

I John 2:1,2

Christ Our Righteous Advocate: Jesus pleads for sinners

READ I JOHN 2:1,2

What is an advocate? It is one who stands along side us and pleads our cause in the way of law and justice. Advocate is a legal office having to do with strict justice. This advocate is like a lawyer who defends his client honestly and demands that law and justice bring its exact ruling and set the accused free based on strict law and justice.

A Christian author writes, “Christ is the Advocate of every justified sinner as He pleads the merits of His blood atonement and righteousness imputed on behalf of His own. He demands that strict law and inflexible justice view His clients, justified sinners, and pronounce them holy and righteous based not on their character and conduct, but based on His righteousness alone.

Christ as our Advocate pleads with a just and righteous God, and so His plea must be consistent with and based upon perfect satisfaction to law and

justice, wherein God is revealed as both a just God and a Savior, and, thus, covenant God and Father. Christ's office of Advocate is the fruit of His office of Priest. A Priest makes intercession by virtue of His sacrifice which rendered perfect satisfaction to law and justice. As Advocate, He pleads strict law and justice based on that satisfaction made in His own sacrifice for sin."

So, when we sin, and the guilt of that sin is incurred, and Satan accuses us, Christ our Advocate calls for a just verdict based upon the satisfaction He has made to God on our behalf by establishing a righteousness which satisfies law and justice.

We read in Zechariah 3:1 how Satan resists Christ, "And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him."

The charges of Satan are groundless, NOT that we have not and do not commit sin and that continually, but that we have a righteousness which demands justification and life, one which satisfies law and justice for our sin.

We read Romans 8:1, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus...”

Romans 8:33, “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.”

So, whatever charges Satan brings, CHRIST ANSWERS THEM. He does not excuse our sin, ignore our sin, deny our sin, nor encourage our sin, but because of His substitutionary sacrifice for our sin, He pleads for the non-imputation of them to us and the imputation of righteousness to us.

He pleads in our favor that these sins have been imputed to Him, and that His blood was shed for remission of these sins, and that He made full satisfaction for them, and therefore, according to justice, they cannot be charged to us.

Albert Barnes writes, “We have an advocate with the Father. God only can forgive sin; and though we have no claim on him, yet there is one with him who can plead our cause, and on whom we can rely to manage our interests there.

The word rendered advocate (paraclete) is elsewhere applied to the Holy Spirit, and is in every other place

where it occurs in the New Testament rendered comforter, John 14:16,26; John 15:26; 16:7. As used with reference to the Holy Spirit (Joh 14:16, et al.) it is employed in the more general sense of helper, or aid.

As usual here with reference to the Lord Jesus, it is employed in the more limited sense of the word advocate, as the word is frequently used in the Greek writers to denote an advocate in court; that is, one whom we call to our aid; or to stand by us, to defend our suit. Christ has undertaken our cause with God, and that he performs for us all that we expect of an advocate and counselor.”

Therefore, an advocate is one who stands along side us and pleads our cause in the way of law and justice. How this fittingly describes Christ’s role as advocate for His people. The title of my message today is, *Christ Our Righteous Advocate: Jesus Pleads for Sinners*. Let us consider four pleas of Christ which He makes on behalf of sinners before His Heavenly Father.

1. As our Advocate, Christ makes a righteous plea

Christ is referred to as, “Jesus Christ the righteous.”

C H Spurgeon writes, “This is not only His character but also His plea. It is His character, and if the Righteous One be my advocate, then my cause is good, or He would not have espoused it. It is His plea, for He meets the charge of unrighteousness against me by the plea that He is righteous. He declares Himself my substitute and puts His obedience to my account.”

He is the righteous; he who suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Christ Jesus is the single defense for the believer who sins and brings the repentant believer back to fellowship with God the Father. The sole basis of Christ’s advocacy is the work He accomplished on the cross... namely, His shed blood and death.

A Christian can never be restored to fellowship or forgiven of sin with God by virtue of a promise or willingness to do better. The only basis why God is justified to forgive the Christian is the death of His Son Jesus Christ.

Our relationship to God is made sure by His grace (Ephesians 2:8,9) and our fellowship can only be made secured by grace.

God's grace compels the sinning believer to rely upon Jesus as the advocate for the remission of their sin. Christ Jesus can only advocate for us effectively by virtue of His shed blood. When a Christian repents from their sin and confesses their sin and sorrow to Christ, fellowship is restored instantly (1 John 1:9). Forgiveness is instant.... cleansing is constant.

