

# PM 1 John 1:5-2:2

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Date: 27 September 2020

Preacher: Rev Robert Dale

[ 0 : 0 0 ] A warm welcome to you all to our evening service. Notices are the same as this morning, basically. Wednesday night, our Bible study and prayer meeting will be led by Jonathan Kenyon.

Next Lord's Day, we have services as usual, 11 o'clock and 6 o'clock, though we're not quite sure yet who the preacher will be. Perhaps I could just add that there are a number of copies of the Christian Witness to Israel magazine just inside the doorway for you to take a copy.

Let's begin our worship tonight by hearing the singing of Psalm 43 and verses 3 to 5 in the Scottish Psalter version, beginning with the words, O send thy light forth and thy truth.

Let them be guides to me and bring me to thine holy hill, even where thy dwellings be. Psalm 43, 3 to 5.

O send thy light forth and thy truth.

[ 1 : 2 1 ] Let them be guides to me and bring me to thine holy hill, in where thy dwellings be.

In where I dwell in thee. Then will I throw God's altar gold, to God my children's joy.

Yea, God, my God, thy name to praise. My heart, my heart, my heart, my heart, my heart, I will employ, I will employ.

Why art thou then cast out my soul, or should discourage me?

And why with venting thoughts art thou? Tis my heart, my heart, my heart, my heart, my heart, my heart, my heart, my heart, still trusting God, for Him to embrace the cause I am sure of all.

[ 2 : 5 3 ] Hear of my countenance, Israel, my heart, my heart, my heart, my heart, my heart, my heart, my heart, that thou art me safe, that thou art me safe.

When eventually we are allowed to sing again, it'll be quite a challenge to us, won't it, to sing to that degree of quality. Beautiful singing, but a wonderful psalm.

The psalm itself, of course, is the word of God. Let's bow together in prayer. Father, we thank you for your word, and in particular for that psalm which we have just heard sung.

And we would echo the prayer of the psalmist, that you would send forth your light and your truth tonight, that they might be guides to us, and might lead us to your holy hill.

It is our desire to come into the presence of the living God. We know that we always are in your presence, always under your eye, for you are in all places and at all times, and you have promised your presence to your people till the end of the age.

[ 4 : 2 7 ] But we desire to know your presence. We desire to be conscious that the Lord is in our midst, and to know your favour upon us.

We praise you that you are the great God and creator of the world, that you are the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom you have sent to be our saviour.

And we freely confess our sins tonight. We have indeed sinned against you in thought and word and deed, but we thank you for the blood of Jesus Christ, that cleanses from all sin.

And we ask that each of us may know that precious forgiveness tonight. Speak to us through your holy word this evening. Grant to us that we may grow in faith, that we may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray.

Amen. Let's hear from the Bible. Two readings. The first is from Psalm 119, verses 105 to 112.

[ 5 : 5 0 ] Part of that very long psalm, which is entirely about the word of God. This is the little section headed up with the Hebrew letter Nun.

Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path. I have sworn an oath and confirmed it to keep your righteous rules.

I am severely afflicted. Give me life, O Lord, according to your word. Accept my freewill offerings of praise, O Lord, and teach me your rules.

I hold my life in my hand continually, but I do not forget your law. The wicked have laid a snare for me, but I do not stray from your precepts.

Your testimonies are my heritage forever, for they are the joy of my heart. Incline my heart to perform your statutes forever, to the end.

[ 7 : 06 ] Now we turn over to 1 John. We began this morning a series of studies in 1 John, and looked at verses 1 to 4, and tonight we're going to be looking at verses 5, to the end of chapter 1, and on into chapter 2, verse 2.

So 1 John, chapter 1, verse 5. This is the message which we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 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.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.

[ 8 : 50 ] But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Let's come again now before God in prayer. Our Father, we thank you that we can approach you, even though you dwell in the light eternal, because of that sacrifice that has been offered up, that precious blood that has been shed for us.

Thank you that the veil has been broken, torn apart from top to bottom, that we may enter into the Holy of Holies.

We thank you that there is a welcome for us, because Christ is there at the Father's right hand, our advocate interceding for us, gaining for us acceptance with the Father.

We would come before you tonight to pray for all needful blessings upon us. We would echo the prayer of the psalmist that you would incline our hearts to keep your law.

