

In part 1 of John 1 – Living in the Light,

- The Apostle John is writing from Ephesus... 80-90 A.D.
- The Church is dealing with FALSE TEACHERS who are leading people away from Jesus and into DARKNESS!
- **LAST WEEK:** We learned that we can't have fellowship with light and darkness at the same time! And then we left off knowing that John defined walking in the light, NOT as a perfect, sinless person who never fails, RATHER, he described it as someone who recognizes they are a sinner and confesses this to God and others.
- **John's day Cerinthus a popular gnostic teacher was teaching!**
  - Once you were enlightened you could no longer sin!
  - You didn't have to worry about sin!
  - Jesus wasn't fully God – He just had the Christ anointing.
- JOHN CONDEMNED THESE TEACHINGS saying that those who taught/believed them were WALKING IN THE DARK!
- **THESE SAME FALSE TEACHINGS ARE STILL CIRCULATING IN THE CHURCH!**

**DEMONSTRATION:** (Turn lights off (leave dim in back.) Hold up the light of your phone! A small light can be seen in a room full of darkness – this is the BEAUTY of what John is getting at!

- Fight darkness by swinging a stick at it? NO
- Pretend it isn't here? NO
- ONLY ONE WAY TO FIGHT DARKNESS – ONE WAY – John says, STEP INTO THE LIGHT... and He takes great lengths to ensure that the readers/hearers understand HOW TO DO THIS.
- SALVATION: There aren't MULTIPLE lights – that is the idea that MANY paths lead to Salvation.
- SERIOUSNESS OF SIN: Sin is no secondary issue and needs to be dealt with properly!
- PURPOSE & GOD'S STANDARD: the direction our lives should be pointed in and how to tell if we are on the right track!
- **John was preaching: ONE LIGHT. ONE WAY. The rest? ALL DARKNESS.**

**TODAY'S SERMON: 1 John 2 – Step into the Light**

John's purpose in writing? **DEFINE THE TRUE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL and HOW TO WALK IN IT!**

**It's an INVITATION to ALL – We do not have to remain in DARKNESS – we can STEP INTO THE LIGHT**

**1 John 1:7-10 (ESV)** <sup>7</sup> But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. <sup>8</sup> If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. <sup>10</sup> If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

- Someone who "walks in the light" is NOT someone who has no sin, or has not sinned. Rather, it is **someone who CONFESSES THEY ARE A SINNER.**
- **EXAMPLE:** for the person stuck in anxiety – addiction – hurts from their past – brokenness – THIS IS GOOD NEWS!
  - **The world says:** "you are not broken – you are good the way you are"

- **COGNITIVE DISSONANCE** – mental health numbers reflect this! We know something is wrong in the world and within us! Pretending darkness is light does not work!
- **The Bible says:** “you are broken – but ‘come as you are’”
  - **Confess (agree with) your need for a SAVIOR!** Admit you are broken!
- John defines walking in the light as the one who confesses He is a sinner – this is GOOD NEWS.
- NOW – He is going to explain how that is possible...

## A. Jesus our Advocate

**1 John 2:1–2 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.

- “little children” common term for DISCIPLES: John is addressing CHRISTIANS.
- **In Ch 1 John says he is writing so that, “our joy may be complete”**
- **In Ch 2 John says he is writing so that, “Christians may not SIN”**
- **That’s good news? DO NOT SIN! SIN BREAKS fellowship with God & other people!**
- **SOLUTION: For example,** Bob Newhart – TWO WORDS CHANGE YOUR LIFE: STOP IT – You are anxious? STOP IT. You are depressed? STOP IT. You are an addict? STOP IT.
- **You want a joyful life? Fellowship with God? Connection and belonging with other people? SOLUTION – DO NOT SIN. STOP IT.**
- **Hebrews 12:14 (ESV)** <sup>14</sup> Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.
- **Matthew 5:48 (ESV)** You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.
- **James 4:17 (ESV)** 17 So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.
- **Scripture defines SIN as the wrong things we DO and the right things we DO NOT DO.**
- Is there ANYONE here that is living this out perfectly? NO! This is the problem ALL worldviews and beliefs seek to find an answer to!
- **How do we FIX what is clearly BROKEN?**

*But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.* <sup>2</sup>

**GOOD NEWS ALERT!!!!!! We have an ADVOCATE – a lawyer, who pleads our case before the Judge!**

That lawyer is none other, than Jesus Christ the Righteous HIMSELF!

Whether you are here... struggling with SIN... SICKNESS... BROKENNESS... MENTAL HEALTH...

**JESUS IS YOUR ADVOCATE – Your LAWYER – He presents on our behalf!**

## B. Jesus our Substitute

*But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.* <sup>2</sup> *He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*

**Greek work “hilasmos”:** translated as PROPITIATION or ATONEMENT

**Propitiation** – regaining good will through appeasement E.g. God’s wrath against sin – wages of sin is death

**Atonement** – reparation for an offense or injury. It involves reconciliation and repairing relationship and making payment for damages incurred.

**Romans 3:23 (ESV)** <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

**Romans 1:18 (ESV)** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness (sin) and unrighteousness of men (sinners), who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

**Romans 6:23 (ESV)** For the wages of sin is death, ...

**PROBLEM:** God is JUST – Sin must be punished. God invites us into fellowship with Him! But God cannot fellowship with Darkness.

