

The Lord Advocate

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[0 : 00] Let's turn now to 1st John chapter 2. I'm going to look for a short time this morning at verses at the beginning there of chapter 2 verses 1 to 6.

My little children, I'm writing these things to you so 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. Not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And particularly those verses where we find Christ described as our advocate and our propitiation.

As we mentioned last night, John was writing against heretics, against false teachers. Heretics are people who present what they claim to be the truth of God, but in a way that has distorted some of the essential or fundamental doctrines of the faith or of the Bible.

So that it's not minor errors that we're dealing with when we talk about heretics or where John was dealing with heretics and writing against heresy.

[1 : 16] Heresy is something that strikes at something very important in the Christian faith, some doctrine that is foundational. And the three doctrines that are mentioned here, there are three particularly, and the three were doctrines that were attacked in some way or other by the heretics and had distorted these three things in a way that really not just obscured the gospel and the true gospel, but actually had distorted it altogether.

And the three doctrines that were the doctrine of sin, the doctrine of Christ, person and work, and also the doctrine of love.

Sin, Jesus Christ, and love. These are prominent throughout John's first letter. Because they were things that he needed to bring up and to correct the way that the false teachers were dealing with them.

And not only is it so that you find that in John's gospel, that we can apply that to our own thinking, to our own lives, to our own behavior as well. But they're very appropriate to bring with us in our minds and our thoughts to the Lord's Supper.

You cannot really appreciate the Lord's Supper or think about the Lord's Supper and what it represents and what it means and what it is for God's people without holding these three doctrines really closely related together.

[2 : 52] We cannot appreciate what's in the Lord's Supper if we make light of sin. If we make light of sin, then why did Christ die? Why did God send his Son into this world to die the cursed death of the cross if sin is not really a serious issue?

You can't understand the Lord's Supper or benefit from it unless you discern in it the Lord's body. Unless Jesus Christ personally to you is really the substance of everything the Lord's Supper is about as you remember him in his death.

And thirdly, the Lord's Supper also is a way by which love is seen and exercised. Our love for the Lord brings us to remember him in his death.

Our love for one another, which we saw last night from another part of John's epistle here, our love for one another is expressed and actually seen in the way that we come together to the Lord's Supper.

We don't come merely as individuals. We come as a family. We come as God's redeemed people. And we come with each other in mind in a way that has the exercise of love as we saw last night.

[4 : 10] Love as an ideal or something that is just a feeling is meaningless. Love is only seen as love when it is practiced and when there are actions that demonstrate it.

The three things then, let's bring them with us in our mind. Let's hold these three things in our minds today as we come to remember the Lord in his death and come firstly to think about the meaning of this passage before we come to the Lord's table itself.

Sin, Jesus Christ, and love. A correct view of sin was so important to the apostle and so important to ourselves.

And really, in many ways, it's about avoiding two extremes. If you cast your mind back to the previous chapter, you'll find there in verse 8, If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

That's one side of it. That we are not the view or the opinion. That we are not inherently sinful. That's to say that we don't have sin at the core of our being.

[5 : 23] That would just regard sin as outward actions or something that's done with your body, but really doesn't have any business at all with your soul, any connection with you inwardly or spiritually.

That's the first thing. That's the first extreme. The second extreme is there in verse 10. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us.

So let's look at these two extremes and from that seek a correct view of sin and bring that with us to the way that John talks here in chapter 2 of Jesus as God's provision against our sin.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. Now back of this, without going into any of the kind of Greek philosophy and stuff like that, that was involved in the heretics thinking and the scholars believe that that was very much part of what these heretics had done.

What they had basically done was take the gospel that John had proclaimed and that John was as an apostle promoting and preaching. They had taken that gospel, but they had adapted it and shaped it into their previous philosophical views of life coming largely from Greek philosophy.

[6 : 46] In other words, it would be like something if you took the gospel today and you actually then began to fit it, try and fit it into a previous worldview that you had.

Something similar to Greek philosophy, something like you find currently in any of the opinions that people have that are not the gospel, but you try and fit it into that.

You try and actually make it fit the shape of your philosophy, your own philosophy. And John is saying, that's just not possible. It has to be the other way about.

You take your views, your human philosophies, your human views of life and what life is about and what the meaning of life is and what human destiny is and what sin is and what death is and what eternity is and you take all your human views of that and you have to bring them to the gospel and you have to have your mind shaped by God's truth.

Not take God's truth and try to fit it into some other shape. And that's because these heretics, they had a distinction between the soul and body that just wasn't right.

[7 : 55] What they said was something like this. Sin, if there is such a thing, sin is really only what you can do with your body. The soul of man, the soul of human beings is actually a pure spirit.

And you have to separate completely your soul from anything to do with sin or impurity or defilement. Now that's something of what the heritage is.

