

# 1 John Ch2v1-6

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[0:00] addressing the elephant in the room, so let me do as well. Yes, I injured myself during the week, which is why I'm sitting down. Thankfully, God's word can stand on its own two feet.

It's just a bit of an injury joke there for you. Start off. It's fine for me to make those jokes as I'm the injured party, but I won't stand for anyone else making them. There's another one. So as John said, it's 1 John chapter 2. We're going to read the first six verses.

So page 1225. My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous one. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for the sins of the whole world.

We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. Whoever says, I know him, but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him. Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.

Up. It'll be all right. Yeah, I think they're on it, yeah. Eric's fine. Don't worry about it.

[1:53] Okay, so let me just pray first and as we start. Father God, thank you for your word. Thank you for the truth that is in it. And thank you for the assurance that we can gain from it. I pray this morning that we can focus here on your word and not on anything else. So if I say anything that is not from you, please help us to forget that and remember just the truth of your word this morning. In Jesus' name, amen. Well, let me begin with a shocking statement. I am not perfect. Now, hold on, hold on. Let me explain myself before you all walk out.

Time and time again, I let my wife Sarah down. It started when we were dating and has continued into marriage. You can ask her if you don't believe me. She'll gladly tell you. I regularly don't prove my love to her by my actions. In fact, at times to anyone looking on, they may think the exact opposite, that I don't love her. Sarah has had to forgive me on many an occasion. But she doesn't just say, I forgive you. She acts on those words. She softens towards me. She talks and jokes with me.

She continues to show her love for me in many ways. If she had just said the words and then continued to punish me, how would I know that I had been forgiven? It's because of what she has done and continues to do that gives me assurance of her love. I, in turn, then prove my love to her by how I act, putting her first, serving her when I can. As well as assuring Sarah of my love, my actions also assure me more of our mutual love. She has already forgiven me. So these actions are out of love, not trying to earn her forgiveness. Well, similarly today, from this passage that we've just read, we're going to see that we can gain assurance of God's love through three things. What Jesus has done, what Jesus is doing, and through what we ourselves do, our own actions, namely keeping the commands of God's word.

Well, chapter two that we're looking at, it comes after chapter one. Surprising, I know, but that's how books work. Well, at the very start of this book of 1 John, we see that John goes to great lengths to help the believers that he's writing to see that there is great evidence for their faith. He reminds them that he and many others were eyewitnesses of Jesus and all that he did. He reminds them of the fellowship they experience with the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. He's trying to instill in them an assurance that they have heard the truth because there are lies all around them. At this time, many had left the church and were following their own ideas about who Jesus was. The church needed to be reminded of the basics of their faith and the truth behind what they believed. They needed this to get back to the certainty that they once experienced. He's continuing this encouragement in chapter two. He moves on from the fact that there are eyewitnesses to now reminding them of what Jesus has done for them. Take a look at verse two.

In our passage. In our passage. He, that's speaking of Jesus, is the atoning sacrifice for our sins. And not only for ours, but also for the sins of the whole world. The words atoning sacrifice are translated as propitiation in other versions. They both speak of the idea of covering up sin. But the word propitiation also includes the reason for the cover-up, namely to appease God's anger. We know that God is angry at sin. And without Jesus' sacrifice, he would have to remain angry. Without Jesus' sacrifice, God's righteous wrath and anger would have to fall on us. God is righteous.

[ 6 : 23 ] God is justice. And so he cannot let sin slide. So when the verse says that Jesus is the propitiation for our sins, we're met with the truth of God's justice and his anger needing to be satisfied. Jesus took all that wrath on himself on the cross. Jesus' work on the cross was enough for the sins of the whole world, verse two tells us. Jesus being the propitiation, speaks of God taking it on himself to appease his own wrath, to make things right, which humans put wrong.

God loves us so much that he sent his only son to suffer and die for the punishment required of sin. People outside the church at the time of writing were belittling what Jesus had done. They were saying he was not God in the flesh, which would mean he couldn't possibly be the propitiation for their sins.

People in the church were hearing this from friends and neighbors and were beginning to doubt Christ's work on the cross. John reminds them of the good news of Jesus and that he, along with the rest of the apostles, were eyewitnesses to Jesus' work on the cross. And so they know what really happened.

Jesus' death and resurrection was enough. He has satisfied God's wrath fully. God's righteous justice has been met through his very own son. The church can rest in the assurance that this death has been paid.

There's nothing else to pay. We don't have to earn God's forgiveness. We don't have to earn God's love. He has paid the price already. We just need to accept it.

[ 8 : 13 ] So we gain assurance of God's love through what Jesus has done. We also can gain assurance through what Jesus is doing. The second part of verse 1, it says, The first thing to notice in this verse is what John says about Jesus.

We've just seen from the very next verse that he refers to Jesus as the propitiation. He's calling Jesus the righteous one and then immediately makes reference to Jesus satisfying God's righteous anger.

