

JESUS, ADVOCATE FOR SINNERS

2/9/12

The Christian life is a life full of hope and opportunity. Whenever we have needs or find ourselves out of our depth, Jesus Christ acts on our behalf for us... he takes over when the going gets too tough. This role that Jesus takes on has a special name, the term used is 'advocate'... one who comforts and defends. The role of advocate is two edged... we are defended against our shortcomings and failings and are personally supported at the same time.

These two verses reveal a balanced viewpoint of Christ's role as advocate in our lives.

1JOH 2:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an **advocate** with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: **2** And he is the **propitiation** (*appeasing, calming*) for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*.

These following verses reveal and demand three separate, yet vital sets of spiritual directions.

1. *Don't sin... avoid it as your first duty.*
2. *Don't lose your hope and joy when you do sin.*
3. *Don't be hypocritical,.. forgiveness and mercy are not just your right alone... they are for all.*

What did John write previously that encouraged them not to sin?

1JOH 1:5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. *God wants us to walk in this light.*

6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: **7** But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. *This reinforces the idea that it is impossible that sin won't be a real part of our lives... however, sin is manageable, but hiding sin and mock self righteousness, is unacceptable. Forgiveness should build our hope and joy... confidence and faith will grow.*

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our sins*, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. *There is no need to hide our sin... we need to be open and honest (walking in the light),... because we have an all powerful advocate, there is no need to hide from our failings (walking in darkness).*

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. *It is not the sin alone that separates us from God... rather the unwillingness to admit or deal with it.*

The advocate role that Christ plays should also be part of our own attitude to our fellow Christians. Christ's sacrifice is not just for us... we also need to forgive in the same manner that we are forgiven. We can also act as an advocate for those who sin against us. We need to love the same way we have been loved.

Summary

*These verses were written to the church to bring balance into every congregation. There are always those who want to be tougher and those who want to be softer. The soft people among us might wish that John had never said in **1:7**, "IF we walk in the light... the blood of Jesus cleanses from sin." And the tough people among us might wish that John had never said in **2:1**, "But if you do sin, we have an advocate with the Father." The soft person may feel that when John makes the ongoing experience of forgiveness dependent on walking in the light, he takes away the freedom of the gospel and leads us to despair. The tough person may feel that when he stresses the advocacy of Christ to Christians who sin, he cheapens the gospel and turns it into license to sin.*

So let the soft learn from John and let the tough learn from John. For this is the way of God. It isn't for the tough nor weak alone. It is for the tough and the weak. We must walk in the light if we are to go on experiencing the cleansing of Jesus. And if we sin, we do indeed have an advocate with the Father.

Duel Roles

Actually, we have two divine advocates. The Holy Spirit is the advocate within the Christian to represent Jesus to us (see below). Jesus is our advocate in heaven to represent us before the Father (see above).

JOH 16:13 Howbeit when he, the **Spirit of truth**, is come, he will guide you into all **truth**: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that shall he speak*: and he will shew you things to come.

ROM 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. **27** And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*.