We're not sure precisely what their teaching would have been. But something like that would have come into it. Because we know that that was from a form of Greek philosophy that came through into the Christian time.

And what John is saying is, if we say we have no sin. We, a whole person that we are. Not just our bodies and the actions of our body, but our souls as well.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. And the truth is not in us. Now you can actually put that to certain views that you come across today.

[9 : 04] Because you'll come across people that say, of any particular kind of behavior. Well, it's not something really that I'm responsible for. I was just made this way.

Or you'll find an explanation for what we call sin. Because we believe the Bible is God's word and God's standard. And that sin is a failure to conform to that.

As well as a deliberate transgression of it. The way the catechism defines sin for us. If we actually come with that view, then we'll regard sin as sin. Wrongdoing as sin.

Omissions that are sinful. All of these things. But here, people nowadays will say, well, people's behavior, it's not due to anything in themselves that we call sin.

We've discarded that view. That's something that went back a long time when people thought that way. But we know better now. We made advances in our understanding of what a human being is.

[10 : 01] Psychologically. Physiologically. And some people will say that our behavior is really set primarily by our social conditions.

By the kind of environment in which we're brought up. And that's what really largely determines how a person comes to behave. Or what kind of lifestyle they end up choosing to live.

John will have none of that. John is saying, we are responsible creatures. And we are responsible for our actions.

And our actions stem from what's in our souls. Our actions actually come from the fact that we are inherently sinful.

One of the things the devil will always try and persuade you of. Is that the first three chapters of the Bible are a myth.

[11:00] That they're just a story to try and explain how things are. It's not surprising. Because that's the part of the Bible that tells us.

How we came to be the way we are. We weren't made this way. God didn't create us with sin inherent in us. God didn't create us as sinful people.

God didn't create us with our souls inherently sinful. Bias towards sin. And therefore showing ourselves to be sinners through our actions. God made us and created us perfect.

We sinned. We chose to sin. We chose to rebel against God. We are responsible for that. In our representative Adam.

And we can't get away from it by saying. But that was Adam. That wasn't me. We've only got to look at ourselves and say. It was me. Because that's what I'm now like.

[12:04] If we say we have no sin. We deceive ourselves. And the truth is not in us. That's the first extreme. Then he goes on.

If we say we have not sinned. We make him a liar. And his word is not in us. Now. You take that in the light of verse 9. If we confess our sins. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And John is then picking up the idea. Well if we have our sins forgiven. Then we can't possibly be accused of sin any longer.

In anything that we do. If we say that we have not sinned. How can we possibly sin if our sin is forgiven. If we come to God with our sin.

And of course down through the years. You've had people. Christians. Who have taken the view. That someone who has their sin forgiven. That's to say are justified.

[13:02] By faith in Christ. That it's possible for people. It doesn't mean everybody is. But it's possible for people. To actually live a perfect life.

In this world. It's called perfectionism. For want of a better word. That's what that idea has been called. Down through the ages. It really means that some people.

You'll still find in some. Circles of believers. In a more. Pentecostal or charismatic. Type of setting. Has to be said nowadays.

But you'll still find it in various groups. And people will actually still say. I really fully believe. That I have not sinned. For the past three months. Because.

They themselves regard. That this is possible. That they are capable of it. Through the grace of Christ. And again. John. As we'll see in a minute. In chapter two.

[13:59] Addressing the fact that. Although we are forgiven our sins. It does not mean that our actions. As we continue. In this life. Are not actually sinful anymore.

If. Any. Any. Man. Does. Sin. And John is perfectly aware. That we all do. Though we are forgiven. Or maybe forgiven. We have an advocate with the father. Jesus. Christ. The righteous. We. Find in our confession of faith.

In one of the chapters there. Regarding our sinfulness. It says this. This corruption of nature. That's our inward corruption. As well as. What we do outwardly.

And bodily. This corruption of nature. During this life. Remains. In those who are regenerated.

Those who have been. Born again. In other words. And although it is.

[14:57] Through Christ. Pardoned. And mortified. That's put to death. Yet all the motions of it. Are truly. And properly sin. In other words.

Though our sin may be forgiven. As it is. When we come to faith in Christ. That does not mean. That our actions afterward. Are not properly sin.

That's why the Lord taught. His disciples. Remember. Remember. The Lord's prayer. And in the Lord's prayer. Which we are to pray. At least daily. There is this clause.

This petition. Forgive us. Our trespasses. Why would the Lord need to include. For his disciples. That clause.

In the Lord's prayer. If he himself knew. That they were no longer. Going to be sinning. After they were. Their sins were forgiven. So these are the two extremes. A correct view of sin.

[16:00] Does not go about. With the idea. That we are not. Inherently. Inwardly sinful. Nor does it go about. With the idea. That having become Christians.

Or having had our sin forgiven. Whatever terminology. You use. After that. Our actions. Are not really. Sins at all. Properly speaking. They are.