Jesus Christ is our righteousness (1Corinthians 1:30). We do not and cannot attain a right relationship with God in our own righteousness because our self-righteousness is as filthy rags. We are guilty sinners in need of a perfect righteousness (Rom. 3:23; Jeremiah. 17:9; Mark 7:20-23).

All that we have as Christians we have received as a free gift of God through Jesus Christ. We are justified once and for all by grace through faith in Christ. It never has to be repeated.

When we are united to Christ, we have a righteous and holy standing before God. We are “in Christ.” We have a vital union in Him. We enjoy a right relationship with God because of the finished work of Christ on the cross. Christ is the basis of our perfect acceptance with God.

We read in 2 Cor. 5:21, “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

God has robed us with the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. He is the basis of our acceptance with God.

It is the act of grace whereby God removes the condemnation pronounced on the sinner, and places him relatively to Himself, as a believer, in the position of a righteous man. The possibility of such a divine act is due to the death and resurrection of Christ. His death is the foundation of everything God does for the sinner.

The apostle Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:12 that we are through the atoning death of Christ declared righteous before God. This “righteousness” of God in Christ is that quality, which is ours when God acquits the believer, based upon the finished all-sufficient death of Christ (Rom.4: 22-25). God acquits the believer for Christ’s sake, not ours.

We can only plead guilty because we are guilty. God treated Jesus Christ as if He were the guilty sinner, and deals with the believing sinner as though he or she were righteous.

Christ did not deserve the curse; we did. The imputed righteousness of Christ to the sinner is a demonstration of the wisdom of God. It is a display of His justice, mercy, grace, love, and power as would never enter into the mind of men.

Man cannot satisfy the Judge unless he is righteous. There is no denying of the fact that no man is righteous before God. No man can produce the righteousness God requires. It has to be given to him if the sinner gets it. Under these circumstances, his faith is counted to him as righteousness (Rom. 3:23; Gal. 3:26).

Christ Himself becomes the righteousness we need (2 Cor. 5:21). God the Righteous Judge views us not as we are in our sinfulness, but in Christ. He is our perfect standing before God. It is only the righteousness of Christ that can possibly satisfy the perfect demand of the law of God. Christ is our righteousness; none other will satisfy God.

As our Advocate, Christ makes a righteous plea.

2. As our Advocate, Christ makes a tender plea

A Bible commentator observes, “On earth the successful philanthropist is, generally speaking, not the man of stern nerve and iron will; but rather, the possessor of keen and tender sensibilities, who can himself enter into the tale of sorrow; who, it may be, from dear-bought experience, can make the cause of the wretched his own.

The most potent advocate of the captive, is he who has himself been familiar with the wrongs he denounces. He who would most successfully plead--indeed, who has most successfully pleaded the cause of the slave, is the man who is the liberated slave

himself; who has had personal experience of the cruelty and indignity of the tyrant's scourge.

Adam Clarke writes, "Jesus is a compassionate Intercessor--"a merciful"--as we have seen Him to be a "faithful High Priest;" for He can enter with liveliest sensibility into all the diversities of His people's experience. Their every pang and sorrow He has Himself endured. "In all their afflictions He was afflicted." What a confidence this merciful character of the Great High Priest gives in approaching His intercessory throne, and soliciting His direction and guidance!"

Even on earth, what a joy and comfort it is in seasons of difficulty, to resort to a tried and loving friend, in whose tenderness and affection you can place unhesitating reliance! What an ease to unbosom in that brother's ear the difficulty that is harassing you, and solicit his wise and faithful counsel! Jesus is this Blessed resort in all time of your tribulation!

Thomas Watson, the Puritan author writes, "What a privilege, when Providence is dark and duty is perplexing, to repair immediately to this "Wonderful Counselor;"

to take your case, as Hezekiah did Rabshakeh's letter, spreading it out before Him in prayer, and saying in simple faith, "I am oppressed, undertake for me."

An earthly advocate may ably conduct the cause confided to him, and vindicate or assert disputed rights. But it is not, we repeat, necessarily any more than the work of a **hired** pleader. He may never have seen his client's face, or claimed his acquaintance, far less his friendship.

Not so the Heavenly Advocate. "We have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." "He is not ashamed to call us brethren." "I have called you friends."

In the Epistle of James, God--"the Lord Almighty"--is said to hear the cry of the defrauded reaper--the common laborer--when he utters the appeal of oppressed and downtrodden poverty. How much more will the cries of His spiritual children enter with acceptance into the ears of their Intercessor! How tenderly will He compassionate, protect, defend, those whom He has redeemed with His own precious blood!

