

PRELIMS. This is a **pastoral** letter full of concern! Mainly written to counteract heresies about the **Person** of Jesus Christ. The Gnostics were saying Jesus was just a phantom, He did not have a body - it only **seemed** to have a body! Its written by the Apostle John, who was Jesus' best friend. It was a letter making **declarations** - that God is **perfect no darkness at all!** John also tells us, that *if we walk in the light, then the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin!* John also assures us, that *if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*[1.5cf]

John addresses his readers with **tender loving** language *My little children*. It is the aged John coming as a **caring father** drawing near his precious children. Maybe he is concerned that what he said in Chapter 1, has **affected** them in that they are **not walking** in the light as they should be! So John wants to **help/encourage** them! A pastor!

John certainly says right away *I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin* [1]! You see, the gospel is for **sinners!** Like someone I read of this week, I used to think that the gospel was for **unbelievers!** But no! It is for believers who **sin!!** The gospel is for **all types** of sinners! Big sinners, small sinners, old sinners, young sinners! Yes, and there are some sins bigger than others. They are not all equal! There are **greater abominations!** And *there is a sin that leads to death* and there is a *sin not leading to death* [5:16,17]

Our Catechism tells us that 'Some sins **in themselves** and by reason of several **aggravations** are **more heinous** in the sight of God than others'[Ans 88] Some sins **are worse** than others. To take **advantage** of a vulnerable person, like the thief who told the old woman that typing in her pin number was only putting it on a **machine** and that he wouldn't know what it was - and robbed her of £11,000!

But the gospel is also for **saved** sinners too! Xns sin too! Xns **need** the gospel too! *we have an Advocate*, said John! I think that John was drawing near in order to **comfort** his readers that God as well as he, knows we are in **need of help!** He knows true believers are **grieved**

and **upset** when they sin - **because** they know the **whole object** of life now that they are converted, is to **please God** and **not** to sin!

For the Xn, **forgiveness** is a **beautiful thing**, because **they know** that sin is **wrong** and **evil** and it is against **God** in whom there is **no darkness at all**, that they are **genuinely grieved** when they sin! So John is coming close to them to **assure** them that they have, at all times, even when they sin, a real, real friend in Jesus Christ!

John of course, is very **understanding**, and knows that Xns do sin, and he therefore lovingly says *if anyone (of us) does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father* [1c] An advocate is a **legal** person who does everything he can to help you when you are **accused**. Yes, and even when you **are** guilty too, he does his very best to deliver you.

Now John mentions **God - the Father** of our Lord Jesus Christ. That is because sin is **primarily** against God - not people! Yes, we can most definitely sin against people too, but **primarily** sin is against God. We insult God when we do wrong, even although **nobody** else is involved! That is one of the problems today - people do **not recognised** sin for what it is - an **affront to God!** It is a breach of **God's law!** *sin is the transgression of the law* [3:4] Not **State** laws! *where there is no law, there is no transgression* [Rom 4:15]

Heart sins do not involve people. Pride, envy, greed, do not generally directly affect others! Sin of the heart are sins against God's **law!** King David would agree with me. After his sin of adultery and murder, he said *Against You, You ONLY have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight* [Psa 51:4] God consciousness!

Now the word 'advocate' is the word 'paracleton' means 'to call by one's side to help and comfort'. It is the word used for the lawyer in law courts. It is the **opposite** of '**accuser**'! He is the **Protector!** That is exactly what Christ does - **when** we turn to Him. He comes near us to comfort us and to protect us from further harm! He **advises** us as to what course to take now that we are in the position we are in! Problem - we do not turn to Him enough - rather we try and **excuse** ourselves and **pretend** their is no sin in our lives!! But Jesus is

waiting to be **called** upon for **His services!** *the Lord waits to be gracious to you, and therefore He exalts Himself to show mercy...blessed are those who wait for Him!* [Isa 30:18] Advocates are **appointed** for different cases! **APP** Jesus has been **appointed** to look after every single appellant who calls for His service!

Our Advocate's name is **Jesus Christ** the **Righteous!** (a) The name 'Jesus' refers to His **humanity!** It was His human name. This is wonderful, because we **need** someone who **understands perfectly** our position - our **nature!** Advocates very often plead the **circumstances** in which their client was in and how he was **feeling** under the **conditions!** Well, listen to this: *we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin* [Heb 4:15] Jesus knows absolutely every human circumstance and every human **pressure** which affects our judgments and emotions! He knows what it is like to be **despised** and **rejected** - by men! He was a man of **sorrows!** Misunderstood/mistreated! Good advocate!

The name 'Christ' refers to His **divinity!** He was **God** as well as man! Yes, indeed, a great **mystery** but nevertheless, true! He was full man and full God. Not half man and half God! Not a mixture of both together running into each other as orange juice in water! He was **everything** God was, and everything man was! *for in Him, all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell* [Col 1:19] It was **because** He was a **unique Person** the **offering** up of Himself was **acceptable!**

The name 'Righteous' refers to His **character!** His life and conduct. He was **sinless** - He **knew no sin!** He did not know anything about it - from **experience!** He knew about its evil nature but not experimentally, just as we might know about cancer but not by experience! Jesus Christ the Righteous was perfect in conduct and behaviour! I read this week about an officer in the US Navy. He said there was a term used for misbehaviour '**conduct unbecoming an officer**'. Conduct deserving a reprimand. Sadly today there are many Xns (saints) today who have 'conduct unbecoming a saint'! But our Advocate, is **holy, innocent, unstained** [Heb 7:26] who said when Satan came *the*

*ruler of this world is coming, He has **no claim** on Me [John 14:30]*

An advocate pleads the **innocence** of each client! He does his best to show that his client is **not** guilty, that he did **not** commit the crime accused of! But **not** so with this Advocate! This Advocate, Jesus Christ, pleads His client's **guilt!** In fact He **confirms** His guilt! And **because** He Himself has paid the penalty of all the sins accused of, He demands the **restoration** of all **privileges** and a **title** to heaven!! Many advocates plead for **mercy** - not justice - they fear justice for their client, if they are guilty! But our Advocate, knows our guilt but He **pleads justice**, not mercy!! You see, God **cannot punish twice!** He pleads with His Father - I have suffered for this soul - let Him go!

Propitiation means **removing** the **ground** of God's anger. God's anger was **satisfied!** With **no complaints!** He accepted the **heavy payment** for each and every sin of His people. Note: Christ is the **propitiaTION**, not the propitiaTOR! Christ is not someone who simply **administers** the removal of our sins. Christ **IS** the **propitiation** for our sins (twice), here in [2:2] and in [4:10]! He is the sacrifice itself!! He gave **Himself** for our sins!

The **propitiation!** Some don't like this word because it has a **heathen connotation** of a god that is irritated and needs to be appeased with bribes!. But that is not the meaning of it. Yes, the heathen gods **are capricious** and **unpredictable** in their passions and are appeased by offerings and gifts. But God is not capricious - He is dependable and stable *no shadow of turning!* He did **not change His mind** about sin. He did **not waive away** its guilt as if it didn't really matter that His people hadn't sinned! He didn't just forget about it!

Yes, Christ is **everything!** He is the Advocate and the propitiation. And you know this matter that took place at Calvary was **not** just a **local thing!** It wasn't just for Jews living in the age of Jesus Christ. It was not just for those living in the Apostle John's day in Palestine! It was the **sins of the whole world.** That means Christ died for the sins of people in the USA, China, Africa, Iceland, Russia, India, Scotland - Inverness, Harris, Fife, Glasgow - Dundee! **APP** Have you ever **felt** your **need** of this Advocate? Have you called on His services?