[ 10 : 29 ] Even though we can honestly say with the psalmist that we love your law, yet we know sometimes our hearts are inclined towards evil.

and we pray for that work of your Spirit, that we might day by day have not only the desire, but the ability to walk in the ways of righteousness, to follow our Lord Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

We pray that we might be a faithful witness to the saving grace of our God in the times in which we live.

Help us each one to shine forth as our Lord has said, you are the light of the world, you are the salt of the earth. Lord, grant that we might indeed shine forth in the darkness of this present age.

We pray for the people of this town of Dumfries, knowing that sadly so many of them do live willfully in darkness.

[ 11 : 42 ] We thank you for each and every one who is a true Christian in this town. Thank you for the various churches and for all who are saved by grace in each of those churches.

But Lord, how we long for more. How we long that the great multitudes of this town might turn from their lost condition and return to God.

We pray, Heavenly Father, for our own church, regarding the future that you would provide for us in the immediate term with the preacher for the next Lord's Day.

But beyond that, that you would give us wisdom regarding the future. Pray that you will build us up again. We feel our fewness of numbers.

But Lord, you are able to add to us and we know that you are able to save by many or by few. We pray for any who are going through difficult times at the moment.

[ 12 : 55 ] We do commit to you, Jack, as he has presumably by now had that COVID test and is now awaiting that cataract operation. Do set his heart at rest and grant that that whole procedure may go smoothly and be effective and that he may feel the benefit of it.

Remember Joan, as she seeks to give support to Catherine in that critical situation. Lord, do appear for them.

We pray, Heavenly Father, for each one of us in our daily lives, for the families here with the young children. Help them as they seek to bring them up in the fear and nurture of the Lord.

We pray, Lord, for those of us who are getting older. Help us to do so with grace. Help us that our eyes may be set upon the glory that is prepared for us. Grant us, whether young or old, always to look beyond this world.

To look to the glory of heaven. To the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ who has gone there before us. We pray, Father, for the government of this country.

[14:14] They seem to be struggling at times trying to find the right response to coronavirus. And sometimes the solutions create problems of their own.

We pray for the student population of Scotland, particularly facing lockdown in their halls of residence.

We know that that will be very hard for many of them. And we ask you that this trial may be somehow blessed to them. Grant, Lord, that some of those students might even think think of the things of eternity.

That having their days turned away from the things that students so often do from the pubs and the nightclubs and so on, they might think of something better.

And they discover that there is eternal life in Christ. We pray, Lord God, for the government at Westminster also.

[15:19] Guide them, Lord. Keep them from danger. We're aware that this is a dangerous world where even a police officer can be murdered at a police station.

Lord, protect all who are in authority. Protect us all, Lord, from every form of harm. And we pray for the nations of the world.

Pray, Lord, for the governments of the world, for wisdom and for quiet government that your people may live in peace. We pray for those countries where there is persecution that you would strengthen your saints to endure whatever you have sent upon them.

But we pray that they may be relieved from their suffering. We ask that the days will come when the gospel will spread rapidly through all the earth and when even the persecutors will change and will turn to the Lord and grant freedom and will enthusiastically embrace the faith that once they opposed.

we thank you that you have caused us who once were at enmity with God to be reconciled, to become friends, to enter into fellowship with God the Father and God the Son and with one another.

[16:50] And we pray that we may be blessed in serving the Lord who has brought us with his blood. Draw near to us now as we shortly will be looking into your word.

Speak to us through it we pray and grant us that we may be built up through it in our most holy faith. for we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

We're going to hear the singing of a hymn before we look at the word. It's the hymn Eternal Light and it speaks of the impossibility of sinners coming into the presence of a holy God were it not for that wonderful offering and sacrifice that has been made for us by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[18:44] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. There is a way for us to pass upon the Lord.

The Lord, we have a son with us. The Holy Spirit is an advocate.

The God, who is the Lord.

He's through esté■■ Vasco. From the midst never seen. V■ter ■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■.

[20:15] Allirez me to■. In His hand will live. He is the Sabbath of life.

William did warn me that the organ unfortunately rather obscures the words in that recording.

The recording I think was made at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, which was Spurgeon's old church. Under C.H. Spurgeon, of course, it saw amazing blessing from God.

And then in the early part of the 20th century they saw a gradual decline. And when Peter Masters went there as minister, I understand that the congregation was only about 20.

Not much more than we have here tonight. But he faithfully preached the word of God. And as you can gather from that recording, there's now a very large congregation there.