And therefore. We must bring them to God. And confess them daily. Secondly. We come to Christ's advocacy. You see.

That is why. John is here saying. I am writing these things to you. So that you may not sin. In other words. He is writing this letter. So that they will attend. To the business of holiness of life.

That they will endeavor. Day by day. To sin less and less. And to live more and more. Holy lives. But he says. If anyone does. He recognizes.

[16:56] That in this life. Perfect holiness. Is not possible. If anyone. Does. Because you see.

If that were the case. If perfectionism. Were true. Most of us. If not all of us. Here would actually. Nearly despair. Because we are not achieving that.

We are not reaching that. And we would listen. To the ideas. That tell us. That the reason for that. Is because your faith. Is not strong enough. Or you are not as committed. To the Lord.

As you should be. Or you don't understand. Things properly. The way you should. Because these heretics. In John's day. That is the opinion. They had. They were an enlightened. They were an enlightened. Elite class of Christians.

So they claimed. They had access to knowledge. They had access to understanding. Which ordinary Christians. Even like the apostle John. Didn't. And if you read through John's writings. Not just this letter.

[17:50] But the next wee letter as well. Second John. You will find that. That's what he says about them. They have. An elitist view of themselves. That they have made.

To the pinnacle of knowledge. Which others largely. Don't achieve. That's. A view that you have to reject. As.

In Christ. Everyone. Who is in Christ. Has their sin forgiven. Has advocacy on their behalf. Because there is still. Sin. In their practice. If anyone sins. We have an advocate. With the father. Jesus Christ. The righteous. An advocate. In our understanding of it. Normally. Is somebody.

[18:44] Who comes to represent. Someone else. In court. Given. Different. Given. Different names. Depending. What part of the world. You're in. In America. They speak about attorneys.

South of the border. They speak about barristers. In Scotland. Generally. It's. An advocate. We've given the title to. Study this morning.

The Lord Advocate. The Lord Advocate. Is the chief legal officer. In Scotland. But this Lord Advocate. Is the Lord Advocate. Because. He is the Lord.

But he's the advocate. For his people. And. The word really means. It's actually. The same word. That you find. Elsewhere. In John's gospel. For the Holy Spirit. It means.

It's translated there. Comforter. In the authorized version. Or in the ESV. It's. Helper. And it has. These. That range. Of meanings. About it.

[19:40] It's. It means. All of that. But. Advocate. Really means. The word actually. Means. Someone. Called. Alongside. That's the literal.

Greek meaning. Of it. Someone. Who's called. Alongside. When you think of. An advocate. Representing. Someone. In a court. Of law. To present. Their case. That's someone. Who's been called.

Beside them. They've been called. To represent them. So they are. Actually. Beside them. They're there. Representing them. They are with them. In presenting. The case. For them.

Whether it's. One thing. Or the other. In defense. Or whatever. It's there. As a case. On their behalf. So that's what. The word really.

Means with regard. To Jesus. As well. If anyone. Sins. As we all do. Though our sin. May be forgiven. We still need to come.

[20:34] To depend on. Our advocate. And here is the great thing. That John is saying. Because we know. That we still. Do sin. But let's not. Despair about it. Let's not get gloomy.

Over it. Let's not think. That because of that. We can't possibly. Yet be Christians. We have an advocate. With the father. We have an advocate. In heaven. And he is Jesus Christ.

The righteous. We need. A legal representative. If you've got a serious. Case that you need to. Have brought to court. Then you need the best. Legal representation. Possible. That's what you have. As a Christian. That's what you have. In the person. Of Jesus Christ. We have an advocate.

With the father. Now that's interesting. It doesn't just say. With God. He says. With God. The father. With the father. And.

[21 : 31] It could be. It could very easily. Take the wrong view. From that. God. That some way or other. Jesus. As our advocate. In pleading our case. In heaven. Is really trying.

To change. God's mind. That he's trying. To change. God's mind. As a God. Of strict. Justice. That he will change. His mind.

And come to. Actually forgive us. And come to accept us. If we can put it this way. It's not. Actually. Love. On the part of Christ.

Love. For his people. Pleading with justice. In respect to God. As a God. Of strict justice. It's not love. Pleading with justice. For justice.

To be. To be. Changed. As to. Release. Those who are held. Under condemnation. It's not that. It's the other way about. It's justice.

[22 : 27] Pleading with love. What a difference. That makes. Because Christ. Is the righteous one. The just one.

The one who has all. The rights. With him. To claim. Benefits. For his people. To claim. Salvation. And ongoing. Salvation.

For his people. And he's pleading. With God. As we saw last night. The God of love. Who sent him. In the first place. Into this world. To die for them. And then.

To come back. To heaven. To plead for them. In other words. The love. That sent. Jesus. Into the world. Is the love.

