

1 John 2:1

My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. *NKJV*

Christians sin. Having laid out the case that everyone sins and that forgiveness is freely offered by Jesus Christ, John, with pastoral care for his audience, is concerned that they should not sin. He transitions his thoughts from counseling them about what to do when they sin, confess, to how that confession is conveyed to the Father Whom they have deeply grieved by their sin. He tenderly admonishes them not to sin, yet sympathizes that they do sin.

Having come to know God personally through faith in Jesus Christ, the Christian naturally feels the weight of guilt caused by his offense before God. But John encourages the Christian that he need not wallow in self-pity or pay penance for his sin since he has a strong defense for the justification of his relationship with God.

Jesus is that Advocate. Because sin is laid out before the Christian as evidence of his failure the holiness of God is the standard that has been broken. The law has been transgressed.

The guilty Christian can feel in shame like he stands in defense of himself before a holy God in plain sight of his own sinfulness. Yet there is One Who willingly joins the Christian and pleads his case before the Holy Father. Jesus Christ took upon Himself at the cross the offense of the Christian and bore the penalty for the offense fully under the judicial wrath of God. As the Christian's defense, **Jesus Christ comes along side of him and makes it known that the penalty has been paid in full.**

John's pastoral counsel to the Christian is that while the conscience may accuse the heart, and knowledge of God's holiness may inflict anguish, there is no need to continue in doubt and fear of God's retribution for sin. **Jesus Christ, God Himself, has taken possession of the sin as the "sin-bearer" Advocate and stands to take the blame for the sin.** Such an advocate has never been witnessed in a courtroom of justice. No man has ever stood completely innocent of offending a holy judge and had a wholly righteous advocate plead his cause!

In John's day, a compassionate friend could be considered an advocate even in legal and ethical matters. If one was in trouble, a friend would come to his aid and take ownership of the case defending his comrade to the end. The bond between the defense and the advocate was more than a legal bond...it was a bond of the heart. The relationship was more than a formal arrangement it was a brotherhood.

The Greek word from which the word "advocate" is derived is the word "parakalein" which means "to call to one's side." Other similar words derived from this root word are the words "comforter" and "helper." In the society of John's day it was the same root word meaning "one who lends his presence to his friends for their benefit."

Jesus Christ is that Advocate Who has taken up the cause of that one who will allow Him to come to his aid in the time of accusation. He has taken up the case for the Christian and has never lost interest in the Christian's ongoing struggle with sin. He is not only ready to defend the Christian against the

penalty of sin, but has also born out the penalty by Himself in perfect love for the Christian.

There is no cause for the Christian to be paralyzed in fear by his own sinfulness in light of having this kind of Advocate. While sin is to be taken seriously and to be readily confessed and forsaken, there is One Who already accomplished justice for sin and bears witness that it need not condemn the Christian.

As the perfect legal counsel *and* as a friend who sticks closer than a brother (Proverbs 18.24), Jesus Christ is the Advocate for those who have been justified by faith in the grace of forgiveness by God.

Read these song lyrics:

I Run to Christ

*I run to Christ when stalked by sin
And find a sure escape.
“Deliver me,” I cry to Him;
Temptation yields to grace.*

*I run to Christ when plagued by shame
And find my one defense.
“I bore God’s wrath,” He pleads my case—
My Advocate and Friend.*

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LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- 1. Why is John concerned that his disciples not sin?**
- 2. What is the tone of John’s writing? Is he scolding or sympathetic? Does he give way for pragmatism and excuses for sin? Does it reflect the Truth that he is presenting?**
- 3. Who has an advocate?**

4. Who is the advocate?

5. Are there any other sources of advocacy for sin? What are some examples of false sources?

6. Why is it important that we view Christ as our Advocate?

7. List 2 more lessons that you take away from this study today:

CAPITOL SQUARE COMMUNITY MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY

Staff, Lobbyists & Capitol Community Welcome

Statehouse Room #44 ~ Wednesdays, 12:00