[21:25] And a Sunday school in the afternoons, which I believe has been as much as, I think it's 400 children in the Sunday school. Quite extraordinary. God can bless.

And we pray that he will here in our church. But let's come now to the word of God. And 1 John, that passage that I read beginning from verse 5.

I'll read that verse again. This is the message we have heard from him. And proclaim to you that God is light and in him is no darkness at all.

We began this morning a series of studies on this first letter of John.

And I suggested to you this morning that the grand theme of this letter is real Christianity. False ideas were spreading in the second half of the first century.

[ 22 : 38 ] In particular, a cult called Gnosticism. Which claimed to have a secret knowledge of God. But denied the true biblical doctrine concerning Christ.

John writes to counteract that. He wants us to have a real faith in the real Christ.

And to enjoy real fellowship with God and with one another. That much we saw in our introduction this morning.

We're now going on to the substance of the letter. Where John shows us what real Christianity looks like. There is a very helpful commentary on 1 John.

By John Stott. Who views it as a series of tests. To assess whether our faith is real or not.

[ 23 : 50 ] We hear a lot about testing at the moment, don't we? If you think you may have coronavirus, then you can go and have a test.

And you'll find out whether you have it or not. Jack has gone to have a test today. Before having an operation. Now that is a test that you definitely want to fail.

I know of someone who thought they had the virus. They had the test and it came out negative. And now all his friends online are congratulating him.

Well done. You failed the coronavirus test. But here is a test or a series of tests that you definitely want to pass.

You want your faith to be real. It would be a disaster if it were not. Because this isn't just a matter of our health.

[ 24 : 58 ] This is a matter of eternal life. The tests in 1 John are more reliable than the COVID tests.

One of the problems of the COVID tests is that they sometimes produce false positives. They tell you that you have the virus and it turns out you haven't.

Well these tests in 1 John will never produce a false positive or a false negative. They will always tell you the truth. And these tests are much more accessible than COVID tests.

Another great problem with the COVID tests is actually getting one. I haven't tried so I don't know what it's like here in Dumfries. But in some parts of the country you may have to wait a long time. And you may have to travel a long distance to get a test. Well these tests here in 1 John are available for us right here and right now.

[ 26 : 04 ] You can take at least one of these tests here through the Bible tonight. So let's look at this first test.

This first spiritual health check. In these verses towards the end of chapter 1 and beginning of chapter 2. And you could sum it up by saying that real Christians walk in the light.

John presents us with a whole series of ifs. Five times that little word if appears in the latter part of chapter 1.

And then it appears a sixth time at the beginning of chapter 2. They come in three pairs of ifs. In verse 6 he says if we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness.

We lie and do not practice the truth. But in contrast verse 7. If we walk in the light as he is in the light.

[ 27 : 17 ] Then we have fellowship and the blood of Christ cleanses us from sin. Then in verse 8. If we have, we say we have no sin.

And the contrast in verse 9. If we confess our sin. Then the third pair. Verse 10. Underlining the point he says if we say we have not sinned.

And then in chapter 2. If anyone does sin. That last if of course is a different kind of if.

It's a rhetorical if. We all do sin. So there's no if about it. But the point he makes is that God has the answer.

If we sin and we do. God has the answer in Christ. You could think of all these ifs as like a doctor making his diagnosis.

[ 28 : 23 ] You know how a doctor will ask you your symptoms. And all the time he's saying if. If you have this symptom then maybe it might be that disease. If you don't have that then no it's not that one.

So if you have a cough maybe you have coronavirus. If you don't have a cough then probably you don't. And so on.

Well let's follow through here with Dr. John. This series of ifs. This diagnosis of our spiritual state. And test the reality of our own faith.

And I want us to consider from these verses three things. The God we believe in. The life we should live. And the problem of sin.

Both its reality. And its remedy. So first. The God we believe in. This is the message we have heard from him.

[ 29 : 31 ] And proclaim to you. That God is light. And in him is no darkness at all. John begins notice.

Not with us. But with God. How we behave depends on what we believe. And therefore he starts with God.

God made man in his own image. And our character should therefore reflect his. It doesn't. Because the image of God was ruined in the fall. But now. It's being restored in Christ. And real Christians therefore should reflect.

The character of God. The key question then. Is. What is God like? Well the answer is given to us here.

[ 30 : 33 ] God. Is. Light. This is one of two great statements. That John makes about God. Here.