That he is now. Pleading with. Addressing. Presenting. His case to. And he himself. Is just. And righteous. He has all.

[23 : 21] The rights. On his side. In other words. The Christian. Can't lose. Can't. He's got love. On the throne. In the father. He's got justice.

And righteousness. In Jesus. His advocate. There's no. Interference. There's no. Clash. Between them. They're both.

Exactly. Committed. To the same. Thing. Exactly. To the salvation. Of God's people. If any man. Sin. Not only.

Do we have. An advocate. We have. An advocate. With the father. Now you see. That means. Almost strictly speaking. We have no. Right.

In ourselves. To the benefits. That Jesus. Is procuring. For us. By his advocacy. In heaven. But what this. Is telling us.

[24 : 17] Is that. For those people. Who have no. Right. In themselves. Yet. They have the right. To expect. Blessing. Because Christ. Has the right.

To it for them. Because Jesus. Is pleading. As one. Who has rights. On his side. And because he. Has the rights. To their benefits.

They have that right. In him. What a wonderful thing. Where can you find. Anything like. The position. That a person. Has as a Christian.

In Christ. Set. In Christ. United. To Christ. The Christ. Who is pleading. For them. In heaven. Presenting a case. In their favor. With his own.

Righteousness. And his own. Rights. To their blessing. Addressing that. To God. A loving. Father. It is impossible. That they.

[25 : 11] Shouldn't. Be blessed. Christ. We have. An advocate. With the father. Jesus Christ.

The righteous. And. It does. Also mean. That if we are not. In this advocacy.

If we don't have him. As an advocate. Today. Who is going to present. A case for us. If you don't have the Lord. Today. As your own.

Savior. And this is really. What the gospel. Is all about. That you will come. And I will come. To have this. For ourselves. To possess. This. This. This. Christ.

And therefore. This salvation. For ourselves. If he is not. Our advocate. Just imagine. What that means. As a sinner.

[26 : 07] Whose sins. Are not forgiven. Who stands. Under the condemnation. Of God. Justly. You are going to have to. Plead your own case. Do you think.

That is going to be possible. You don't have to do that. You shouldn't even think. Of doing that. You know. The impossibility.

Of it. Because. There is an advocate. For you. This. Jesus. Christ. And not only that. But he is the propitiation. For.

Our sins. Now we mentioned. Propitiation. Last night. And said we would try. Open it up. A wee bit. Today. Every advocate. Needs. A case. Or arguments.

That he can plead. In other words. Pleas in law. Is what is normally called. In a court case. The pleas in law. Are. That which you have. In the record. That's presented.

[27 : 06] To the court. Which the advocate. Then presents. And explains. And. Does so in a way. That seeks to be as persuasive. As possible. With the person.

Or the jury. Or the judge. That's sitting on the bench. The pleas. In law. Are what the advocate. Presents. On behalf of his client. Or our client.

What is. The. What are the pleas. In law. What. Does. Jesus Christ. Have to present. In order to. Present. A case. In favor.

Of his people. What's his argument. What are his pleas. In law. Himself. He is.

The propitiation. For. Our sins. Jesus. As our advocate. Is presenting. A case. In our favor. That our sin. Will not be held.

[28 : 02] Against us. What can he bring. What can he possibly. Bring. To God the father. On the throne. Of heaven. That will actually. Guarantee. That our sin. Will never be held.

Against us. What can he possibly. Bring. That will be. The most persuasive. Argument of all. He brings himself. And he brings himself. As the propitiation. For our sins.

What does that mean. Then. That he's the propitiation. For our sins. That this is the substance. Of his argument. Propitiation. Propitiation. Has to do with. Meeting the anger. Of God.

We said last night. That the anger. Of God. Is real. The Bible. Tells us. It's real. And is directed. Especially. Against sin. That means. Your sin. And my sin.

As God sees us. As we are in ourselves. As fallen. Lost. Condemned. Sinners. In that respect. God's anger. Is directed. Against us.

[28 : 58] In order. To divert. That anger. Away. From us. Something. Incredible. Had to happen. God.

Had to be satisfied. In his justice. And also. Have his anger. Directed. Against sin. To punish sin. With what it deserved. Where was he going to do that.

If not. On ourselves. Who deserved it. Well he did it. Because he punished. Our sin. In Jesus. His death.

On the cross. Remember. That's not. Just a physical thing. It's not just death. In the way. We experience death. Soul and body. Being separated. Leaving this world.

The death of Jesus. Is eternal death. It's. It's everything. That hell. Is. Taken into himself. Paying the price.

[29 : 57] Of our sin. In experiencing. That hell. For us. In our place. So that we would not come. To experience it ourselves. That's what we.

Saw last night. Doesn't it? That God sent his son. Into the world. In this is love. In the very chapter 4. He sent his only son. Into the world. So that we.

