

JESUS CHRIST OUR ADVOCATE

1 John 2:1-2

Intro: I have mentioned before, and you have also heard it from others, if you have known the Lord for much time at all, that the Apostle John was an old man when he wrote his epistles. He was probably in his middle or late eighties, and maybe in his early nineties. We can't say exactly how old he was. But he was an old man. He had known the Lord for many years, and now was the last surviving apostle. He had seen a lot take place in the Church since the Lord went back to heaven following his resurrection from the dead – much of it was good; some of it was bad. But last words are important words, and I think that that was especially so in the Apostle John's day. One thing seems to have concerned him as he thought about the Lord's people whom he loved very much. And that one thing was their fellowship with God. He knew, as Paul knew, and as Peter knew, and, as we are learning about James both from Paul Felix and our own Pastor Will, that God saved us to make us holy. And to be holy means that God saved us to make us like His Son. The Apostle John tells us in this very epistle that we are saved now (if we are saved at all), and that when the Lord comes we are going to be "like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." See the first three verses of chapter three.

In our study of Ephesians on Tuesday we learn, not only that God has chosen us for salvation, but that this means that He has chosen us to be holy and without blame before Him. .

In 1 Peter, the first chapter, Peter wrote this in 1 Peter 1:14-16:

14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

And that last verse is a quotation from Leviticus 11:44. So it has always been God's will that His people become a holy people.

I have been listening again to the messages that Dr. Paul Felix brought to us at Family Camp this past summer from the epistle of James, and you who heard him may remember how in his second message he stressed over and over that we are to "count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations," or trials. And the reason we are to do this which sounds so foolish to people who don't know the Lord, is because they don't know

why we have trials. Our trials are designed by God to make us a holy people. This is God's purpose for the commandments that God has given us in His Word, both the commandments that tell us what we are to do as well as those which tell us what we are not to do. And so the Apostle James tells us to be doers of the Word, and not just hearers.

We don't become holy overnight. It is a lifelong process of growing to be like the Lord.

Now in chapter 1 of First John we have seen that the Apostle John makes it very clear that we have been saved to have fellowship with God, and that it is through fellowship with God that our joy and his joy for us, is made full. Everyone wants to be happy, but before we know the Lord we are all so spiritually blinded that we look for joy and happiness in the wrong places.

Yesterday as Lucille and I were having lunch I was actually looking for a football game on TV, and I turned to a channel where they were having horse racing. And I got to hear the man whose horse had just won a race by a large margin, say what he was going to do to celebrate. And he said that he was going to get as drunk as he could get. Is that where happiness is to be found? That is where a lot of lives have been ruined, and a lot of homes have been broken up, but people do things like that thinking that that is how to have a good time.

The Apostle John says that the path to true happiness is found in learning that "God is light, and in Him is not darkness at all." Light stands for holiness; darkness, for sin. People will argue with me on this, but this is the foundation for a truly happy life. It is to know God through Jesus Christ, and then to be obedient to the Bible, the Word of God. That is how we have fellowship with God, and that is how we become like God, and like Christ. The Holy Spirit helps us to understand how God wants us to live, and then He gives us the power to live that way. I believe with all of my heart that there is no other way to true happiness. The Christian life is a life of fellowship with God. That is our calling as Christians.

Now to emphasize what he means, the Apostle John has spent much of chapter 1 warning us about sin. People generally don't like to talk about sin. In fact, many people would like for the word sin to be eliminated from our vocabulary altogether. But God has given all of us a conscience so that we by nature know that there are some things that are right, and

other things are wrong. In the book of Romans which was written by the Apostle Paul under the direction of the Holy Spirit, in one place he was talking about those of us who are Gentiles and who did not have the Bible given to us like the Jews did, nevertheless have a conscience. The Apostle expressed it this way in Romans 2:14-16:

14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.

How do people know that it is wrong to lie, or to steal, or to murder? It is because God has given them a conscience which causes them to know that there are certain things that everyone knows down in their hearts are wrong – and that God has appointed a day in which people are going to be judged for doing those things.

But in addition we have the Bible. And the Bible spells out in great detail what is sinful in God's sight. Nations may legalize things that the Bible condemns, but that does not make them right. God is the Judge, and we are all going to have to face Him some day whether we believe it or not.

Many of us in our Bible reading in the OT are reading the prophecy of Jeremiah just now. When the Lord was bringing judgment upon Israel because of her sin, the people said to Jeremiah that they would do whatever the Lord wanted to do – to stay in Israel, or go to Egypt to escape from the Babylonians. So Jeremiah sought the answer from the Lord. He told the Jews that they were to stay in the land if they wanted to live. But when he gave that message to the people, they said, "We are not going to stay here; we are going to Egypt – which they did, and they forced Jeremiah to go with them. When they got to Egypt the Lord told Jeremiah that He was going to send the Babylonians to Egypt, and that all of the Jews would die. And that is exactly what happened! Just a small group were spared, and they probably were like Jeremiah: they had been forced to go against their will.

