

So That You May Know

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

Chapter 5- The Call to Holiness

39. Our Advocate and Propitiation- Part 4

WAOY Thursday/Monday 06/14-18/07; WOSM Thursday 11/24/22

Welcome again, my brothers and sisters in Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1 John**, and today I want to continue to look at what the Apostle John taught about "The Call to Holiness". So, let's read **1John 2: 1&2** again 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 the last broadcast, we were examining the first part of verse 1 and we saw how that John said that he wrote what he wrote so that saved people would not engage themselves in a lifestyle of ongoing, unrepentant sin. Now in the second part of this same verse- John says:

... And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

Now John is not taking out of both sides of his mouth here- but he is showing us the great difference between a lost person living a life of continual ongoing and unrepentant sin and saved people slipping into periodic acts of sin.

It does no good, beloved, for a lost person to seek forgiveness for specific acts of sin and then refuse to come to Christ for Salvation and live for God. For example- what good would it do for God to forgive a lost person for lying if he is still going to hell because he is lost?

So, from the way that John phrases this statement here in verse 1- we can see that John is talking about two groups of people here. What John is saying here in this first verse is that if saved people will

yield themselves to that which John wrote and submit themselves to the authority of all of the Scriptures and obey them- then that person will become strong in the Lord and the power of his might, and that individual will not live in consistent and unrepentant sin as a normal course of his daily life.

And then John goes on to say- when that same saved person who is fully yielded to the written Word and who does not live in constant sin- when that saved soul periodically slips into specific acts of sin- then that saved person has been given the Promise that Jesus Christ will act as his lawyer or Advocate and Jesus will go the High Court of God and plead his cause to Father God so that the saved soul may remain saved and safe from God's wrath against his sin.

We must remember, beloved that as far as God is concerned- sin is brought forth- not just by wrong deeds- but we sin even when we have even the wrong motive in our heart. For example- we can do right and godly things- but if we did those godly things for the wrong reason- as far as God is concerned- we haven't pleased Him at all- but in fact- we have sinned.

For example- preaching the Gospel is a wonderful thing. But if you preach for the purpose of elevating yourself or to bring glory to yourself- even though others may be blessed by what you have preached- you yourself have sinned because you sought after Glory that rightly belongs only to God.

So, by God's standard of perfect and continuous righteousness- any time we fall short of that holy standard in either thought; word; or deed- we have sinned.

And when you are discussing sin- we must keep in mind that sin is not wrong because we got caught or because we had to pay a fine or because we got in trouble or because we got sick or because we hurt other people or because we were put in jail or because we died. Those things do happen when we sin- but none of that is what makes sin to be wrong. Sin is wrong because sin offends God.

So, any time we fall short of God's Own perfect and sinless Nature- we have sinned- even when we are saved.

The point here is that it is impossible for any human born of woman to achieve sinless perfection in this life- so because that is true- we all must come to terms with both the reality of sin and the certainty

of sin- so that we will have a healthy and Biblical understanding of sin and forgiveness and confession and redemption.

This is what John has been talking about now in the last part of chapter 1 and on into chapter two.

And what John is teaching us here is that saved people- by virtue of the new divine nature that resides within them- do not live lives which are continuously sinful. That is what distinguishes them from lost people. Saved people alter their behavior and they change the way they live precisely because they are saved and love Jesus. And it is this change; this transformation; this bearing of godly fruit that is the unmistakable proof that they are saved.

But while that is true- these same saved people- by virtue of the fact that their bodies have not been redeemed; and by virtue of the fact that the world around them has not been redeemed- these saved people who love Jesus with all their heart still periodically commit acts of sin. And when that happens- Jesus Christ acts as their Advocate to plead their cause to God.

Those who live continually in sin; those whose life is a reflection of their depraved nature; those who still serve sin on an ongoing basis- those people do not need and do not have any access to an Advocate- those people need a Savior.

But those who are saved; those who have been born again from above; those who do possess the new divine nature; those who love and follow Jesus Christ with all their hearts- these people do have need for an Advocate because they still periodically fall into sin. They don't need a Savior- because they have already been saved- but they do need Someone to plead their case before God when they fall short of God's holy standard.

Do you see the difference here? The Promise that the Holy Spirit makes here through John that we have an Advocate was not written for the lost. Advocacy has nothing to do with people whom Jesus doesn't even know. But this wonderful Promise give those who are saved great hope and great comfort that as they are trying with all their heart to serve and please God and they fall short- that Jesus steps in and pleads their cause to Father God.