This is a slap in the face to anyone that was trying to deny Jesus' divinity. To any of the false teachers that were trying to lead this church astray that Jesus' work on the cross was not sufficient. Jesus is God himself and so has satisfied the righteous wrath. The next thing to notice is what John says Jesus is doing. He is an advocate to the Father on our behalf.

I googled the word advocate. I have no idea how people wrote sermons in the dark ages before Google. Maybe we can ask Johnny after the sermon. But the Google definition is to publicly defend or state a case for someone.

[ 9 : 41 ] This word is designed to bring to mind a courtroom. Jesus is at our bench defending our case. Not only that, Jesus is sitting in the accused seat also.

God, the perfect righteous judge sits above the proceedings and looks on Jesus' life instead of our own. Jesus speaks about what he has done to honor the Father and to appease his righteous anger.

The Father accepts that Jesus has made the necessary sacrifice and we get to walk free. The Father recognizes Jesus' perfect life instead of our own.

And we get to walk close to the judge, almost as equals, certainly as friends. We sit alongside the righteous judge in command of his courtroom because he sees only perfection when he looks at us. Wow! Thank you, God. Thank you, Jesus. All praise and glory to you, our Savior, my Savior, your Savior.

[ 10 : 50 ] The amazing truth is we can't be tried for a case that is no longer on the docket. Jesus has already taken the punishment.

We just need to thank him and live in gratitude every day. Well, if that wasn't enough, Jesus is doing even more for us. Jesus is revealing God the Father to us.

Flick forward, please, to chapter 4. Same book, chapter 4 and verses 7 to 9. Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God.

Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us.

He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. Jesus reveals God to us.

[ 11 : 56 ] God has provided his word, the Bible, to tell the story of Jesus, to tell the story of his love. Every time we pick up the Bible and read from its pages, every time we think on and meditate on the words we have read, every time we sing songs based off the words of Scripture, every time we make the decision to come to church instead of the beach, God is revealing himself to us.

God is revealing his love to us. God is revealing his love to us. We can so easily, just like the believers that John was writing to, we can so easily lose our assurance.

We can lose our confidence. We can only seize back this assurance if we're regularly spending time in God's word. Not just listening to the sermon on a Sunday.

Not just a scan before bed when we're tired. Read it. Devour it. Take the words and ideas in and let it penetrate right to your very soul.

If you want that assurance, if you want to be able to say with confidence the same thing that Paul says in Romans 8, for I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[ 13 : 26 ] If you want that assurance, you need to fill your mind with God's word. The false teachers of the world will make us doubt if we let it.

Friends, don't let it. Don't let it. Be doing everything in your power to pursue this assurance. There's a great song by Keith Green, and one of the verses says, To obey is better than sacrifice.

I want more than Sunday and Wednesday nights. Because if you can't come to me every day, then don't bother coming at all. Very, very strong words.

But what this song is trying to get across is, we need to be doing everything in our power to gain this assurance back. How everything will be put into its proper perspective if we have this confidence in what we believe.

So we've seen that Jesus has died on the cross to satisfy God's wrath. We've seen that we're clothed in Jesus' righteousness instead of our failure.

[ 14 : 37 ] We've seen that Jesus is an advocate to the Father on our behalf. And we've seen that Jesus is revealing the Father to us through the Bible. All of this should fill us with confidence that we can and will meet the Father face to face.

However, there's more that we ourselves can do to gain this assurance. Jesus has done and is doing so much for us. Now it's our turn.

Let's take a look at what we can do to gain this assurance of God's love for us. Our first responsibility, or the first thing that we can do to bolster assurance, is to recognize the seriousness of sin.

John is writing to a church where false teachers are minimizing the seriousness of sin. If God is forgiving God, you can do what you like. We see throughout the Old and New Testaments that sin has consequences.

The main consequence of which we've spoken already, God's wrath and justice, have to be appeased. The primary consequence of sin is death.

[ 15 : 45 ] And so Jesus died for our sin. Sin is serious business. The fantastic hymn that we sang already, How Deep the Father's Love for Us, says, It was my sin that held him there until it was accomplished.

Speaking about Jesus' time on the cross. Our disobedience, our lies, is the reason Jesus had to die. The lies we tell got an innocent man killed.

When we disobey God's commands, we've sentenced our best friend to death. Sin is serious and cannot and should not be taken lightly.

Look at one of the main reasons John gives for writing this letter back in verse 1 of chapter 2. I write this to you so that you will not sin.

Sin is serious. But thankfully, there is good news because I sin. Every day I sin. And I have news for you. Every day you sin.

[ 16 : 51 ] Crikey, there better be a bit of good news. Well, let's see how verse 1 continues. But if anybody does sin, John's just told us that he's writing so we won't sin, then he says, but if anyone

does sin, it's not a, oh, maybe you will sin, maybe you won't sin.

He knows you will sin. And when we sin, we have Jesus defending us to the Father, clothing us in His righteousness instead of our own failures.