Millions of people in the world today are making the same mistake. They ridicule the idea of a holy God Who judges sin, and they are going to face eternal judgment if they don't change before they die. We all are blinded by our sin, and our hearts are hardened, and our minds are closed. But the fact that we are blind and hard-hearted and deaf spiritually, do not change

the fact that we are all accountable to God. Even we as Christians can still sin. And even this short letter from the Apostle John tells us that there is such a thing as “sin unto death,” even for Christians. Solomon said in the book of Proverbs, in Proverbs 29:1,

1 He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

Sin is nothing for us to play with. The Apostle Paul also said in Romans 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

And so as we look into 1 John, chapter 2, after warning us who are Christians about sin in solemn and strong words of warning, we see that he has not finished what he intended to say about sin. And more is going to follow throughout the epistle.

But notice how the chapter begins: “My little children.” The Apostle John uses this expression in 2:12, 13, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21. It is a term of endearment. Perhaps this old apostle felt that most believers were younger than he was, and so he took the liberty of addressing them as his children. It also could be that he was writing to many whom he had led to Christ. He also knew, as the Apostle Paul expressed in Romans 2:4 that it is “the goodness of God” that leads people to repent. Perhaps this is one reason, too, why the Apostle John placed such a strong emphasis on the love of God for His people.

So the Apostle John wanted his readers to know that he was writing to them as one who was on their team, as one who sought their greatest good.

But what was his advice to them? He was writing to the children of God, those who were trusting in the saving grace of God. His message was, “These things write I unto you, that ye sin not!” Abbreviated it means, “Don’t sin!” This is great advice for everyone. Sin never made anyone a better person. In fact, it does just the opposite. And this includes all kinds of sin. We sin often by what we do. But we can also sin by what we don’t do. We sin by what we do. We sin by what we say. We sin by what we think. Nobody ever had to teach us to sin; we do that naturally. King David wrote in Psalm 58:3,

3 The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

But the sad fact remains for all of us, even those of us who are true children of God, that we do sin. The writer of the book of Hebrews said that we are to “lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us” (Heb. 12:1). We don’t all have trouble with the same sin, but we all have trouble with sin. Do you know what your besetting sin is, or what your besetting sins are? What sin or sins keeps you from running a good race, or living a holy life? Is it pride? Is it anger? Is it impatience? Is it criticism? The standing rule for all of us is that we are not to sin.

But what if we do? And we all know that we do? Does the Lord put us out of His family, especially when we commit the same sin over and over?

What does our text say? Essentially it says, “No, He will never cast us out of His family.” Is God grieved when we sin? Yes. What can we do if and when we sin. Here is the good news. “We have an Advocate with the Father.” You see, we can sin against other people. We can sin against ourselves. But all sin is primarily against God. But we have an expression here of grace. John did not say that we have an Advocate with God, but it is “with the Father.” For the children of God sin is a family problem. Who is He? He is Jesus Christ the Righteous,” or the Righteous One!

What is an Advocate? Well, the word that the Apostle John used here is the Greek word Paraclete. Literally a paraclete is one who is called to our side to help us. He pleads our case. In the Gospel of John the Holy Spirit is called our Paraclete. But in the first mention of the Holy Spirit as our Paraclete, or Advocate, the Lord said this in John 14:16-17:

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

Notice the word “another” in verse 16. The Jews had two words for “another.” They could say *another of the same kind*, or *another of a different kind*. The word that our Lord used means *another of the same kind*. The Lord Jesus was a Paraclete, and so is the Holy Spirit. But they are the same kind.

The Apostle John here in our text said that now even though we have the Holy Spirit is our Paraclete, our Helper, yet where our sin is concerned as

believers, our Paraclete is “Jesus Christ the righteous.” What does this mean? It means that when we sin, we really should be cast out of the family of God, but “Jesus the righteous,” steps forward to plead our case on His own behalf since when He died, He died to make an atonement for all of our sins, and He is now resurrected, and seated at the Father’s right hand, is righteous, meaning that although He was charged with our sins, all of them, and for all who would ever be saved, He is now the righteous One who has successfully put away all of our sins, having paid the debt in full we owed to God. So what we have to do according to 1 John 1:9 is to confess our sins, call them what God calls them, and fellowship is fully restored

And then to confirm what he was teaching, the Apostle John gave added emphasis of our security in Christ by what we read in 1 John 2:2: “And He is the propitiation for our sins.” This word occurs one other time in 1 John. See 4:10. And another form of the same word is used in Romans 3:24-26:

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

This means that the Lord Jesus Christ by His death has provided a full atonement, a complete sacrifice that is fully satisfying to the righteousness of God, and that it is of eternal value for our salvation. And the same applies for the whole world, not that the whole world is going to be saved, but that wherever in the whole world that people are to be saved, it is only through Christ that anyone can have full and eternal acceptance with God. This is confirmed also by 1 John 4:14, “And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.” To which we can add Acts 4:12: “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

Concl: I close with a statement which Dr. Chafer emphasized with us when I was in Seminary. He said that we ought to write down where we could always see it and be reminded of this great truth of propitiation. It is the statement, “God is propitious.” He was propitious

before we were saved. He is propitious after we are saved. He will always be propitious, even when we sin. This is never to be an excuse for our sin, but a strong point to know how completely secure we are in Christ.

Upon a life I did not live,
Upon a death I did not die,
Another's life, Another's death,
I stake my whole eternity.

It is finished, yes, indeed;
Finished, every jot!
Sinner, this is all you need!
Tell me, is it not?