God is light. In chapter four. And verse seven. God. God. God. Is love. He calls this. A revelation. This is the message. We have heard from him. That God is light. But it's clearly not a new message. It's the message of the whole Bible.

Go back to the beginning. Genesis one. God's first act of creation. God's first act of creation. Was to say. Let there be light. Artists very often express their own character.

In the works that they produce. And we might say that God is the great artist. The supreme artist. Christ. And there. In Genesis one.

[ 31 : 39 ] He is expressing his character. And how does he begin? With light. This is what I'm like. God is saying.

Light. You find it all through the book of Psalms. Psalm 27 for example.

The Lord is my light. And my salvation. Psalm 36. In your light we see light. Psalm 43.

Which we heard sung earlier. Oh send forth your light. And your truth. Psalm 104. You are clothed with light.

As with a garment. Psalm 119. Which we read. Your word is a lamp to my feet. And a light to my path. And you can find many.

[ 32 : 34 ] Many more. I'm sure. The promise of the Messiah. In Isaiah chapter 9. Begins with the promise.

The people who walked in darkness. Have seen. A great light. And Christ identifies himself. As that light.

In John 8 and verse 12. I. Am the light of the world. Whoever follows me. Shall not walk in darkness. But have the light of life. When John says.

This is the message we have received. From him. He means undoubtedly. Christ. Christ. This wasn't just his doctrine.

But Christ's doctrine. And it's not offered. Just as an opinion. But it's proclaimed. As the truth. So what does it mean.

[ 33 : 32 ] For God to be light. Well two things. Especially. Truth. And holiness. God is true.

And in him. There is no falsehood. At all. God is holy. And in him. There is no sin. At all. He's perfect.

Holy. And true. Through and through. With not the slightest. Trace. Of darkness. And his son. Is the same.

Says in Hebrews 1. And verse 3. He is the radiance. Of the glory. Of God. And the exact. Image. Of his nature. Again. Hebrews 7. Verse 26. He is holy. Innocent. Unstained. Separate. From sinners. Jesus. That is what God is like.

[ 34 : 35 ] That is what Christ is like. And that therefore. Is the pattern for us. That is the ideal. That is what we should be like.

Which leads us to our second point. How we should live. In verses 6 and 7. And here we have the first pair of ifs. If we say we have fellowship with him.

While we walk in darkness. We lie. And do not practice the truth. 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. To walk in the light. Is to live a life.

Of truth. And holiness. Reflecting. The very character of God. Now John is not suggesting here.

[ 35 : 37 ] That Christians are perfect. Obviously not. He speaks of sin. Right here in verse 7. And in the verses that follow. He is going to insist.

That we are all sinners. It is not a question of perfection. But of the pattern. Of our lives. As Christians.

We have been born again. As children. Of light. Our hearts desire. Is to walk in the light. We have received a new heart.

And God's law is written upon our hearts. We want to be open with God. We want to live in sincerity. And in truth.

And we want to walk in the ways of God. We delight in his commandments. We love his law. We love the light.

[ 36 : 36 ] We have come to the light. And we want to walk in the light. The world as a whole. Has no such desire.

Jesus says in John 3.19. This is the judgment. The light has come into the world. And people loved darkness. Rather than light. Isn't that shocking?

That the perfect one. Jesus has come into the world. And people have said. Don't want it. Don't want to be like him. Really? The perfect wonderful Jesus.

People don't want to be like him. But that's how it is. They prefer the darkness. Rather than the light. And tragically.

There are some who claim to be Christians. Who choose darkness. Rather than light. The Gnostics evidently were among them.

[ 37 : 36 ] Some of them taught. That it didn't really matter. How you lived. It was all a matter. Of this secret knowledge. And that God didn't. Judge you according to.

How you behaved. And they took full advantage of that. And lived dissolute lives. But there are Christians. Or so called Christians. Who do the same.

Living in all kinds of sin. As if it just didn't matter. John is telling us here. That that simply is not possible.

Darkness and light cannot mix. If you're walking in darkness. Living a life of lies and of sin. If you delight in ungodliness.

If you're hiding from God. Then you cannot be a real Christian. No matter what claims you might make.

[ 38 : 40 ] True Christians. Walk in the light. Now if we walk in the light. John says. Then there are two great blessings. That will follow. Fellowship.

And forgiveness. Not that walking in the light. Earns these blessings. We must be very careful. About that. All of the blessings of God.

