

A. Introduction

1. What if we sin?

- a. A man named Carl Coleman was driving to work when a woman motorist, passing too close, snagged his fender with hers. Both cars stopped. The young woman surveying the damage was in tears. It was her fault, she admitted. But it was a new car – less than two days from the showroom. How was she ever going to face her husband? Mr. Coleman was sympathetic but explained they must note each other's license number and automobile registration. The woman reached into the glove compartment of her car to retrieve the documents in an envelope... And on the first paper to tumble out, in a heavy masculine scrawl, were these words: "In case of accident, remember, Honey, it's you I love, not the car."
- b. Those are God's words to us. It is we whom He loves. —{2}.

2. the text: 1 John 2:1–2 – on the Christian as a sinner

- a. Part 1: Don't ... 1 My dear children, I am writing these things to you in order that you should not sin.
...
- b. Part 2: If ... Should anyone sin, we have a Paraclete in the presence of the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous One. 2 Now He Himself is a propitiation on behalf of our sins, and not on behalf of ours only, but also on behalf of those of the whole world.
- c. today I want to touch briefly on one aspect of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ in providing salvation
 - (A) this has to do with how He deals with sin
 - (B) a grammatical point: this is all in the subjunctive mood
 - (C) this mood, dealing with the exceptional situation, is forced throughout by the introductory "in order that"
 - (D) if you write computer programs and systems, one thing that you need to provide is an "exception handler" – that is, instructions to the computer as to what to do if a certain error occurs ... not that it is expected to happen, but just in case
 - (E) John here gives us an "exception handler" respecting this matter of sin ... sin for the Christian is intended to be the exception rather than the rule

(F) not that Christians do not sin – we covered that in 1 John 1 when we discussed it 2 weeks ago – but we are no longer to practice sin; to make it our rule of life; for as Paul says, “For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace.” (Romans 6:14 NAS)

3. How does Jesus Christ deal with my sin? There are three points that I would like to make this morning from these verses

- a. Sin is the object of God’s wrath
- b. Jesus Christ defends us from that wrath
- c. Basis of our defence is Christ’s propitiatory work

B. Sin is the Object of God’s Wrath

1. What is wrath?

- a. the word is a bit archaic, not used in everyday speech
- b. Webster’s dictionary defines it as intense anger or fury, particularly in judgement or in vengeance
- c. our own experience with anger colours what it means to us
 - (A) of someone losing their cool, their self-control
 - (B) of a person flaring up in a hot temper
 - (C) “as of the fury of a storm” ^{–{3}}. (my uncle took a picture of such fury, of a wave breaking over the lighthouse at the eastern gap of Toronto harbour)
- d. but wrath, though it can be used of men, but when “the Hebrew prophets ... spoke of the ‘wrath of God’ ethicized the idea of anger so that it meant the absolute, implacable hostility of Divine Holiness to every form of moral evil –{2}”
- e. So we read in 2 Chronicles 36:15-16 “And the Lord, the God of their fathers, sent word to them again and again by His messengers, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place; but they continually mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, until there was no remedy.” (NAS)
- f. God’s wrath brings judgement against sin, and
 - (A) because the sinner is inextricably mingled with his sin
 - (B) it brings judgement against the sinner with his sin
 - (C) unless God should remove that sin away from him

2. Now God has given His Holy Spirit to indwell every believer
 - a. the Holy Spirit is also known as the Spirit of holiness
 - b. of Him we read, “[And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment](#)” (John 16:8 NAS)
 - c. so it is no wonder that when we as Christians sin we find ourselves engaged in an inner turmoil between our new spiritual nature and our old fleshly nature as Paul describes so clearly in the Romans chapter 7 with the question, “[Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?](#)” (verse 24, NAS)
 - d. now that is a state in which no Christian desires to be left, so we are delighted when we read Paul’s next words, “[Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! ...](#)” (Romans 7:25a NAS), for we find that ...

