

1 John – God is Love: Week Two

What it Means to Have Divine Protection

Day One: What Jesus Did for Us Who Believe and Why

This week we will be looking closely at Chapter Two of 1 John. It is such an important chapter, because John helps us better understand what Jesus has done for us. We know that He gave His life when He died on the cross, but do we understand why He had to die? Let's look at that issue today.

The name of this study is, "God is Love", and I hope after this week, you will see what we mean by that. God proves His love to us through His Son Jesus Christ.

Read 1 John 2:1

So that you may not sin, and if anyone sins...

That phrase appears at first to be a contradiction, doesn't it? First John tells us we are not to sin, then seems to imply we will still sin. But, think about it. Doesn't this pretty much describe the dual nature that you and I wrestle with? We have our old nature (the flesh) and our new nature (the spirit). We wrestle with what our conscience tells us is wrong, (like when we are being self-centered or unkind), and what we just feel like doing because we are upset or angry. Remember, we are all a work in progress, not completely living up to our own high standards!

And to be honest, when we are living according to our old nature - we won't be ready to have a relationship with our holy, perfect, Father God. We know He loves us, but it's hard to be around someone who is perfect, isn't it? Being in God's Presence makes us painfully aware of our shortcomings. I'm glad that Paul the Apostle had the same problem!

Read Romans 7:14-25, 8:1-5

Matthew Henry wrote, "while God makes no allowance for sin, He has made provision for it. Therefore, we must not sin that grace may abound, but when we have sinned, we must make use of abounding grace!"

We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (1 John 2:1b)

John is saying, I know that you are trying not to sin – and that's good! But, if you do – don't think for a minute that God doesn't love you, or that He is going to reject you. (That's how people might react – but not God.) No, when you sin, don't despair! You have an Advocate who will cover you with His love. Jesus is on your side!

John Gill says, “He (Jesus) pleads in our favor that these sins have been laid upon Himself, and He has borne them, and His blood has been shed for the remission of them, and that He has made full satisfaction for them, and therefore in justice they ought not to be laid to our charge but forgiveness of them should be applied unto us.”

Let’s imagine a courtroom setting.

God the Father is the Judge. You are on trial for something you have done. Although you agree that you really are guilty of disobeying God’s commands, the penalty of death seems awfully harsh, so you are ready to plead with God for mercy.

The Accuser (the prosecuting attorney) is there telling God the details of your failure. You listen to him tell the Judge what you have done. You know that it is all true. Things are not looking good. He makes a good case against you.

But in walks your Defense attorney – Jesus Christ, your Advocate! He speaks to the Judge on your behalf. He reminds the Judge that He paid with His own blood (through His death on a cross), for each and every sin you would ever commit. Jesus reminds the Judge that by faith in Christ, you have been adopted into His family, and now are a child of God. You are sanctified by the Holy Spirit and redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

God, the Judge, declares you free to go! No more guilt, no more shame, just a clean slate!

Jesus is your Advocate. He is your Defense attorney. He is the Propitiation for your sins.

Read 1 John 2:1-2, 4:9-10

The Greek word translated, “propitiation” is “hilasmos”. It signifies an expiation (from our word expire) and a means whereby sin is covered and remitted.

Let’s ask God to give us spiritual understanding. Remember, our God is Spirit, so we need to come to Him and allow Him to teach us things that our minds might not comprehend.

Pray this prayer or your own: *Dear Lord, please open my spiritual eyes so that I can understand what you have done for me by dying on the cross. Teach me so that I can better appreciate the great sacrifice you made for me, and so that I can know you more. I want to know you more, Jesus! Amen.*

Read Leviticus 1:1-13

In Old Testament times, God made a covenant with Moses and the Israelites after He brought them out of Egypt, and the people were given very specific instructions or commands, that they were to obey. If they disobeyed, they needed to offer an animal sacrifice before they could be cleansed or atoned for their sin. There were other types of offerings too.

It was all about having fellowship with God. God gave them detailed instructions to build a tabernacle where they could meet with Him and placed the tabernacle right in the center of their community – like a town square. God’s presence could be seen as smoke over the Most Holy Place (the Holy of Holies), where the Ark of the Covenant was kept. No one was allowed into the Most Holy Place, except one day a year – only the High Priest could go in – behind the Veil, and only after sprinkling blood on the Ark, and doing all kinds of purification and sacrifices.

The people would have understood that God was very, very, holy, and if they were to disobey and walk into the Most Holy Place, they would surely die. But God still wanted to have fellowship with His people. So, He made it possible for them to bring daily sacrifices to the tabernacle. The shed blood of the animal would be sprinkled on the horns of the altar, and by doing this, the blood (representing death of the animal) would atone (temporarily) for the person’s sin.

But unfortunately, the people didn’t stop sinning. They just seemed to sin more and more, until God allowed the Ark of the Covenant to be stolen by the Philistines, and later the temple that God had told David to build, was set on fire. The sacrificial system didn’t make the people any better.

Read Hebrews 9:11-14 and fill in the blanks.

1. But when Christ appeared as a _____ of the good things to come, He entered through a greater and more perfect _____ not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation;
2. And not through the blood of goats and calves, but through _____ He entered the Holy Place once for all having obtained _____.
3. For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the _____,
4. How much more will the _____ who through the eternal _____ offered Himself without blemish to God _____ from dead works to serve the living God?

Based on this passage in Hebrews, the blood of goats and bulls was able to cleanse (sanctify) the people’s flesh.

What is the blood of Jesus able to cleanse (sanctify) us from? Hebrews 9:14

Read Hebrews 10:10-22 and fill in the blanks. (My added notes in parenthesis!)

1. By this will (God's), we have been _____ (made holy) through the offering of the _____ once for all.
2. (v. 14) For by one offering He has _____ for all time those who are _____.
3. (v.18) Now where there is _____ of these things (sins we commit), there is no longer any _____ (needed) for _____.
4. (v. 19) Therefore brothers (and sisters), since we have _____ to enter the Holy Place by the _____
5. (v. 20) by a new and living way which He inaugurated for _____ through the _____ which is, His _____,
6. (v.22) Let us _____ (fellowship) with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled _____ from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with clear water.

This passage explains why, if we want to have fellowship with God, it is so important that we understand that we have had our hearts (consciences) cleansed, not just our bodies. Since Jesus is our High Priest, He has made provision for us to be completely cleansed – once and for all. You are sanctified, made holy by the blood of the Lamb!

As a result of this great victory over sin, what should our response be, based on verse 22?

Read Hebrews 2:17-18

There is that word, “propitiation” again. Jesus is not only our High Priest, our Advocate.... He is also the Lamb that was slain. He became the perfect and final sacrifice - a sacrifice that no one but the sinless Son of God Himself could offer - making propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4:10 says this: In this is **love**, not that we **loved** God, but that He **loved** us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Wow! What He did for Love!