Are ours by the grace of God. They're not a reward. For the way that we live. But walking in the light. Is the mark of the true Christian.

Who enjoys those blessings. And walking in darkness. Will prevent us. From enjoying them. And what blessings they are.

Fellowship we've spoken of this morning. I won't say more about that. Except to say that. Christians have fellowship. Both with the Father. And with the Son.

[ 39 : 40 ] And with one another. And that there is a spiritual union. Between us in Christ. Which is very precious. But here he adds forgiveness.

The blood of Jesus cleanses us. From all sin. And that I do want to focus on tonight. John speaks here notice.

In the plural. The blood of Jesus cleanses us. Plural. From all sin. We all need forgiveness. forgiveness. And he speaks in the present.

We need forgiveness. All the time. The blood cleanses us. It didn't just cleanse us once. A long time ago. It continues to cleanse us.

And we need that continual cleansing. Which brings us to our third point. The problem of sin. Its reality.

[ 40 : 41 ] And its remedy. Both are found. Here in verse 7. The reality of sin. Is implied in the fact. That we need. To be cleansed.

And the remedy. We're told. Is the blood of Christ. And both of those thoughts. Will be developed. In the verses that follow. However. But let's just look for the moment.

At verse 7. Here in verse 7. John admits. That we need. To be cleansed. We are. All sinners. Sinners by nature. And sinners by choice. And sin. Makes us. Dirty. And unclean. And that is a problem.

How can we possibly. Have fellowship. With the pure. And holy God. When we ourselves. Are polluted. By sin. How can we even.

[ 41 : 40 ] Approach God. When we've disobeyed. His law. And brought judgment. On ourselves. Sin. Is real. And it is a real problem.

But. God. Has a remedy. A wonderful remedy. The blood. The blood. Of Jesus. Cleanses us. From. All sin.

The blood. Of Jesus. Was shed for us. On the cross. As a sacrifice. For sin. To pay the price. Of sin.

To reconcile us. To God. To open up for us. The way. Into his holy presence. Perhaps. Perhaps you couldn't hear clearly.

The words of that hymn. But there's a phrase in it. There is a way. For man to rise. To that sublime abode. An offering. And a sacrifice.

[ 42 : 41 ] That's what he's speaking of here. How can we enter. Into the glorious light of God. How can we enter into. The presence of the holy one. By the blood of Jesus.

Which will cleanse us. From our sins. We can read elsewhere. In the scriptures. How it cleanses us completely. Cleanses us. Both of the guilt.

And of the power of sin. And it cleanses us. From all sin. I find that little word. All. Particularly wonderful.

We might easily think otherwise. That our sins are. Somehow too great. To be forgiven. Or perhaps. That we've sinned. Too often.

We've fallen repeatedly. Into the same old sins. Surely God is not going to forgive us. Yet again. But John assures us here. That he is.

[ 43 : 40 ] The blood of Jesus. Cleanses us. From all sin. John knew that. He'd seen examples of it. John was there.

Remember. When the dying thief. Was forgiven. On the cross. Can you imagine. The astonishment. Of the onlookers then. Here is this man.

Who was a terrorist. And Jesus is prepared. To forgive him. He's committed murder. In the insurrection. And he can be forgiven.

Yes he can. The blood of Jesus. Cleanses from all sin. And if he can be forgiven. So can we. Again. John was there. When he. Heard Jesus cry out. Praying. For those who were hammering in the nails. On the cross. Father.

[ 44 : 40 ] Forgive them. For they know not. What they do. What these people. Who are actually. Crucifying him. They can be forgiven. Yes they can.

John also knew. The apostle Paul. Knew him personally. He knew what he had been. He knew what he'd become. Well. And no doubt he remembered.

That Paul was once. The great persecutor. Of the saints. There in Jerusalem. They had lived in fear. Of that man. The apostles had left Jerusalem. For fear that they might be killed.

By him. And yet. Paul was forgiven. After behaving like that. Yes he was. Because the blood of Jesus.

Cleanses from. All. Sin. We must think though. That this is automatic. Or take it for granted. There is a human side too.

[ 45 : 43 ] The confession. Of sin. And that's the theme of verses 8 and 9. The second pair. Of ifs. If we say.

We have no sin. We deceive ourselves. And the truth is not in us. If. We confess our sins. He is faithful and just. To forgive us our sins. And to cleanse us.

