing. Our defense in the courtroom of God is **His righteousness**, and is therefore effective and complete.

The way in which the advocacy of the Lord Jesus works for His sinning people is beautifully illustrated in His prayer for **Peter**.

“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

~Luke 22:31-32

In anticipation of **Peter's** denial, Jesus asked the Father to prevent **Peter's** faith from collapsing. He also had in mind **Peter's** future helpfulness to other Christians.

Just as Jesus prayed for **Peter**, the Holy Spirit continually intercedes on our behalf.

“In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.”

~Romans 8:26-27

III. OUR ADVOCATE...THE PURPOSE:

And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world (vs. 2)...

Propitiation...Gk. *hilasmos*, literally means *mercy seat...atonement* or *satisfaction*. The **mercy seat**, which was on the **Ark of the Covenant**, is where the High Priest made *atonement* for sin (**Hebrews 9**).

Propitiation refers to *God's wrath being satisfied by the death of Christ*. It emphasizes the *removal of sin by the sacrifice that satisfied God*...a sacrifice that bears God's wrath to the end and in so doing changes God's *wrath* toward us into *favor*. Christ is the only offering that could and did completely satisfy God's wrath concerning sin.

*"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the **propitiation** for our sins."*

~I John 4:10

*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a **propitiation** in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed"*

~Romans 3:23-25

*"Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make **propitiation** for the sins of the people."*

~Hebrews 2:17

If God extends *mercy* to a sinning believer...and because of that *mercy* the believer doesn't reap the full consequences of his failure...the fact that he doesn't reap the full consequences of his failure isn't due to his own merit...that is, the personal merit of the believer himself. On the contrary...it's the result of *grace* obtained through the advocacy of Christ. Like all of God's *grace*...it's the result of His *all-sufficient sacrifice on the cross*.

Should any sinning believer wonder on what grounds he might secure God's *mercy* after he has failed...the answer is found in **verse 2**. So adequate is Jesus Christ as God's atoning Sacrifice that the value and worth of His work extends not merely to the sins of Christians themselves, **but also** to the sins **of the whole world**.

In saying this, John was clearly affirming the view that Christ genuinely died for everyone.

"For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died

and rose again on their behalf...namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation"

~II Corinthians 5:14-15, 19

"But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone."

~Hebrews 2:9

This doesn't mean that everyone will be saved. This isn't *universalism*. What it does mean is that anyone who hears the Gospel *can repent* and *can be saved*.

"For 'Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.' How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? ...However, they did not all heed the good news... So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."

~Romans 10:13-14, 16a, 17

"The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost."

~Revelation 22:17

In context, **John's** point is to remind everyone of our **Advocate** Jesus Christ, and the scope of His *atoning sacrifice* in order to assure everyone that His advocacy as the **Righteous One** on their behalf is fully consistent with God's *holiness*.

"All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him."

~Isaiah 53:6

A beautiful illustration of **propitiation**...

"The tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!'"

~Luke 18:13

Sin interrupts normal relations with God...**propitiation removes sin** and **restores the relationship**. The **cross** has **propitiated** (*satisfied*) God and has met His righteous demands so thoroughly that His **grace** and **mercy** are abundantly available.

IV. OUR ADVOCATE...THE PERMANENCE:

As our **Advocate**, there is no reason for Christ to ask God to keep a Christian from *falling from grace* and *losing their salvation* and therefore going to hell as a result of their sin. Our salvation is secure. Eternal life is fully guaranteed to those who have trusted Jesus for salvation.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.”

~John 3:16-17

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.”

~John 5:24

“The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning His Son. And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.”

~I John 5:10-13

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

~I Peter 1:3-5

The consequences of a believer's failure (sin), his restoration, and future usefulness are all urgent matters which Jesus takes up with God when sin occurs...as our **Advocate**.

LESSONS WE CAN LEARN:

- Because of the completed work of Christ on the cross, our relationship with God is secure. It's not based on our goodness or performance...but on the righteousness of Jesus and His performance on the Cross. And He performed perfectly.
- When we do sin, we have an Advocate that has already paid the penalty of that sin. But there is much more than just the forgiveness that He gives. He cleanses us and restores us to fully fellowship with God the Father.
- We will all stand before God one day. The question is...
Will you stand before Him based on your own merits?
Or will you stand before Him based on the merits of your Advocate?