**O the deep, deep love of Jesus, vast unmeasured
boundless, free!**

**Rolling as a mighty ocean in its fullness over me!
Underneath me, all around me, is the current of
Thy love--**

**Leading onward, leading homeward, to Thy
glorious rest above!**

**How He watches o'er His loved ones, died to call
them all His own;**

**How for them He intercedeth, watcheth o'er them
from the throne!**

**"O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus," by Samuel
Trevor Francis**

As our Advocate, Christ makes a tender plea.

3. Christ makes a propitiuous plea

We read in verse 2, “And he is the **propitiation** for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”

The doctrine of propitiation is this, “that God loved the objects of His wrath so much that He gave His own Son to the end that he by His death should make provision for the removal of this wrath. It was

Christ's to deal with the wrath so that those loved would no longer be the objects of wrath, and love would achieve its aim of making the children of God's good pleasure."

Christ is the PROPITIATION for our sins, and not for ours only but for every sinner who believes God's promise of salvation conditioned on Him alone. It is for every sinner who seeks after justification and life based on His righteousness imputed. This does not mean that Christ died for all men without exception. That would be a denial of the propitiation, of the very truth that John is giving.

"Propitiation" means atonement, satisfaction, reconciliation and peace with God based on that satisfaction. (1 John 4:10; Romans 3:24-26). It means that Christ in His Person as the High Priest of the covenant, and by virtue of His obedience unto death, established and fulfilled every condition and requirement of God's holiness on behalf of His people.

His righteousness DEMANDS the justification and eternal life of every sinner for whom He died, whom He represented. And based on that righteousness, law and justice demands they go free. If any one of them went to Hell, law and justice and God Himself would

be unjust, and Christ's Person and work would be worthless.

This also shows us that all those for whom Christ was the propitiation for their sins, **GOD WILL BE THEIR FATHER.**

He will be to them a just God and a Savior. Christ **IS ALL IN ALL** that God requires of us for salvation (1 Corinthians 1:30). This is the ground of our salvation and what He pleads on our behalf to insure our eternal blessedness.

Jesus Christ as the sinless substitute (see Romans 5, Isaiah 53, 2 Cor. 5:21) bore the full wrath and fury of holy God. Thus God's wrath was wholly satisfied in the death of this God-man.

This is the most wonderful example of love the world has ever and will ever witness. In that while we were yet sinners Christ *died for US*, the just for the unjust. The old gospel truths never get old or become boring to the beloved of God. We must never lose sight of Christ our Advocate, the propitiation for sin.

As our Advocate, Christ makes a propitious plea.

4. Christ makes a prevailing plea.

Christ pleads on behalf of His people to the Father and the Father hears and answers His Son. The Son is never turned away by the Father. The Father always hears the pleading of His son for the sinners He bought with His precious blood. What a wonderful salvation God's grace has provided for the sinner! He has said concerning all who believe, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 10:17).

Are you a believer? If you are, look afresh to the cross and believe those words: "It is finished!" Believe God when He says, your sins are "remembered no more"-your past sins; your present sins; your future sins. All your sins are gone forever and you are eternally forgiven: "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14).

Behold Christ Jesus who "sat down" at God's right hand in heaven (Heb. 10:12, R.V.) Since you are accepted in Him (Eph. 1:6), you are no longer in Adam but in Christ (1 Cor. 15:22; 2 Cor. 5:17). You are no longer a sinner but a saint (Rom. 1:7; 2 Cor. 1:2). You are in the world but not of it (John 17:16).

"Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price"
(1 Cor.6:19-20).

Your link with the old creation has been severed forever before God, because Christ died as your substitute and you have died with Him. As a new creature you are a partaker of the "divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4); God is your Father; you are His child, and heaven is your home. You have received resurrection life from Christ and He is your life (Col. 3:4).

You can say with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal.2:20).

As believers we are "to walk, even as He walked" (1 John 2:6). "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor."
(Eph.5:1,2).

In closing, One of the greatest blessings God's people enjoy is that we have Jesus as our Advocate with the Father. We are told by the Apostle John that when we do stumble into sin we have Jesus as our advocate. The word advocate signifies one who pleads another's cause, one who stands alongside. It is a beautiful description of the provision that we have in Jesus Christ. We need one to plead our cause when we sin.. And this is the role of advocate that Jesus plays in our lives.

Jesus' advocacy for us continues as he proceeds to apply on our behalf the sufficiency of his own merit to cover our sins and blemishes and fleshly weaknesses. Paul says that Jesus is now at the right hand of God and "indeed intercedes for us" [Romans 8:34]. As our Advocate, Christ's pleas are righteous, tender, propitious, and prevailing before the Father. Let the truth of Christ our Advocate encourage and inspire us as we wrestle against the world, the flesh, and the Devil. Let us pray!