From all unrighteousness. Now surely we might think. No one is going to say. That they don't have any sin. But people do.

Most people think of themselves. As basically quite good. They get quite angry with you. If you tell them. That they're sinners. And some religious people.

Seem to think. That they're perfect. Look down upon others. The Pharisees. Were like that. Weren't they? They had a pretty high opinion. Of themselves.

[ 46 : 44 ] The Gnostics. Also imagined. That they were sinless. But this. John says. Is a lie. They're deceiving themselves.

We need to admit. The truth. Both to ourselves. And to God. And confess. Our sins. That's actually part of what it means.

To walk in the light. To be open. And honest. With God. To expose ourselves. To the truth. To let the light of God's word.

Shine into the darkness. Of our hearts. And admit. That what God says about us. Is true. John isn't speaking here.

Of confessing to a priest. Or even to one another. Though that can sometimes be helpful. As James says. Confess. Your sins.

[ 47 : 41 ] To one another. And pray for one another. That you may be healed. But John isn't speaking of that. He's speaking here. Of confessing our sins.

To almighty God. And no other. If we confess. John says. God is faithful and just. To forgive us our sins.

Faithful. Because he has promised to forgive. Just because Christ. Has satisfied justice. By dying. On the cross. For our sins.

And he will cleanse us. He says. From all unrighteousness. All. Notice. There's nothing. That we cannot confess. To God.

Sometimes. In our human relationships. We're very. Reluctant to admit. Our faults. Aren't we? There are things. We're ashamed of. And we don't dare. To mention. To another person. God knows.

[ 48 : 41 ] All these things. There's no possibility. Of hiding from him. Far simpler. Just to admit them. All of our sins.

We must confess. To God. And all of our sins. Can be forgiven. And that confession.

Will bring. The joy. Of forgiveness. All this is so important. That John wants to. Underline it. And this he does.

In our remaining verses. Our final pair. Of ifs. In verse 10. And at the start. Of chapter 2. John first. Underlines. The reality of sin.

In verse 10. If we say. We have not sinned. We make him a liar. And his word. Is not in us. God says. We have sinned. If we say otherwise.

[ 49 : 35 ] We're calling God. A liar. And that's an even worse sin. But then he comes back again. To the remedy. In chapter 2.

My little children. I'm writing these things. That you may not sin. But if anyone does sin. We have an advocate. With the father. Jesus Christ. The righteous. He is the propitiation.

For our sins. And not for ours only. But also. For the sins. Of the whole world. John speaks to us. Gently here. My little children. He wants us. To be perfect. That really is. The ideal. As Jesus said. Be perfect.

As your father. In heaven. Is perfect. But he's a realist. We do sin. And he wants us. To grasp this.

[ 50 : 31 ] Wonderful remedy. He speaks of Christ. Here in two ways. As an advocate. And as a propitiation. Now the word advocate.

Of course. Is a legal term. An advocate was. And still is today. A lawyer. Appointed. To plead your case. Before the judge. And people pay good money.

To get a good lawyer. Can make all the difference. Finding someone. Who knows the law. And who understands. Your case. And who knows. Exactly what's needed.

To get you acquitted. Well Christ. Well Christ. Is the perfect advocate. Doesn't use any loopholes. He doesn't use any kind of legal trickery. He is the righteous one. He is perfectly righteous. In the way that he pleads our case. But he will always win.

[ 51 : 31 ] Every case. He does so. With the most extraordinary plea. The plea is not.

Father. Let them off. Because they haven't really committed that sin. Quite the reverse. The plea is. Father. They have sinned against you.

They deserve death. But I offer up myself. I have died on the cross for them. Therefore Father.

Forgive them. He can only do that. Because he is the righteous one. He had no sins of his own. But he died instead for our sins.

And he is able to make for us. Therefore. An unanswerable case. That is certain. To get us acquitted. Propitiation meanwhile.

[ 52 : 31 ] Is a sacrificial term. Taken from the temple. Under the Jewish law. Animals were offered. As a sacrifice for sin. To pacify.

The wrath of God. Those animals both. Represented. And substituted for. The sinner. Well. Christ was offered. On the cross. As a propitiation. For our sins. As the sacrifice. The perfect sacrifice. As John the Baptist.

Had said. And John remember. Had heard him say it. Behold. The Lamb of God. Who takes away. The sin. Of the world. John emphasizes here.

That final thought. That this is not for. Our sins only. But for the sins. Of the whole world. Jews. Jews and Gentiles. It extends to both.

