

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John**

Chapter 5- The Call to Holiness

36. Our Advocate and Propitiation

WAOY Friday/Monday 06/08-11/07; WOSM Monday 11/21/22

Welcome again, my brothers and sisters in Christ. We are continuing our verse by verse “journey” through the Epistle of **1 John**, and today I want to look at what the Apostle John taught about “The Call to Holiness”. So, let’s read **1John 2: 1&2** together:

1 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;

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

Now on today’s broadcast, I want to look at the fact that Jesus Christ is our “Advocate” and our “Propitiation” and what these two words and concepts mean to us who are saved. The words that were translated into English here as “advocate” and “propitiation” are the Greek words, *parakleetos* and *hilasmos*. Now the use of the word, *parakleetos* is unique to only John’s writings. John uses it only once in this Epistle and scribed this word himself four times on the original autograph to denote the exalted Christ and His function for those who are saved.

But while the word “advocate” is only used by John and only used one time in all of Scripture- the concept that the Resurrected Jesus intercedes to the Father on our behalf in Heaven is a *common* thought that is found throughout the Bible.

In Isaiah’s very detailed prophecy concerning the attributes and function of the future Messiah- this great prophet penned down these inspired words about our Lord in **Isaiah 53:12**:

Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was

numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.

Isaiah is telling us here that Jesus Christ- Who was numbered *with* the sinners- will make intercession to the Father *on behalf of* the sinners. So, this great prophet is telling us that Jesus will plead our cause to the Father. And pleading a cause is the role of an Advocate. So, the Apostle John is telling us that Isaiah's prophecy about the Messiah's Intercession is fulfilled in Jesus Christ's heavenly ministry as our Advocate.

Now this "pleading" that Jesus does for us now in Haven is tied directly into what John has been talking about in the previous chapter. Sin is such a certain reality that we need an Advocate so that saved people can possess eternal life.

Now nothing that John has written so far could ever be taken as an endorsement of sin. It is simply not possible to carefully go over what John wrote in chapter 1 and come to the conclusion that John was saying that sin was okay or that sin was not a big deal.

But what *is* possible is that some people may twist what John has written and get the wrong idea about what John is actually saying about sin.

These people will read what John wrote in Chapter 1 in a very shallow way and then argue, "*Well didn't John say that all men sin?*" And then these people would then reach their ridiculous conclusion and say, "*Well, if John said that all men sin- then sin is therefore inevitable, and we don't need to worry about it and we don't even need to struggle against it and so we just need to resign ourselves to the fact that we are going to sin but God loves us so much that it really doesn't matter anyway*".

And you would be surprised at how common what I just said is today among those who say that they are Christians.

These people do what is called, "presuming against Grace". And to Presume against Grace is the act of believing that since God has promised to forgive our sins- then it really doesn't matter if we sin at all. This heresy is a perversion of the entire New Testament and an insult to the true Grace of Jesus Christ.

Presuming against Grace assumes that God loves you so much and that you are so precious to Him that God won't hold your sin

against you and that lie is nowhere to be found in Scripture. The net result of this lie is that people actually develop a great boldness to sin with impunity and the people who believe this nonsense are by anyone's standard of measurement- "loaded with sin".

This bad belief is called the heresy of "Antinomianism" or lawlessness and it is ancient heresy that John and Paul and Peter combated in the Scriptures. But even though this false doctrine is ancient- it is by no means extinct- but is alive and well and living and being taught in a Church somewhere near you.

You may have met some Antinomians. Of course, they probably didn't say that they were Antinomians- they probably told you that they were Christians- but it is what they believe that makes them at odds with Scripture- not the name that they go by.

Antinomians believe that sin is inevitable and so since sin is inevitable- then why not enjoy it? These deceived souls wrongly believe that God is *obligated* to forgive us- that He is bound by His Word to always forgive us- even when we don't confess; and even when we don't repent; and even when we plan on committing the same sin again tomorrow. These people have confused "being sorry" with "repentance" and this has led them into great deception.

Now it is true that a person who sins should be sorry for what they have done. But simply being sorry for what you have done is not what biblical repentance is all about. When someone says that they are "sorry" for doing something wrong- we need to ask a few more questions if we are to actually bring them to a place of true repentance and restoration.

For example- *Why* are they sorry? Are they sorry because they got caught? And if they are sorry because they got caught then would they have been just as sorry if they had *not* been caught? Are they sorry because they offended God or are they simply sorry because now they have to pay a visible and an immediate and painful price for their sin?

So, if they had gotten away with their sin- if they had been all alone and no one saw and no one knew- and they didn't have to pay a visible and an immediate price for what they did- would they still be just as sorry? John tells us that true believers would still be sorry, but that unsaved people would *not* be sorry.

John teaches that sin grieves the very soul of a saved person and

that grief causes him to go into great sorrow. The extreme agony of the realization that we have failed God breaks the heart of every single born again saint of God. And the Bible teaches that over and over in a hundred different places.

Those who can sin with impunity with no remorse and no sorrow and no brokenness have never known Calvary- and that too is taught over and over in the Bible.