We try not to sin, but it's a guarantee that we will sin. Where the assurance of God's love comes from is in our recognition of our failings.

We need to understand that, yes, we do sin, and that sin is serious. We need to recognize our need for Jesus and strive every day to live in a way that's pleasing to Him.

In chapter 1, verse 8, John uses the word claim. He says, if we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

[18:00] And then in chapter 2 that we're looking at, in verse 6, he uses the same word again. Whoever claims to live in Him must live as Jesus did. As long as we don't claim to be perfect, as long as we recognize our sin and weakness, then we can live in God and live as Jesus did.

So now that we have accepted that we sin, that sin is serious, and that Jesus is in our corner, now we can obey God's commands in confidence that God loves us no matter what.

Verse 3, We know that we have come to know Him if we keep His commands. We know that we have come to know God.

We are assured that God loves us if we obey His commands. This is the sign of a true follower of Jesus. Do you fight to do what's right?

Do you struggle to obey God's commands? And it will be a struggle. In this world, it's tough to obey God. This world tells us that we can all have our own truth, that we can all do whatever makes us happy.

[19:18] Well, if you're doing what makes God and others happy, you can be assured of God's love. Verse 5, But if anyone obeys His word, love for God is truly made complete in them.

This is how we know we are in Him. We are in God. He loves us if we obey His commands. How do we know His commands?

Read His word. It's not a mystery. He hasn't left us in the cold to guess. Read the Bible. The answers on how to obey God are in there.

An easy way to start obeying God is seen in verse 4. Whoever says, I know Him, but does not do what He commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person.

The easiest way to start obeying God and proving your love to Him is to get the truth into you. Set aside time every single day to hear God's commands.

[20:25] Read His word of life. Don't leave it for a Sunday. Don't leave it for when you have more free time. Start now. Get God's truth into you and prepare to gain this assurance of eternal life.

Don't pay attention to the false teachers of the world. Fill your mind with God's truth. The consequence of doing this will be seen in your love for others.

Flick forward a page again with me please to chapter 3 and verse 23. And this is His command to believe in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as He commanded us.

This is God's command that we need to obey. Love one another. Put others' needs before your own. The world tells you to not stretch yourself.

The world tells you to put yourself first. If you fall out of love, divorce. If you're struggling financially, lie on your tax form. Keep some back for yourself. If you're not being satisfied sexually, look at porn.

[21:41] If you don't enjoy your job, don't put in your best effort. Take extended breaks. Leave early on a Friday. The world tells us to put ourselves first. But we see here that the key to gaining assurance of eternal life and consequently a happy life is to love others.

Give to others of your time and resources and watch God work miracles. John mentioned it earlier. Get involved in the children's ministry in church even though it means giving up your Friday evenings.

Go on the setup rota even if it means coming to church an hour earlier. Support a child in need through compassion even if it means you can't eat out every week. Put others first and watch your assurance grow.

Watch how you'll be convinced of the truth of God's commands. Wait and see how all doubt of God's love will vanish and your love for Him will continue to grow.

Going back to what I was saying at the start, I made a conscious decision to put Sarah's needs before my own. It's tough at times but it has reaped its reward.

[ 22 : 54 ] Sarah knows I love her where before there were doubts. We started fighting less which makes me very happy. Sarah's well able to fight. Put others first and wait and see how God enriches your life.

Wait and see how you will be filled with assurance that He is there, that He is in your corner fighting your battles and that with Him who can stand against you.

Verse 5 again. But if anyone obeys His word, love for God is truly made complete in them.

This love will be perfected on the final day of judgment when we stand before our advocate, our friend, and thank Him for taking the punishment we deserve.

We can know now that we will get there. We can know for certain through what Jesus has done on the cross, through what Jesus is doing, interceding on our behalf, and through what we do by reading and obeying His commands and by loving others.

[ 24 : 07 ] Let me just pray as we finish. Father God, thank you for your word.

Thank you that you haven't left us to guess. Thank you that we live in a country where it is so freely available. It's in every single bookshop. It's even online. Help us, just because it's so easy to access, help us not to take it for granted.

Help us to always remember the life-giving words that are written down in this book before us. We pray for everyone here that we would understand, remember the importance of getting your truth into us and watching how we flourish.

Help us to try in the week ahead to put others' needs before our own. Help us to try and love others with the same sacrificial love that Jesus had for us.

Thank you so much for the sacrifice that Jesus made. And thank you so much that you are there fighting on our behalf.

[ 25 : 39 ] Fill us all with confidence to know that if you are for us, who can stand against us? You're in our corner. Help us always to remember that no matter what life throws at us.

And help us to do our part. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. thanks for that connor and as we respond to that word from the bible i can encourage us all to stand and sing this song yet not i but through christ and me we can even read through the first verse there what gift of grace is jesus my redeemer there is no more for heaven now to give we have as connor said we see his love in what he has done for us we see his love and what he continues to do for us let's live in response to that love let's stand together as we sing what gift of grace