**We Now Have an Advocate**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**1 John 2:1-11**

**Wednesday Evening**

**August 23, 2023**

**1 John 2:1-11**

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. 2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

3 Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.

6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked. 7 Brethren, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning.

8 Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining. 9 He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. 10 He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.

11 But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

**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.**

Saints, the first step for living in the light is to confess sin. The second step is to forsake all sin.

John emphasized human sinfulness in chapter 1 in order to make his readers despise their sin and try to stay free from it.

So that you will not sin means that you will try to stay free from sin by avoiding it, refusing it, but then also confessing it when it does happen.

Christians will sin because they have not yet been made perfect. John fully understood this. He did not want his readers to take the inevitability of sinning as an excuse to sin.

The tension between the phrases “so that you will not sin” and if you do sin forms a balance between a too harsh or too lenient view of sin.

“Believers have no business sinning,” says John, “but when they do sin . . . God has provided a way for them to be cleansed.”

When believers sin and then come to the Father for forgiveness, there is someone to plead for them before the Father. This “one” is Jesus Christ, the one who pleases God completely.

Christ’s righteousness contrasts with humanity’s sinfulness. Not only is Jesus the Judge’s Son, but he also has already paid the penalty.

Because Jesus Christ fulfilled the law and paid sin’s penalty for all who believe, he can plead for them on the basis of justice as well as mercy.

Believers cannot be punished because someone else has already taken the punishment for them.

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

Saints, when Jesus Christ speaks to the Father in people’s defense, he doesn’t falsely claim that they are innocent.

Instead, he maintains that they are guilty of sin but then points out that he has already paid the penalty.

Because Jesus Christ is the sacrifice for our sins, he can stand before God as the believers’ mediator. His death satisfied the wrath of God against sin and paid the death penalty for it.

**Romans 3:23-26**

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,

26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

**Hebrews 2:17-18**

17 Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

Saints, Jesus took away not only the sins of John and his fellow believers, but also the sins of all the world.

Christ’s atoning sacrifice is sufficient for the sins of every person in the world.

While Christ’s death is sufficient for every sin of every person who ever lived or ever will live, it becomes effectual only for those who confess their sin, accept the sacrifice, and embrace Christ as Lord and Savior.

John was not teaching universal salvation—that everyone was saved by Christ whether he or she believed or not. We know this from John’s statements in 2:19-23;

**1 John 2:18-21**

18 Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. 20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.

Saints, obviously the antichrists had not found forgiveness and acceptance in Christ.

**3 Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.**

Saints, up to this point in the letter, John has been warning against the false teachers and those who left the church to follow them.

The people who remained in the church, John’s readers, may have been wondering, “How can we be sure that we belong to him?” In other words, “How can we know that we’re Christians?”

This passage gives two ways to know: if you do what Christ says and live as Christ wants.

People can know that they belong to Jesus Christ if they are obeying his commandments. This letter lists several proofs for how people can know Christ and belong to him.

Obedience provides one clear indication. This does not mean that believers must follow a list of rules without one slip, nor does it mean that people must demonstrate obedience before they can come to know God.

Instead, obedience comes as the natural outworking of a person’s faith and love for the Lord. True believers wholeheartedly accept and submit to God’s will as he has revealed it in his Word. If a person claims to belong to God, but doesn’t obey God’s commandments, he or she is a liar.

Since anyone can claim to know Christ, you can check his or her authenticity by seeing whether or not he or she obeys God’s word.

**5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.**

Saints, Obedience is linked not merely with knowing God but with loving him. Those who obey God’s word really do love him.

By this obedience and love, believers can know that they live in him. Jesus portrayed in human terms absolute obedience to the Father. Anyone who wonders how to obey God can look at Jesus.

Those who truly desire to live in God should live their lives as Christ did. To “live as Christ did” doesn’t mean choosing twelve disciples, performing great miracles, and being crucified. People cannot merely copy Christ’s life.

Much of what Jesus did had to do with his identity as God’s Son and his special role in dying for sin.

Anyone’s claim to live in Christ must be backed up by following his example of complete obedience to God and loving service to people.

**7 Brethren, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning.**

Saints, the commandment to love one another is both old and new. For the Jews, the command to love others was as old as the Pentateuch (Leviticus 19:18), and as new as Jesus’ words (John 13:34).

**Leviticus 19:18**

“You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD”

**John 13:34-35**

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Thus, John knew that he was not writing a new commandment because it is an old one you have always had. However, Jesus called the commandment “new” because he interpreted it in a radically new way.

The newness of Jesus’ command focused on the practice of love.

**8 Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.**

Saints, yet this commandment to love is also new, because the new commandment to love departs from the old characteristics of the law with its emphasis on outward conformity to certain regulations.

The commandment to love one another is true in Christ and is true among the believers. The command to love first reached its truest and fullest expression in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He demonstrated true love by coming into the world and giving his life for all who believe. Thus the command should also be true in you—that is, in all who claim to follow Christ.

Although the true light is already shining and the darkness has not passed away completely, the darkness is disappearing slowly but surely.

Thanks to the victory of Christ, the outcome of the conflict between light and darkness is a foregone conclusion. The conflict continues, however.

But like the first rays of sun at dawn slowly but steadily piercing the darkness, so the true light experienced and shared by Christians is growing.

**9 He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now.**

Saints, these next few verses highlight the absolute contrast drawn between light and darkness, love and hate, God and the world.

The two contrasts cannot coexist. This verse teaches that a person who claims to be in the light should then, by extension, also be filled with love (2:7-8).

**1 John 2:7-8**

7 Brethren, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning.

8 Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.

Saints, if that person makes this claim but hates a Christian brother or sister, then the claim to be in the light is false. That person is still in darkness.

**Mark 12:30-31**

30'And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. 31 And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Living in love is living in the light, since the gospel both illuminates people’s minds and warms their hearts to love.

**1 John 4:20-21**

20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

Love should be the unifying force and the identifying mark of the Christian community. Love is the key to walking in the light, because believers cannot grow spiritually while they hate others.

**10 He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. 11 But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.**

Saints, as the opposite to verse 9, verse 10 explains that actions reveal faith: anyone who loves other Christians is walking in the light.

There is nothing in such a person to make him or her, or anyone else, stumble. In contrast, people who claim to be Christians yet hate a Christian brother or sister are not grounded in the truth, as seen by their actions.

They are walking in darkness. In the context of this letter, those who hated other Christians probably referred to the false teachers and their followers who had left the fellowship of the church and thereby had rejected John and the other true Christians.

They claimed to love God, but they hated other children of God. “Believers” who hate are in darkness and not light, in sin and not in fellowship with God. They are lost, having been blinded by the darkness.

**2 Peter 1:9**

“For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins”

To hate, then, is to choose the darkness and to shut oneself off from the light. To hate is to separate oneself from the presence of God and from the fellowship of other believers.

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name**