**Penal Substitutionary Atonement: Some reject PSA because it sounds too LEGAL and not RELATIONAL.**

*PSA has come under attack recently again and continues to create a storm even within the church! Some Christians do not like the idea of JESUS having to DIE for their SINS. They do not like the idea of JUDGMENT.*

- **Penal** – legal term for prescribing punishment. E.g. penal code – laws and consequences
  - **Rom 6** – the consequence of sin is DEATH.
  - **Colossians 2:14–15 (ESV)** by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands.
  - **There are LEGAL demands.** Actions have consequences. Whether we like those consequences or think they are too harsh, is irrelevant. What matters is what the Bible teaches.
    - **For example**, I may be hungry and still from Superstore – its not a big deal! They throw out food that goes bad! Do my feelings have ANY bearing on whether my actions are good or bad? Or, on whether I deserve a consequence? NO.
  - **The consequence according to Gen and Rom? DEATH.**
  - **REMEMBER:** Sin is like cancer – no matter how small it appears... it always grows and always brings DEATH.
    - God desired people who could CHOOSE to love him. Requires ability to CHOOSE to reject him.
    - PEOPLE chose to REJECT Him – SIN.
    - SIN has LEGAL CONSEQUENCES – DEATH.
- **Substitutionary - something/someone that replaces another**
  - **The PENALTY for sin is DEATH.** Every SINNER will be judged for SIN.
  - **ALL transgressors/sinners will have to give an account for our actions.**
  - **1 Peter 2:24 (ESV)** He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.
  - **2 Corinthians 5:14, 21 (ESV)** For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; <sup>15</sup> and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. <sup>21</sup> For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
  - **Isaiah 53:6 (ESV)** 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.
  - **Some charge:** Those who speak against PSA often talk about how PSA makes God the Father to be ABUSIVE towards His son.
  - For example: like a father abusing his kids. One pastor said, “it’s like a dad taking his son into the garage and beating him until he says he is good. GOD ISN’T LIKE THAT”
  - **This comes from a misunderstanding of the Trinity and the seriousness of sin.**
  - GOD IS ONE – FATHER – SON - HOLY SPIRIT. Three persons in ONE GOD.

- **John 10:17–18 (ESV)** 17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”
- **The FATHER DIDN’T ABUSE JESUS. Jesus Himself said “NO ONE TAKES MY LIFE FROM ME, I LAY IT DOWN OF MY OWN ACCORD”**
- **For example**, in Captain America, when they are testing Steve Rogers before he gets superpowers... they throw a dud grenade and everyone runs, but Steve JUMPS on the grenade and sacrifices himself. It’s a dud. But everyone is wowed! Why? BECAUSE HE CHOSE TO DIE SO OTHERS COULD LIVE.
  - **Had Rogers thrown another troop on the grenade, we wouldn’t feel the same!**
  - This is precisely what this pastor, and others who advocate against PSA do not understand. It wasn’t child abuse... it was LOVE.
- **Jesus, our LAWYER, also stepped in as our SUBSTITUTE. Meaning He is willing to PAY OUR DEBT. He dove on the grenade that was meant for us! So we could LIVE.**
- **Atonement** - Making amends for wrongdoing
  - **In the OT** – animal sacrifices were used as a substitute.
  - **Hebrews 10:1–4 (ESV)** 1 For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. 2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? 3 But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.
  - **The sacrifices reminded God’s people of the seriousness of SIN and its CONSEQUENCE – DEATH.** But the sacrifices were insufficient as a complete substitute.
  - **Hebrews 10:12 (ESV)** 12 But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God,

We are BACK to John’s first purpose of writing – SO OUR JOY MAY BE COMPLETE!

**PROBLEM:** God is LIGHT – He invites us to be with Him! But SIN is darkness and cannot fellowship with Light! Sin is wrongdoing that can only be fixed through DEATH.

**SOLUTION:** JESUS, our Advocate, is our PROPITIATION, or, ATONING SACRIFICE. JESUS PAID OUR DEATH.

**REPEAT:** *But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. <sup>2</sup> He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*

**REFLECT:** what is the worst thing you have ever done? The most shameful moments? what is the brokenness you see in yourself? Some of you think... YOUR SIN IS DIFFERENT.

Scripture says Jesus’ sacrifice paid for the SINS OF THE WHOLE WORLD – INCLUDING YOURS.

**The GOOD NEWS** – You do not have to FIX this yourself! in fact, YOU CAN’T. Jesus advocates for YOU. He stepped in as a SUBSTITUTE for YOU. He is willing to WIPE ALL YOUR DEBT AND SINS AWAY!

**THIS IS THE GOOD NEWS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

**C. Our Choice: Will we Step into the Light?**

**As Paul, Isaiah, and John agree – Jesus died for ALL sin and for ALL people. BUT... we have a choice! Do we receive this gift? Or reject it?**

**Romans 3:23–26 (ESV)** 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

**MY STORY:** When Austin was born, It really impacted me how terrible a person I had become. I knew better! Isn't that the unforgiveable sin? To know what is sin and do it anyways! I wanted BETTER for my son! And longed to COME HOME! My shame and failure kept me from STEPPING INTO THE LIGHT.

**Whether you are hearing the GOOD NEWS for the 1<sup>st</sup> time today! Or, you are a Prodigal!**

**The invitation to STEP INTO THE LIGHT STANDS! Believers: 1 John 1:9 & Unbelievers: Romans 10:9-10 confess your sins and be forgiven, confess Jesus as Lord and be saved!**