[ 53 : 29 ] Don't know if you were aware of it. But tomorrow. Is Yom Kippur. The Jewish day. Of atonement. The Jews of course.

Are no longer able. To make animal sacrifices. The temple is gone. And they imagine. That they can still. Atone for their sins. By their sorrow.

For their sin. And by good works. Pray that there may be Jews. Who even tomorrow. Will reflect on the futility. Of that. And will go back.

To their own scriptures. And discover. That an atonement. Has been offered. For them. That Christ. Has died.

As the one true. And final sacrifice. No need ever again. For a temple. No need ever again. For animal sacrifices. Christ.

[ 54 : 24 ] Has made the offering. That is needed. Once. And for all. But that sacrifice. Is not just for the Jews. But for the whole world.

For every nation. Upon earth. Whoever. Calls on the name. Of the Lord. Will be saved. God. Well I've hardly even.

Skimmed the surface. Of these verses. But the main point. I hope. Is clear. Real Christians. Walk in the light. They admit.

Their own sin. And they seek. And they find. Forgiveness. With God. So let me ask you.

Do you pass the test? Are you walking. In the light. Or do you secretly. Prefer the darkness. Do you admit.

[ 55 : 22 ] Your own sin. And confess it. To God. Are you trusting. In Christ alone. For the forgiveness. Of your sins. Do you know.

In your heart. That your sins. Are forgiven. John was. Writing. To Christians. He is expecting. Us to pass.

He wants us. To pass. But he wants us. To be sure. If there is. The slightest doubt. Then you know. The answer. Trust in Christ. Who alone. Can save you. If you thought. You had. Coronavirus. It would be. Foolish. Wouldn't it. Not to be tested. And if you tested. Positive. It would be foolish. Not to accept. Treatment. How foolish.

[ 56 : 20 ] It would be. If you. Know. That you are a sinner. Not. To come to Christ. Christ. And even. You are a sinner. And even.

If you don't think. You are a sinner. Think again. We are told. That. We can have. Coronavirus. Without even knowing it. That is why we take.

All these extraordinary. Precautions. Well. You can certainly. Be a sinner. And not know it. And it is far. More deadly. Listen to what God says.

And come to Christ. For salvation. But most of you. I am sure. Will pass the test. You are. A real Christian. But are you walking.

Consistently. In the light. Or do you wander a bit. I know. If I am honest. That I sometimes. Wander off.

[ 57 : 21 ] Into the shadows. We should stay. Always. In the light. Robert Murray McShane.

Once prayed. Lord. Make me. As holy. As a pardoned. Sinner. Can be. That ought to be. Our prayer. Do you confess.

Every sin. Or do you make excuses. For yourself. Or avoid. Facing up to reality. There is a tendency.

Sometimes. For us. To lament. The sins of the world. How terrible people are. Today. And forget about. Our own sins.

Those angry. Thoughts. Those. Covetous. Desires. Within our own. Hearts. Or we go to the other extreme. And we wallow in despair.

[ 58 : 23 ] Condemning ourselves. As worthless sinners. And ignoring the remedy. That wonderful remedy. Is always there for us.

And we will always need it. That powerful. Cleansing. Blood of Christ. Christ. The holy. Lamb of God. Who died for our sins.

May he be ever more precious to us. And may we all glorify him. In our lives. Amen. Amen. Let's close our service now.

By hearing another psalm portion. It's from Psalm 32. In the Scottish Psalter version. And it's the first five verses of that psalm.

Begins. It begins. Oh blessed is the man. To whom is freely pardoned. All the transgression he hath done.

[ 59 : 25 ] Whose sin is covered. There. God. God. Yes.

All the transgression he had done, Whose sin is covered red.

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord In beauty of his sin, And in whose spirit there is no God, Nor promise our name.

When as I hear refrain my speech, And silent was my tongue, My bones then waxed, Oh, because I hope there are in all.

For the army, for day and night, My man did heavy lie, So that my oyster can read his, In his sufferings round their eyes.

[ 61 : 20 ] I dare hold down to thee, My sin and knowledge end, And thy hearts my integrity, I have not come away.

I will confess unto the Lord, My trespass and say, And I shall know my sin, Now be this for infeitly.

Now may grace, mercy, and peace, From God the Father, God the Son, And God the Holy Spirit, Be with us all forevermore.

Amen. Amen.