Might live. Through him. This is love. That love. That God. Did this. For us. And so. Propitiation. Is Jesus. Dealing with God's wrath.

Not turning him. From a God of wrath. Into a God of love. Because remember. God's love. Sent his son. To be a propitiation.

It's an incredible thing. It's God's love. Providing something. To meet God's own anger. In the person. Of his dear son. And God's love.

[30 : 55] In bringing Christ. To be the propitiation. Really is God's love. If you imagine. God saying. Well. My love needs to. Find its purpose.

In saving my people. I'm committed to. Saving them. In my love for them. But my wrath. Stands against that. Because they deserve. My wrath. Against their sin.

And that has to be answered. How am I going to save them. But punish their sin. At the same time. I will send my son. For them. I will send him.

To take the punishment. For them. And he will meet. All my wrath. In all its entirety. And he will endure that.

And he will overcome that. And once that's done. He shall live. And now when Jesus.

[31 : 51] Is our advocate in heaven. It's not like you sometimes. Find in this life. A clever lawyer. Can just persuade. The judge. That somebody. Who is known.

To be guilty. Perhaps by him. And who is himself. The person who is accused. Knows that he's guilty. But he's presenting. A good case. In favor of being let off. Or being not guilty. And a clever lawyer. Can sometimes do that. Jesus. As our advocate in heaven. Doesn't deal with that. Sort of shadiness at all.

What he basically is. Is saying to God the Father. In his own presence. There continually. I died their death. I answered your wrath for them.

Now then. I have the right. To their salvation. I have the right. To keep them saved. I have the right. That they forevermore.

[32 : 49] Will not have to answer. For their sin. We have an advocate. With the Father. Jesus Christ. The righteous. And he is. The propitiation. For our sin.

As Paul put it. In 2nd Corinthians 5. The great exchange. Has taken place. He who knew no sin. God made him. To be sin. For us. For us. So that we.

Might become. The righteousness. Of God. In him. And that's how he enters the case.

On behalf of his people. The sufficiency. Of his own death. That corresponds. To all the demands. Of God. God. Every Christian.

Should rejoice. In Christ's intercession. And what it is. It's the presentation. Of a case. On their behalf. And for them.

[33 : 51] And in their favor. That is bound. To succeed. And to keep on succeeding. For them. That is never in question. Of failing. The judge.

On the bench. The father. On the throne. Never says. I'm not sure. About that. Never says. Well. What about that. Person. I know. That they were really.

Desperately. Evil. Sinners. Before they came. To know salvation. Do you think. They should really. Be held. Forevermore. Free from their sin.

Free from its guilt. The death. Of Christ. To say. Of course. They should. It's answered here. I've taken their place. And that's what we're remembering today.

Friends. Remember as you take. The bread. And the cup. That there is someone remembering you.

[34 : 50] As you do so. And pleading on your behalf. Not with a reluctant God. But with God. Who's already a father to you.

As you remember him in his death. He's remembering you in his intercession. As you take the emblems of his. Broken body and shed blood.

He's presenting that as a propitiation. An accomplished propitiation. A propitiation. That once and for all. Finished and complete. But evermore. But evermore. Continues to speak for his people.

So that they will be maintained. Free of the guilt of sin. And ultimately of its presence and power.

Now then. If anyone does.

Here's the great provision. We have an advocate with the father. Jesus Christ the righteous. And he is the propitiation.

[35 : 57] For our sins. There is therefore. Now. No condemnation. To those who are in. Christ.

Jesus. Come to the table. And rejoice in doing so. That you are found. In Christ.

May God bless his word to us. Let's pray. Almighty God. We give thanks for your great provision for us.

We stand in awe. At the way in which you came. In your love. To demonstrate your love. And to do so in a way. That provided for us. Such a glorious redemption. In such a great saviour.

We give thanks. Oh Lord. That however great our sin may be. And however much we ourselves. May be perplexed by it. That our saviour is much greater.

[36 : 57] Greater even than all the accumulation. Of the sin of his people. In its entirety. We thank you today. For your advocacy. For the way that it is ongoing.

Constantly. For your people. For the way that it has already. Taken account of our need. And presents a perfect case. To God the Father. We give thanks.

That through that. We have the certainty. Of our acceptance. And its continuance. Before you. And Lord. We pray today. That we may come. Filled with thanksgiving.

To remember the death. That achieved us. Hear us. We pray now. For Jesus' sake. Amen. Amen. Now if we move to the.

Part of the service. To do with the Lord's Supper. It's customary and necessary for us to. Come to address. Those who are coming to the table. In what we call.

[37 : 54] The fencing of the Lord's table. If we cast our minds. To verse 9 of chapter 1. If we confess our sin. He is faithful and just. To forgive us our sins.

And to cleanse us from all. Unrighteousness. Who. Should come to the Lord's table. Who should come to take. Communion. Many ways to answer.