And for anyone to teach that sin is inevitable and therefore that it doesn't matter- is to lead people into great deception and to guarantee that the great Sacrifice of Jesus Christ is dragged through the mud.

John's words in the first chapter do not say what the Antinomians teach- nor do the principles that John taught in the first Chapter ever lead anyone to arrive at the conclusion that sin is not a very serious issue.

In fact- that which John taught in Chapter 1 will lead the serious student of Scripture into the very opposite conclusion. So, in order to draw attention to the summation of all that he said in Chapter 1- John begins Chapter 2 by telling us *why* he said all the things that he said in Chapter 1 by saying:

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin...

So contrary to what the Antinomians teach- John is calling the believer to a life of holiness. And this is the forgotten word in the modern church today- "holiness". For a believer to struggle against the lusts of his flesh to abstain from sin and to conduct his life in a way so that many of the common temptations are eliminated is viewed by many today to be a form of legalism that is said to be harsh or unnecessarily narrow. But John disagreed with these people, and he believed that sin is what was hard and so he says here in verse 1 that he wrote this entire Epistle to the end that those who read these inspired words would not sin.

Now some would ask, "*Wait a minute, Brother Blair, are you saying that human beings can become sinless?*" No, I am not saying that at all- and neither was John. John clearly taught in Chapter 1 that if we say that we have no sin- we are deceived and we make Jesus Christ to be a liar.

But this is where so many get off base. While it is true that no

human beside Jesus Christ can walk on earth totally sinless- it is equally true that much sin can be avoided, and it is true that much temptation can be resisted, and it is true and that we can have great success in not sinning and in not yielding to temptation nearly as much as we do. So, while I am *not* saying we can be sinless- I *am* saying that we should all sin less.

Because sin should really bother us. Sin should trouble us. When we fall into sin- we need to stop and analyze *why* we did what we just did. And then we need to see if we can *reduce* or even *eliminate* that source of temptation so that we may not continue to fall into that same trap- precisely because we are saved and we love Jesus and we do not wish to bring dishonor to Him.

For example, if we fell into lust- maybe part of our repentance should be cancelling late night television movies which show more sinful things. Maybe we ought to put a filter on our computer so that temptation will not be so prevalent. Maybe we ought to pray more and study the Bible more and attend Church more often so that we may get stronger so that we can resist that temptation more effectively. Maybe we need to fast and deny our flesh so that we can gain the spiritual strength that we need to not sin against God.

Now some of you will say that these suggestions are us trying to *earn* Salvation- but that is not at all what I am saying. I reject legalism in all of its forms- but legalism is defined very narrowly as lost people trying to earn Salvation by what they do for ourselves. I am talking about what saved people should do after we are saved. For us, as children of God, to do specific and measurable things so that we can better and more effectively resist temptation is not legalism, beloved- it is simply being obedient and faithful to God.

What do you think Paul and Peter and James and John and Jesus were talking about when they used words and phrases like, “Yield”, and “Mortify the deeds of your body”, and “Crucify the flesh” and that to do these things that lead to personal holiness were not some horrible affront to our liberty in Christ but were simply our “reasonable service”. I tell you that the laid back attitude about personal holiness that is so prevalent today did not come from the Apostles- nor did it come from the Bible. These men lived and taught that holiness was not some rare thing that a few people should aspire to in the sweet by and by- no, every single one of these men who wrote down inspired Words taught

that holiness was *mandatory* if we are to even see heaven. Look with me at **Hebrews 12:14**:

Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.

Now some will argue that nothing that we can do here on this earth can make us holy- that God makes us holy because of the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ and anyone who knows me knows that I believe that. The length of your hair and the length of your skirt and the length of your sleeves does not make you holy. That is true. But what is equally true is that after we are gloriously saved by Grace through Faith in Christ alone- we are *commanded*- we are not asked- we are *commanded* to walk and live and operate and function in the newness of life and part of that new life is that we do not walk and act and talk and behave ourselves like the lost unsaved world.

So, in our effort to live and walk in the newness of life; in our effort to not be entangled again in the sin that so easily besets us; in our effort to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust- in our effort to be humble and faithful bond slaves of the Lord Jesus Christ- there are things that lost people do that we should *not* do. There are things that lost people engage themselves in that saved people should refrain from. There are position on events and cultural stands and political issues that as a born again believer in Jesus Christ I cannot support, and I cannot help give a person power who does support those things and I cannot participate in those things personally. That's not living in bondage, brothers, and sisters- that is just what being a Christian is all about.

And that ought to be a joy to us and it is- if we are saved. It is not a burden to abstain from sin if you are saved- no matter what you have to go through- because you know that you just gave God the honor that He is entitled to receive. It is not something terrible for a saint of God to walk on the straight and narrow path; it is not a load for a believer to strive to enter at the straight gate; it doesn't crimp our style for us to watch and pray and to be broken and humble and to tremble at God's Word. It is not a burden for a saint of God to deny himself and to walk as Jesus walked- these things are not burdens- no- they are the source of our joy!

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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