

The Justice of God Satisfied in Jesus

1 John 2:1

INTRODUCTION

A little animal called an ermine lives in the forests of northern Europe and Asia. The ermine is known for his snow-white fur in winter. He instinctively protects his white coat against anything that would soil it.

Fur hunters take advantage of this unique trait of the ermine. They don't set a trap to catch him, but instead they find his home, which is usually a cleft in a rock or a hollow in an old tree, and smear the entrance and inside with grime. The hunters then set their dogs loose to find and chase the ermine. The frightened animal flees toward home, but won't enter because of the filth. Rather than soil his white coat, he is trapped by the dogs and captured while preserving his purity.
→ For the ermine, purity is more precious than life.

This is how it should be for us.

→ God issues a Call to Holiness for us in 1 John.

→ READ 1 John 2:1-6

Proposition:

I. God's Purpose: Holiness Demanded

II. God's Pardon: Justice Displayed

III. God's Propitiation: Wrath Quenched

So That: You and I may not sin. ☺

I. God's Purpose: Holiness Demanded 1 John 2:1a

Point – The Call to Holiness - God's standard- 1Peter 1:15-16

Proof – ^{1a}**My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin.**

Illustration – My beloved **Margie** and I had a long-distance relationship until the day we are married so we wrote each other so many letters. We became great friends. And the pen is very mighty. I remember one time, while visiting for the weekend, not being able to leave until around three in the afternoon because I wanted to be with her. She look like an earth angel in a simple white church dress as I finally peeled myself away and left around 3pm in the afternoon to drive the 10+ hours back to Oregon State.

I was driving through southern Oregon (very rural, very remote) at 1:30 AM, which is very beautiful driving during the day. But when you're trying to stay awake in the middle the night, it is not that good a place to be.

But my point is that we wrote many letters over the time of our long distance relationship. There was tremendous affection in the writing in those letters.

“My little children” – In the same way, John writes with tremendous intimacy. He has a personal relationship with his flock → He expects to be heard.

John switches from plural “we are writing” in 1:4 to **“I am writing these things to you”** in 2:1

- Chapter 1 speaking on behalf of the apostles in general.
- Chapter 2 is more a reflection of John's heart in particular.

“that you may not sin” – ina – “so that”
→ Purpose Statement!

This is one of three occurrences in his letter where John ties the purpose of his writing together with a purpose statement.

- **So That:**
- **Joy** (1:4),

- **Holiness** (2:1),
- **Assurance** (5:13)

He has a deep deep concern for the spiritual welfare of the readers.

John, like **Paul**, and like **James**, fights against Antinomianism. He fights against Easy Believism which always attempts to cloak itself under the mighty shadow of Justifying Grace. John wrote this letter to blow that kind of theology out of the water.

This is a Call to Holiness.

God commands through John:

- Do not sin!
- Do not practice sin!
- Those who walk in darkness practice sin.
- You walk in the light!

This is an expansion, explanation, and application of 1:6-10.

- Don't walk in the darkness!
- Walk in the light as God is in the light, that is, don't live a life of sin!
- Sin is insubordination against God.
- Sin is very serious.

Findlay – *“A forgiveness that fails to make a man thereafter clean from sin, is a wretched delusion.”*

3 John 4 – “I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.”

Look at **3:7-9** – describes a life of sin, a practice of sin that is unhated, unassaulted, and unconquered.

Holiness Demanded...

v. 1 John drives a stake in the heart of dissipation in the life of a believer. It also drives the stake in the heart of despair.

v. 1 is for the soft people. And v. 1 is for the severe people.

II. God's Pardon: Justice Displayed 1 John 2:1b

Point – Do not sin! - v.1a.

Do not despair when you do sin! - v. 1b

Now, when John issues a call to holiness, this call to encouragement, with what does he back it up? 2 inch deep theology? Platitudes? Simple pleasantries?

No. He has deep, rich doctrine.

If 2 Cor 5:21 is the single verse that best sums up the substitutionary atonement, if Phil 2:6-11 is the greatest Christological statement in Scripture, I think 1 John 2:1-2 are perhaps the two verses that capture the deepest theology embedded in the cross.

Proof – “^{1b}**And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;**”

“**And if anyone sins**” – literally – “whenever anyone sins”

“**we have an Advocate**” – παράκλητος – literally means ‘one called alongside of’. It only appears 5 times in Scripture – here in 1 John 2:1 and in John 14:16, 26; 15:26; and 16:7 where it is translated ‘Helper’.

Definition of sin → **3:4** – “Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.”

The grammar here is very important to help us understand:

3:6,9 – present indicative → habitual practices of an unbeliever

2:1 – subjunctive aorist → interruption in the righteous flow of life of a believer

The point is we are in need of defense, and that is where our Advocate comes in.