That question. You would need to take. The whole of scripture basically. And answer it from different angles. And come forward with different truths. That answer the question. But if we confine it to that.

One verse. Those who come to the Lord's table. Who have the right to come. Who have the duty of coming. The privilege of coming. Are those whose sins have been forgiven.

And you see the way it's put there. If we confess our sins. And by that the apostle doesn't just mean. The kind of confession that we. Learn as infants or children.

[38 : 54] Where we just do it parrot fashion. Confession of sin. In terms of a proper biblical. Idea of confession. Is a confession that recognizes.

What sin is. And to some extent realizes. That sin is something. For which we do need. The forgiveness of God. And the cleansing power.

Of God's spirit. To wash us from our sin. If we confess. If we confess. Our sin. Genuinely. Seriously. Earnestly.

And yet be careful. Because your acceptance. Is not actually based. On the quality of your confession. On the reality of it.

Yes. On the fact that it's a real confession. Well. It's a means through which we receive forgiveness. It's not the ground. The reason for our forgiveness. Because that's in God himself.

[39 : 52] But we don't have forgiveness. Without confession. Without coming. To express our sin. And our sorrow for it to God. And when we do so.

We meet with a God. Who is faithful. And just. To forgive us our sins. That's.

The ground of our confession. The nature of God himself. When we confess our sin. We don't come. To meet with a God.

Who is reluctant to give us. Forgiveness. But we'll do it. Just because we've asked for it. When we come. We meet with a God.

Who is full of abundant mercy. It's his mercy that draws us. As much as anything else. And when we come without confession of sin.

[40 : 52] We meet with a God. Who is faithful to his promise. His promise is. If you confess. I will forgive. God. And that's what God.

Actually holds to on his side. He's not going to forgive our sin. Without our meeting. The terms of confession. But when we come to confess.

God is not going to be short of his promise. He is faithful. And he is just. Now we saw. Something in the propitiation. We mentioned of God's justice.

As well as God's anger. Because God. In his justice. Requires things to be done. Before. We can think of receiving forgiveness. For ourselves.

And that's what God has done. In Christ. His justice. Has been answered. And satisfied. Fully there as well. It is now. Just of him. To forgive our sins.

[41 : 49] You see. Without. The death of Christ. You cannot. See how it would be just. Or proper. For God. Just to make a declaration. Of forgiveness.

Over anybody. And say. Well it's alright. I choose to forgive you sin. I don't really need my anger. Or my justice. To be satisfied. I'll just do it. I'll do it by an act of my will.

And that's it. God. Needs to be true to himself. And to be true to himself. In order for forgiveness. To reach us.

Satisfaction must be given to him. To answer for our sin. It's been done. The justice of God. As the love of God. Is displayed in Christ.

And in his death. He has justly. Punished our sin. In him. And now he can justly forgive. When we come with our confession.

[42 : 44] You come to the Lord's table. As those who are forgiven. How do you know you're forgiven? Well one of the things. That demonstrates it.

Is that you want to be holy. That you want to be rid of sin. That sin. Is a problem to you. If you are today in Christ.

And seeking to live as a Christian should. Sin will be a problem to you. Because sin is something that you see. Is contrary. To the standard of God.

But God has given you things. In order to. Through this life. Put sin to death. As he put it in Romans 8. If.

Through the spirit. We mortify the deeds of the body. We shall live. That's. Working at holiness. That's sanctification. That's. Seeking to be holy.

[43 : 46] And that's what's. Brought in here as well. I think in. The other part of verse 9. God is faithful and just. To forgive us our sin. And to cleanse us. From all unrighteousness.

To make us at last. Perfectly holy. Before him. In our actions. In our thoughts. In our words. In our minds. In our souls.

In our bodies. That's what heaven will be like. That's what God is determined. To bring about. That's why Jesus died. And you come to the Lord's table today.

With sin forgiven. Having asked God. To pardon your sin. And being assured. That because you have come with your confession. God is committed to your forgiveness. But you want to be holy. And you're not as holy as you want to be. And you're not as holy. As you should be. But because that's the case. You don't. Stay away from the Lord's table.

[44 : 45] The Lord's table is not for those who are perfectly holy. Because they don't exist in this life. The Lord's table is for those who want to be holy.

And who want to use the means. That God has given. To reach that holiness at last. To improve upon your holiness. Here and now.

That's where the Lord's table fits into. Christian experience. It's not for the super holy. It's not for an elite class of Christians. It's for every Christian who's born again.

Whose sin is forgiven. Who wants to be holy. And who knows that God. Through what happens in the Lord's Supper. Though we don't understand it all. Yet as a means of grace.

Spiritually we are strengthened. And we are strengthened. To be holy. More than we are. See that's John's pastoral concern.

[45 : 47] In verses 3 to 6 of the chapter. By this note we know. That we have come to know him. If we keep his commandments. Whoever says I know him. But does not keep his commandments. Is a liar.

