

ADVOCATE

1 John 2:1

INTRODUCTION

- One of the most despised professions in the world is lawyers
- They are often perceived as dishonest and untrustworthy, doing and saying anything to win their case; and they are also seen as being money-hungry, charging exorbitant fees for their services
- This is an unfair generalisation, and there are many good, honest lawyers in the world
- Today we are going to consider the greatest legal case that ever was, before the greatest Judge that ever was, and the greatest Advocate that ever was, pleading the cause of his people
 - ✓ The greatest legal case is the sin of mankind in breaking God's holy law, the penalty for the crime being eternal damnation
 - ✓ The greatest Judge is God Almighty, whose judgment is perfect
 - ✓ The greatest Advocate is Jesus Christ the righteous, who represents sinners who have fled to him for salvation
- The title of Christ we are considering today is "Advocate" which is from the Greek *parakletos* (from *para* "side of,

alongside, beside” and *kaleo* “to call”) and literally means “one called alongside”

- It means to help, comfort, encourage, counsel, or intercede for
 - ✓ It describes a friend called in to help a person who is troubled or distressed or confused
 - ✓ It describes a commander called in to help a discouraged and dispirited army
 - ✓ It describes a lawyer, an advocate called in to help a defendant who needs his case pleaded
- The same Greek word is translated 'Comforter' in John 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7
 - ✓ The Holy Spirit is God's Advocate on earth with men
 - ✓ Jesus Christ is man's Advocate in heaven with God
- Long ago, Job desired for one who would “plead for a man with God” (Job 16:21; 9:33)
- It is in Christ that man has such an Advocate to plead for a man with God
- God is just and righteous, and his forgiveness does not overthrow his justice, but rather establishes it (Romans 3:26)
- There is an altogether legal aspect to the Gospel

- In fact, the reason we need the good news of the Gospel is because of the law of God, which we have broken, bringing guilt and condemnation on ourselves, and making ourselves liable to the justice of God, who is the Judge of all the earth
- And it was at the cross where God's mercy and God's wrath met as the Son of God bore our sins and the punishment of them in our place for our salvation
- God cannot simply overlook sin and wipe out our debt out of his love for us – that would violate his justice
- The Gospel reveals the righteousness of God (Romans 1:16-17)
- The Gospel message is not “God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life”, but “You have sinned and deserve the judgment of God, but Christ died for your sins and rose again, and if you repent and believe in him, God will forgive you and grant you everlasting life.”
- The more we understand God's holy justice and hatred of sin, the more we appreciate his grace and mercy in forgiving sin
- When God's righteousness is magnified, his mercy is magnified

I. THE DEFENDANTS WHO ARE CHARGED

- A. 1 John is written to believers, not unbelievers (1 John 1:3-4; 2:12-14; 5:13)

1. The apostle wrote to the brethren to establish them in the true faith, guard them against error (particularly Gnosticism), and give them assurance of their salvation
 2. The epistle gives numerous marks of true salvation that we can test ourselves by
 - a. We walk in the light (1:5-7)
 - b. We confess our sin (1:8-10)
 - c. We keep his commandments (2:3-4)
 - d. We love the brethren (2:9-11)
 - e. We love not the world (2:15-17)
 - f. We continue in the faith (2:24-25)
 - g. We practice righteousness (3:10)
 - h. We have the Spirit indwelling (4:13)
 3. For the unbeliever, the charge of sin lays upon him, but he has no hope or promise of an Advocate to avert God's wrath – he stands alone in his sins to suffer the awful punishment due to him
- B. 1 John shows the remaining sin in the Christian's life
1. When a sinner comes to saving faith in Christ, he is justified – he is forgiven, declared righteous before God, and accepted by God as righteous for Christ's sake

2. Yet there remains sin in the believer through the flesh
3. The apostle corrects two errors that we can fall into regarding sin in the believer's life
 - a. He refutes *sinless perfection*, which teaches we can reach a sinless state in this life (1:8)
 - b. He refutes *antinomianism*, which teaches that we should not concern ourselves with sin, but may continue in it (2:1)
4. The teaching is that we must forsake sin, but if we do sin, we should not despair – God will forgive us when we repent and confess to him (1:9), and we have Christ our Advocate who pleads on our behalf in heaven (2:1)

II. THE INDICTMENT THAT IS LAID

- A. God's law accuses us (Romans 2:15)
- B. Satan accuses us, who is the accuser of the brethren
 1. He accuses us before God (Revelation 12:10; Job 1:6)
 2. He accuses us to one another, sowing discord among the brethren
 3. He accuses us to ourselves, bringing up our past failings

C. The world accuses us (Acts 24:10-15)

III. THE ADVOCATE WHO PLEADS

A. He is the Advocate *with the Father*

1. This describes his ministry of intercession between sinful man and the holy God (Isaiah 53:12; Romans 8:33-34; Hebrews 7:25)
2. We have many examples of Christ interceding in prayer in the days of his flesh, that reveal this ministry of intercession for sinners
 - a. He prayed for his enemies (Luke 23:34)
 - b. He prayed that Peter's faith would not fail (Luke 22:32)
 - c. He prayed the Father would send the Comforter (John 14:16)
 - d. He prayed for all believers, that we would be kept from evil (John 17:1-26)
3. Christ is ascended into heaven and is set down at the right hand of the Father as our high priest to minister on our behalf (Hebrews 8:1-2; 9:24)
4. Christ is the ONE Advocate – there is no other priest or saint who can perform this role for us

C. He is the Jesus Christ *the Righteous*

1. Because Christ is perfectly righteous, he was able to offer himself a sacrifice for our sins (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 3:5)
2. Because Christ is perfectly righteous he is fit to be the Advocate for sinners (Hebrews 7:26)

D. He is the *propitiation* for our sins

1. Here is the foundation of Christ's advocacy for us – his payment for sin upon the cross to satisfy God's righteous anger against us (Isaiah 53:10-11)
2. Christ paid the price for our sins that we could never pay, through his own blood
3. A form of the Greek word for "propitiation" (*hilasmos*) is used for the "mercy seat" (*hilasterion*) in the tabernacle
4. It is the blood of Christ at the mercy seat in the heavenly tabernacle that satisfies the demands of God's law, and makes believing sinners accepted with God
5. Christ's advocacy is different to that of earthly lawyers – he does not argue that his people are innocent or sinless; rather he acknowledges we are sinful, hell-deserving creatures, but that he has paid the penalty for our sins
6. Note that we should not picture the Lord Jesus performing liturgical acts of ministry in the heavenly temple before the Father; rather it is his simply his bodily presence before God that is all that is

sufficient to reconcile us to God and to forever
reconcile us

CONCLUSION

1. It has been said regarding law courts that “he who appears as his own advocate has a fool for his client.”
2. How much more true is that in the court of heaven!
3. Without an Advocate, the sinner must stand before the Great White Throne judgment, have his sins brought against him, be found guilty before God, and sentenced to the second death
4. The only way to escape this judgment is to flee to Christ in humble repentance, trusting in his atonement for your salvation
5. To those who come to him, like Joshua, their filthy garments will be removed and garments of righteousness will be given (Zechariah 3:1-5)
6. “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”
(Romans 8:33-34)
7. *His death is my plea
My Advocate see!
And hear the blood speak that has answered for me:
He purchased the grace
Which now I embrace;
Father, Thou know'st He has died in my place!*