C. Jesus Christ Defends us From that Wrath

1. we find that for the believer, for those who have been obedient to the invitation of the gospel, there is deliverance from this wrath of God against sin, against the sinner
 - a. “[He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.](#)” (John 3:36 NAS)
 - b. “[Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.](#)” (Ephesians 5:6 NAS)
2. “Judge Judy” is one of a number of similar TV programs
 - a. bringing the drama of the courtroom into your living-room
 - b. in the form of settling a person’s complaint against another
 - c. where even the winner seems frustrated in not being able to state their full case; and the loser leaves feeling wronged
3. So, here we are in the courtroom of God
 - a. and, moreover, we know that we are guilty!
 - b. we know, that by rights, we deserve God’s wrath
 - c. and we know that God knows it too
 - d. yet, what do we find

4. the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is our Defence Lawyer
 - a. He intercedes; he pleads our case to the Father. He always does this according to the will of God and is always heard. When Jesus intercedes for us, the Father always hears him; the Father always responds immediately to bring to pass what the Son has requested. He is our advocate with the Father ...
 - b. He intercedes before the Father when we sin. He asks the Father to release into our life all that the Father has provided, especially the Holy Spirit (John 14:16).
 - c. Jesus' intercession can dramatically affect your personal life and walk with God. He can and will keep you from sin.^{-(4)}}
 - d. and we can leave the courtroom having heard the verdict, "not guilty" and know that we have not just got out by some loophole of the law, but that this is a just verdict, because we just read that our Advocate is Jesus Christ, the Righteous One ... One who cannot cheat God's judicial system ... how can this be?

D. Basis of Our Defence is Christ's Propitiatory Work

1. Donald Johnson, a defence attorney in Cornwall, Ontario, Canada, woke up in the middle of the night to noises from another bedroom in his house. His wife called police while he chased after the burglar. He tackled the intruder, disarmed him of a knife, and then realized he knew the man: it was one of his own clients. "I guess he didn't know it was my house," Johnson said. After booking, police asked Scott Best, 34, if he'd like to call a lawyer. He asked if he could call Johnson, but officers apparently convinced him to call someone else. Johnson agreed it "wouldn't have been a good idea" to call him.^{-(5)}} – Is it a good idea to have your adversary for a lawyer? Yes? No? Well, then, listen to this ...

2. God

- a. is the Plaintiff, the One wronged by our sin
- b. is the Judge, the One pronouncing judgement on our sin
- c. and is our Avocate! defending us in this court for our sin!
- d. and it is God who has provided the solution whereby we as sinners can be separated from our sin, cleansed, even as we noted two weeks ago: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9 NAS)

3. it has always been so
 - a. God takes the initiative to deal with our sin
 - b. He did so for His people in the Old Testament, Leviticus 17:11, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement." (NAS)
 - c. "... So the priest shall make atonement for them, and they shall be forgiven." (Leviticus 4:20 NAS)
 - d. God made this possible because the work of Jesus Christ on the cross had been planned and was as good as done, for Revelation 13:8 tells us of "...the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world." (NIV)
 - e. and God took what was true in eternity making it true in time, "But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons." (Galatians 4:4-5 NAS)
4. Christ, then, stands as our Propitiation, a wall from behind which we are shielded from God's wrath so we can be forgiven
 - a. "who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us." (Romans 8:34 NAS)
 - b. "being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus." (Romans 3:24-26 NAS) – that is how God can justly forgive us our sin

- E. Propitiation ... Christ's atoning work of salvation was
- a. effected by God's plan in eternity and by the cross in time
 - b. applied to the Christian through faith unto salvation
 - c. and continually operative for every Christian to deal with his or her sin, until we are set "free from the body of this death"
 - d. what a marvellous peace we have with God!
 - e. what a comfort from Christ to a sinner!

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Various English versions of the Holy Bible are used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in [square brackets]. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
NAS	New American Standard version © 1975 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
NLT	1996 New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Further sermons and illustrations may be found at the web-site, www.holwick.com. Materials in this sermon from Rev. David Holwick's database are identified by “Kerux” followed by a sermon or illustration number.

2. “Who Will Take Away This Burden of Guilt” by Paul Harvey – Kerux Illustration # 1716
3. “St Paul's Gospel to the Romans”, G. O. Griffith, Oxford, 1949, page 20
4. “Jesus Intercedes for You” by Henry Blackaby – Kerux illustration #17381
5. Canadian Press – Kerux illustrations #29581