

A Defense Like No Other – 1 John 1:10-2:1

Introduction – The first two dishonest claims we have handled: (1) Sin does not break our fellowship with God and (2) Sin does not exist in our nature (vv6-9). John continues to ramp up his rhetoric as he deals with the third dishonest claim: (3) We have not actually sinned. Those who claim the first, lie. Those who claim the second, deceive themselves. Those who claim the third declare God to be a liar.

John's rhetoric also becomes more pastoral, more personal, and we learn again why he is writing. "*My little children, I write these things to you, so that you might not sin.*" And yet, didn't he just say that we shouldn't say that?

Dishonest Claim #3: I Haven't Sinned (v10) – We may concede the scriptural truth that sin breaks our fellowship with God, and that a sin-disposition remains in us; it remains possible to deny that we have in practice sinned. *If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us* – for God has declared quite the opposite (1 Kings 8:46, Psalm 130:3, Prov 20:9, Eccles 7:20, Rom 3:23, James 3:2).

The Paradox Again – God's Word in us does not make us sinless. Quite the opposite, if God's Word is in us, then we will acknowledge that we have sinned. And then God's Word directs us to the only remedy for that, and every, sin.

Three Dishonest Claims – They make terrible defenses against the wrath of God. But are we tempted to believe these claims, to lie to ourselves and to call God a liar, because we fail to realize the depth of the grace of the gospel of Jesus Christ? You have sinned and you are a sinner and you have broken your fellowship with God again. But, child of God, you have a defense that is strong and sure, a defense like no other.

My Little Children (2:1) – As John turns to correct the third and final dishonest claim, he pauses with a personal and pastoral plea: *I write these things to you, so that you might not sin.* Writing with his apostolic authority and on behalf of the teachings of the church-corporate, he had said that *we* declare and *we* write these things. Now he says, "*I write...*" His purpose in going over these false teachings was so that his people might not sin. First, they would not sin in the sense of excusing their sins as irrelevant to their fellowship with God. Second, they would not excuse their sins as though it did not come from within their own person. Third, they could not excuse their sins by refusing to acknowledge them.

The Saint is Still a Sinner – These little children are still sinners. While Christians no longer love their sin, no longer are under sin or the habit of sin in the way they were before they received their new nature, while they belong to a holy generation and are new creatures, none of us have yet to be perfected in that new nature. Many struggle with peculiar infirmities – shortness of temper, a proud spirit, lustful or covetous eyes, unbelief brought on by depression of the spirit, cowardice of faith, and on and on. And here is the pastoral cry. You don't have to hide these sins from God with some kind of false doctrine about you or God in order to be in fellowship with Him. You simply have to confess those sins, falling upon the One who is your perfect Advocate.

A Defense Like No Other – Our Advocate is provided for us because we do and will sin, otherwise there is no need for an Advocate.

Advocate – Jesus is the One who is "called alongside" like a defense attorney to represent us before God. Every other time this title is used, it referred to "*another Advocate*," the Holy Spirit (John 14:16) implying that Jesus was the first. If we should in, we do not need another justification from the divine Judge. We are children of God; what we need is the Father's forgiveness, and this is assured to us through the advocacy of Jesus Christ, the Righteous. And this is true and available, every time we sin.

Jesus – His name is Jesus because He shall save His people from their sin. In His human nature Jesus is our brother (Heb 2:11), is acquainted with our frailties (Heb 4:15), saves us (7:25), and intercedes for us.

Christ – He is the Messiah, the anointed One who has fulfilled the demands of the law for us and therefore has been given the title "Righteous". And that has all been imputed to us.

Grace Upon Grace – Let the force of vv 7, 9, and 2:1 fall over you. Why is it possible for there to be fellowship and joy with God and one another? Because God will forgive your sins in Jesus Christ. He loves to do so and this is why Jesus Christ is our Advocate. All the sin that a believer can commit cannot mar his benefit in Christ. It may mar his fellowship and joy in that interest for the present, but that is easily taken care of in Jesus Christ our righteous Advocate. This is the nature of God; this is the nature of His forgiveness; this is the nature of Love. God's love never tires of forgiving you, it never runs dry (Eph 3:18-19). It is this kindness that leads us to repentance that we might not sin.