“**with the Father**” – proj – toward, having conversation with

1984 NIV – “we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense”

- not a translation, but a very good paraphrase because that is exactly what John is talking about

When we think of a lawyer defending a client, the outcome is based on the merit of the defendant, his innocence, or the merit of his case in a civil trial.

But that is absolutely not the case here. Here, the merit of the **accused** is not mentioned, because it does not exist.

For us to truly appreciate Jesus’ intercession for us as Advocate (and as Propitiation) **Turn to: John 3:16, 18, 36**

Psa 5:5-6 – The boastful shall not stand before Your eyes; You hate all who do iniquity. ⁶You destroy those who speak falsehood; The LORD abhors the man of bloodshed and deceit.

Rom 9:13 – ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.’

God’s sovereign love is more clearly seen and understood when cast against God’s sovereign hate

<u>The Sovereign Love of God:</u>	<u>The Sovereign Hate of</u>
Undeserved	Deserved
Unmerited	Merited
Unconditional	Conditional
Unearned	Earned
Uncaused	Caused

We love because God first loved us.

We hate because we are born sinners.

The **hate** of God is sovereign and **conditional**.

God's hate is **earned** by those He hates.

The **love** of God is sovereign and **unconditional**.

God's love is **not earned** by those He loves. God's love is free, spontaneous, unevoked, and uncaused.

It is easy for us to understand God's hate.

It is not easy for us to understand God's love.

From "Sinners in the Hand of an Angry God" – Johnathan Edwards

*That world of misery, that **lake of burning brimstone**, is extended abroad under you. There is the dreadful pit of the glowing flames of the wrath of God; there is hell's wide gaping mouth open; and you have nothing to stand upon, nor any thing to take hold of, there is nothing between you and hell but the air; it is only the power and mere pleasure of God that holds you up.*

*There are **black clouds of God's wrath** now hanging directly over your heads, full of the dreadful storm, and big with thunder; and were it not for the restraining hand of God, it would immediately burst forth upon you. The sovereign pleasure of God, for the present, stays his rough wind; otherwise it would come with fury, and your destruction would come like a whirlwind, and you would be like the chaff of the summer threshing floor.*

*The wrath of God is like **great waters** that are dammed for the present ... If God should only withdraw his hand from the flood-gate, it would immediately fly open, and the fiery floods of the fierceness and wrath of God, would rush forth with inconceivable fury, and would come upon you with omnipotent power.*

The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice bends the arrow at your heart, and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood.

With this backdrop enters....

“**Jesus Christ the righteous**” – Holy, harmless, undefiled. He was separate from sinners. He is the perfect Lamb without blemish and without spot.

The merit of the Accused is not mentioned, because it does not exist. → The merit here is on the part of the Advocate

→ This is the Sinless pleading on behalf of the sinful.

Jesus does not plead our innocence.

Rather, He acknowledges our guilt and presents His vicarious sacrifice and substitution as the basis for our **Pardon**.

Here, guilt and forgiveness meet at the crossroads.

Punishment and pardon have come together.

Justice and grace have kissed.

The flaming sword of justice raised over our heads to strike has been melted into a shield of justice raised above us to protect.

God, you see, demands payment for sin in full.

Without full payment, there is no forgiveness – **Heb 9:22** –

“without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness”

God does not break His law to forgive sin.

He does not ignore His law.

He does not bypass His law.

Every sin will be punished.

No sin, known or secret, will ever go unpunished.

At the cross, **justice** was neither compromised nor set aside.
→ Rather, **justice** was satisfied.

Salvation is not just an act of mercy and grace.
Salvation is also an act of justice, righteousness, and holy wrath.

→ This is not **Love** (Jesus) saying to **Justice** (the Father) show mercy.

→ This is **Justice** (Jesus the Advocate) standing before **Love** (the Father) saying, You may show mercy **justly** because of what I've done.

Turn to: Rom 3:21-26

As part of the foolishness of God which shames the wisdom of the world, Jesus is the **ONLY Advocate** in the history of jurisprudence to **ONLY** take **defendants** who have completely and totally confessed their guilt.

→ This is connected to and presupposes **1:9** – the sin has been confessed

Christ is not the Advocate for the habitual sinner.
He is not the advocate for the unbeliever who refuses to acknowledge his guilt.

God the Father is the Compassionate Judge. Jesus the Son is the Defense. Who is the Accuser?

→ **Rev 12:10** – “the accuser of our brethren ... who accuses them before our God day and night.”

Jesus puts to silence the great enemy of your soul.

Holiness Demanded, Justice Displayed, ...

IV. God's Propitiation: Wrath Quenched 1 John 2:2a

Election, justification, sanctification, glorification, conversion, redemption, reconciliation, adoption, ... in all these we are the object.

In propitiation, this is the one facet where God is the object. Propitiation is the effect of the cross on the Father.

CONCLUSION

We will look at this more next week but today.....

2:12 – I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.

My Hope is in the Lord lyrics – *“He shows His wounded hands and names me as His own.”*