Now I want to repeat what I just said so that you can get this clearly. Jesus does not act as Advocate to lost sinners. Jesus does not plead the cause of lost sinners to the Father. Lost people are not saved,

and they do not need an Advocate- they need a Savior. But to the lost- Jesus is neither Advocate nor is He Savior. The only thing that Jesus is to those who are lost is Judge. Only when they come to Him- smiting their chest- without one plea- repenting of their sin and trust Christ for Salvation- only then does Jesus become their Savior and Advocate.

“But Brother Blair- you are putting lost people in the worst possible light by what you’re saying. If what you are saying is true- then lost people have no hope at all unless they get saved.”

That is exactly what I am saying and that is exactly what the Holy Bible teaches. So, the answer to this horrific condition of “lostness” is for men and woman and boys and girls to repent today; right now and love and serve Jesus Christ with all their hearts because until they do- they are without God and without hope and the wrath of God against them is bearing down on them like a freight train at 300 miles an hour and they are chained to the railroad tracks.

The only way for the lost to get out from under the wrath of God that has been on them since the very moment of conception- the only way- is to be saved. There is no plan “B” for the lost. Be saved or perish. And until they are saved- every lost human on earth has no Savior and no Advocate- because they have spurned the Love of God that God manifested in Jesus Christ.

They can go to Church and they can sing in the choir and they can be baptized and they can speak in tongues and they can cast out devils and they can preach God’s Word under a powerful anointing and they can do great exploits- all in the name of Jesus- but until they are born again from above- the Bible says that Jesus Christ doesn’t even know who they are. Read with me in **Matthew 7:22-23:**

22 "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'

23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

Jesus doesn’t know lost people because they do not belong to Him. And it is impossible for an Advocate to plead the cause of those whom he doesn’t know. But if and when these lost souls repent and trust

Christ for Salvation then Jesus- the Judge becomes Jesus the savior and Jesus the Advocate.

Now the word, “advocate” doesn’t appear anywhere in the New Testament beside in those books that John wrote. But the concept of Jesus acting on our behalf as an Advocate is found throughout the New Testament.

For example, Jesus was acting as Advocate when he prayed for Peter in **Luke 22:31&32**- so let’s read those verses together:

31 "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded *permission to sift you like wheat;*

32 but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

Now this statement by Jesus must have really startled Peter. First of all- Jesus is telling Peter that Satan is after him. And keep in mind that Jesus had the Power and the Authority to rebuke Satan- but He didn’t. Jesus could have forbidden the devil from touching Peter- but He didn’t.

So, when Satan asked God for permission to sift Peter like wheat- Jesus said, “Okay- go ahead.” But then Jesus did what only a Savior and what only an Advocate can do- Jesus *prayed* for Peter to remain faithful.

Again, I want to show you the great contrast between how Jesus worked in this situation versus what many of the popular preachers teach today. Notice that Jesus never forbade the devil from sifting Peter just like wheat is sifted. And this was not because Jesus was mad at Peter, or because Jesus doesn’t care, and neither was it because Peter didn’t have enough faith to bind the devil and get out of it. That is *not* what the Bible teaches here, dear friends.

But because of real bad teaching- many of *our* priorities today are actually opposed from what the Bible actually teaches. Many today view anything that makes us uncomfortable or that brings tragedy into our lives or that causes us to personally suffer as being “bad” and “of the devil”- and therefore something to “rebuke” or “resist” or “cast out.” But the Bible doesn’t teach that and so we shouldn’t think that way.

We have to remember, beloved that there are worse things in life

than trials. There are worse things than physical pain and suffering. There are worse things than going through sifting and financial hardship and there are worse things than even physical death. For example, sin is worse than suffering. Living a self-centered life is a far worse thing in God's Eyes than any trial that we could ever go through. Loving pleasure more than loving God is a far worse aspect in our life than financial hardship. The horror of being covetous far outweighs any affliction that we might endure. Self-centeredness and loving pleasure more than God and being covetous was described by the Apostle Paul in **2Timothy 3** as being "dangerous things"- deadly and life threatening things.

And I would suggest to you that suffering and going through a trial and being sifted like wheat is God's Will for his saints because it is in those fires that all hay, wood, and stubble is burned off and only pure gold remains. Sin and sinful actions are burned away in the fire of affliction- which is why it is God's Will that we go through those fires.

Jesus told Peter that after he becomes transformed because of the sifting that Satan desired for him- that he would be able to strengthen the brethren. So, the only reason that today the words and life of Peter can give us hope and courage and strengthen us is precisely because he went through that sifting and Jesus- acting as his Advocate- prayed for him so that he would not fail- and so he didn't fail. And when Jesus is your Savior and your Advocate and not your Judge- you will not fail either.

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

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