But whoever keeps his word. In him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may be sure. That we are in him. Whoever says he abides in him. Ought to walk in the same way.

In which he walked. In other words. The Lord's table is for those. Who knowing they are not yet. As holy as they should be. Or want to be. And yet know that their sin is forgiven.

They come to the Lord's table. To remember him. And through doing so. He promises them. That they will receive grace. To help them.

On their journey. It's for the forgiven. It's for the forgiven. Whose desire is to be holy. It's for the forgiven.

[46 : 45] Whose desire to be holy. Involves using all the means. Including the Lord's Supper. That God has provided. To that end.

May he bless. His thoughts on his word to us. As we come. To the communion. And now. And now. Prosperity.

It's customary now. For us to read. And warrant. For observing the Lord's Supper. Which we find in 1 Corinthians. Chapter 11. And verse 23. For I received from the Lord.

What I also delivered to you. That the Lord Jesus. On the night. When he was betrayed. Took bread. And when he had given thanks. He broke it. And said. This is my body. Which is for you.

Do this. In remembrance of me. In the same way. Also. He took the cup. After supper. Saying. This cup. Is the new covenant. In my blood. Do this. As often as you drink it.

[47 : 49] In remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread. And drink the cup. You proclaim. The Lord's death. Until he comes.

And so on. We follow the Lord's. Pattern and example. So let's now give thanks. O Lord.

O gracious God. And loving. Heavenly Father. We do give thanks. That in this moment. We are brought again. To face the reality. Of your love.

We do give thanks. That in doing so. You demonstrate. That love to us. In a way. That has provided for us. A means. By which. We can visibly see. The portrayal.

Of your sufferings. In your death. And your death. On the cross. Which was followed. By your resurrection. We ask. O gracious God. That you would. Grant to us.

[48 : 43] At this time. That sense. Of your presence. And we pray. That you would speak. To us. That we might know. That in being here. That you address. Our souls.

And our need. We pray. That as we confess. Our sin. You would assure us. Once again. Of that glorious. Forgiveness. Which is ours. In the Lord. In the Lord. In the Lord. Jesus Christ.

We give thanks. Lord. For all. That is in. That death. That achieved. Such. Great things. For your people. We bless you. That in. That death.

We find all. The comfort. That comes. To. Provide. For us. Against. Our sin. For what the law. Could not do. In that it was.

Weak. Through the flesh. God. In sending. His own son. In the likeness. Of sinful flesh. And for sin. Condemned. Sin. In the flesh. That the righteousness.

[49 : 39] Of the law. Might be fulfilled. In us. We walk. Not after the flesh. But after the spirit. May your spirit. Lord. Take these things. Today. And make them.

Powerful. And precious. To us. Bless all. Who are here. At your table. Bless all. Who are witnesses. For it. We ask it all. For Jesus. For Jesus. Amen.

In John's. First epistle. We also have. Words. That remind us. Of the love. Of God. In chapter 3. I just like to. Read that.

Before we come. To take communion. And see. What kind of love. The father. Has given to us. That we should be. Called. Children. Of God. And so.

We are. The reality. Of being. Children. Children. Of God. That. Reality. Is.

[50 : 38] Something. That the apostle. Says. Is indeed. Something. We should be. Sure of. That is. Our position. We are. The children. Of God.

We don't. Have to be. Hesitant. About that. Indeed. We ought. Not. To be. Hesitant. About that. The apostle. Is saying. And such. We are. As if. To demonstrate.

Against those. Who were. Heretics. That faced them. With all the false. Teaching. All the accusations. That they leveled. Against them. That they. Weren't. Properly. People of God. At all. And Christians. Beloved. He says. Now. We. Are. Children. Of God. What's more. Amazing. To you. Other than.

The death. Of Christ. Inself. Than the fact. That you are. A child. Of God. We were. All the children. Of wrath. As others. As Ephesians.

[51 : 31] Two. Puts it. But we have. Been taken. From that. And we have. Entered. A new state. By the grace. Of God. We are. His family. We are.

Brothers. And sisters. Of the Lord. Jesus Christ. We are. The children. Of God. We have. The rights. Of his children. The privileges. Of his children.

The destiny. Of his children. We have his. By adoption. He has. Indeed. Taken us. As his own. And what he says.

Here too. Is. What kind. Of love. The father. Has given. To us. That we. Should be. Called the children. Of God. It's not just. That we are.

But the wonder. Of how we came. To be. What we are. The nature. Of this love. Behold. What manner. Of love.

[52 : 27] This is. It doesn't just say. We were loved. But we were loved. By an amazing love. What manner. Of love. This is. As you are about.

To take. This bread. And this cup. Think. As much. As you can. Of the nature. Of the love. That God. Has shown. To me. What manner.

Of love. Of love. That is. What love. Would have done. What this love. Did. What love. Would have sent. His only dear son. To take. Your place.

Your death. Your sin. Your guilt. Your hell. What you deserved. It. That is.

What this love. Did. What love. Would have. Brought. Such sufferings. To one. Who is totally. Undeserving. Of it himself. So that you.

[53 : 22] And I. Might live. What love. Would continue. To provide. For you. Patiently. Lovingly. Each day. Knowing. Our mistakes. Knowing.

Our failures. Knowing. Our. Reluctance. At times. To listen. To. Knowing. Knowing. How short. We come. Of being. The kind. Of people. We should be. Outwardly.

And inwardly. What love. Would continue. To bless us. But the love. God. Hold. What. Manner. Of love. This is. That we. Should be called. The children. Of God. An amazing. Status. An amazing. Love. An amazing. God. We read. When the Lord.

[54 : 17] Was betrayed. The night. In which he was. Betrayed. That he took bread. When he had given. Thanks. He broke it. And said. Take it. This is my body. Which is broken. For you.

This too. In remembrance. Of me. In like manner. After the supper. He took the cup. The English cup. Is the new covenant. In my blood. The stew.

As often. As you drink it. In remembrance. Of me. As often. As you eat. This bread. And drink. This cup. You show. The Lord's death. Till he comes.

The Lord's death. Beloved.

Now we are God's children. And what will be. Has not yet appeared. But we know. That when he appears. We shall be like him. Because we shall see him.

[55 : 13] As he is. And everyone. Who thus hopes in him. purifies himself as he is pure. The fact of being God's children and the wonder of the love that produced it is accompanied by the destiny of God's children because this is their destiny that they shall be like their father.

The passage is about God the Father not about Christ particularly though it is through Christ's mediatorship that we know the Father is God and know God as our Father.

I think it's better translated there we know not what will be has not yet appeared that means that what we're going to be ultimately has not yet become evident it's not happened yet but when it shall appear we shall be like him we'll be like our Father we shall see him in Christ through Christ although only Christ has a human body Christ himself in Matthew 5 said blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.

Jesus said to Philip in John 14 verse 8 have I been so long time with you Philip and do you yet not know me? whoever has seen me has seen the Father.

that was in his life it's certainly going to be more so the case when we come to heaven that we shall see our Father through the mediatorship of Christ in a way that's impossible in this life for we shall see him as he is we shall understand for never before what his fatherliness is really about what he is like as God our Father and everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself as he is pure our hope is towards that destiny but that hope is accompanied by our faith our faith which involves our obedience to Christ to God the Father and as we hope towards our destiny so we accept the means that he has provided for us in this life that we might purify ourselves as he is pure that's the same thing as we mentioned earlier holiness, life and the means that God has given to us to obtain it the two go together those who expect to be like him in heaven want to be as like him as possible on earth and that is why God has given us the privilege of children and the destiny of children his own children by adoption through Jesus Christ

[58 : 12] I would like to say a word to those who are not at the table at this moment it's a very very precious thing to see to hear we're delighted that you are here today you have been witnesses of a commemoration a commemoration of the death of Christ in the Lord's Supper as the communicants have taken bread and wine to commemorate and to represent him and his death you have also been witnesses of a separation you are separated by distance from the Lord's table I am fully persuaded that many of you perhaps even all of you would wish today that that separation was not there that that distance had been overcome but that's not happened yet for me and I'm not saying this in any way condemningly judgmentally finding fault with you accusing you anything like that

I'm saying it because it is my desire and the desire of all God's praying people here that the time will soon be for you when you too will commemorate and be part of a separation not by staying where you are but by coming forward today you've met with Jesus you've seen him in his word and in his sacrament you've heard about his advocacy about the fact that he's a propitiation for our sins God is saying to you today this is for you too it's all your if you were just happy please don't leave it that's just a memory of today make it your resolve from this moment onwards that for you there will be no separation in the future from commemorating the Lord's death may he bless this abundantly to all of you to his glory let's pray

Lord our God we seek your blessing to follow all that we have done in your name in the proclamation of your word the singing of your praise our calling upon you in prayer our reading of your word our participation in the Lord's supper for all of these we do give thanks and we pray that you would seal them to our hearts we pray for all who were at your table we pray that you would bless them as they continue to live their lives as witnesses for you keep their light we pray shining grant that in their hearts they may know each day of your grace supplying them to that end we pray for Elie as she has come for the first time we thank you for her we thank you for the way that you have dealt with her to bring her to this moment in her life we thank you that she is now visibly one of your own children in this world and pray that you would bless her and use her and we ask oh Lord that she may know your continued upholding in days to come bless we pray any of us who may have been at your table for the last time we know not what a day might bring forth bless again all who are witnesses of it bless them and bless it to them continue with us now and be with us this evening we ask it all for your glory's sake
Amen