

“Who Is Your Defense Attorney?”—1 John 2:1-2

The text for this sermon, the theme of which is, “Who Is Your Defense Attorney?”, is 1 John 2:1-2 → *My little children, I am 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, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.* This is the text.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus:

Back in the 90's there was a Christian band who sang a song with a chorus that went something like this:

“When you get what you don’t deserve . . . it’s a real good thing!

When you don’t get what you deserve . . . it’s a real good thing!”

These lyrics may sound a bit confusing and contradictory. However, when viewed from God’s perspective as He defines our relationship with Himself in Christ, they have fantastic meaning! When you get what you don’t deserve (i.e. eternal life) it’s a real good thing! When you don’t get what you deserve (i.e. hell) it’s a real good thing! The question is: How can I experience “the real good thing” described? According to our text, in order to experience “the real good thing” we need a lawyer—specifically a defense attorney.

When confronted with sin, people tend to react very defensively, even to the point of turning to someone or something else for our “defense.” However, it’s usually a “defense” used to excuse away our responsibility for our sin. Striving to “justify” your sin in this way is basically saying you have no sin and deceiving yourself.

Sin is defined by God in His Word. Romans 2:14-15 says that even people who do not know the written law of God’s Word *by nature do what the law requires and show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them.* Guilt in the midst of sin is a dynamic which encompasses all the human race whether or not one knows the written Word of God. You can see this dynamic in a two year old who has a guilty look on his face because He has done something he feels is wrong, even if he was never taught it was wrong. Then comes his defense for his actions! Every human being is bound in sin and needs a defense attorney.

Efforts to make a “defense” for our sin in a refusal to accept responsibility for it leads people to except wrong as right. When such a “defense” continues, eventually what was wrong at the beginning becomes right for them in the end. It is one of the devil’s ways of desensitizing the conscience. In this way one is deceived into feeling secure in his sin. When you feel secure in your sin

you deny the work of Christ because Christ's work no longer has to cover that sin. It's actually a denial of the atoning work of Jesus Christ and an acceptance of a false teaching! 1 Timothy 4:2 says *such teachings come through hypocritical liars, **whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.*** (NIV) Searing the conscience produces no more sensitivity to God's Word.

However, the promise of God's Word always holds true—that *if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* (cf. 1 John 1:9) The "excuse deception" comes from the devil whom Jesus referred to as *the father of lies.* (cf. John 8:44) It is a lie to refuse recognition of your sin. In fact, you are actually calling God Himself a liar if you refuse to recognize your sin because God is in the business of dealing with sin . . . **and He takes that business seriously!!**

This is why He provides you with a defense attorney. Verse 1 of our text says: *If anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.* The Greek word translated *advocate* is the word used for a lawyer. An attorney is a person who is called to the side of another to give help and counsel while making sure that justice is served properly. We have **in Jesus Christ** a great Defense Attorney before God!

Jesus has come to your defense. He has come to speak on your behalf

before the Judge Who would give you what your sins deserve—eternal damnation in hell. Here's the picture:

- I am called to appear before the LORD, our Judge.
- I take my seat on one side of the courtroom next to my Defense Attorney, Jesus.
- Satan is the accuser (the name “satan” means “he who accuses”). He is the “prosecuting attorney.” He takes his seat on the other side of the courtroom.
- God calls the court into session. He sits as the Judge to determine the case of innocence or guilt.
- He tells satan to call his first witness. Satan calls me up to the stand and accuses me of every single sin that I have done in my life—every filthy rotten thing I've ever done, every lie, every deception and so forth.
- At this point I can sit on that stand and make every excuse that I want to “defend” myself by trying to explain away my actions but to no avail. Satan's accusations are absolutely right and I'm guilty.
- After satan is done and he sits down and God the Father looks at

Jesus, Who has accompanied me into court as my defense attorney. He looks at Jesus and says, “Your witness.” Jesus stands up and says, “No questions Your Honor.”

- I am shocked at His answer! “No questions Your Honor? What are you talking about? No questions? I need some help here! I’m drowning!!”

Well . . . what would Jesus question me about? He knows it’s all true. He knows I’m guilty as sin. What’s there to question? Jesus isn’t going to get up and try to somehow defend or excuse away my sin. It’s not going to happen!

- Jesus sits down and I’m dismissed from the stand. Now it’s time for the verdict. God the Father raises the gavel and gets ready to speak the verdict. As He’s getting ready to pronounce the obvious sentence of “guilty as charged,” and the gavel comes down, Jesus stands up and says: “Your Honor, may I approach the bench?”
- He approaches the bench, places His hands in front of God and says, “But I died for him. I fulfilled the law perfectly for him. I paid the complete penalty price and punishment for his sins. He’s mine! I did it all for him!!”
- At that moment God brings the gavel down and says, “Not guilty!”

Who is your defense attorney? This defense characteristic of Jesus is based upon His Person and Work which He accomplished on your behalf. **It's based upon His sacrifice, His death, His fulfilling the law perfectly for you, His resurrection and His breaking the chains and the power of satan and death forever for you!!** Verse 2 of our text: *He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. The propitiation is a sacrifice which causes God to turn away His wrath from you so that He doesn't give you what you deserve—hell—because He placed your sin, guilt and punishment upon Jesus on the cross. In His justice God must punish sin. In His love He doesn't want to punish you. So He punished His own Son in your stead!*

Jesus Christ is your sure defense. Not to make excuses for you, thereby defending you in your sin. Likewise, Jesus Christ is your sure defense so that you don't make excuses in an effort to defend your own sin. Jesus does not defend you by minimizing your sin but honestly, truthfully and painstakingly dealing with it for you. His defense gives you a reason to recognize your sin through contrition, repentance and faith.

Christ's defense is complete! It is for **all sinners**! It is for you. It is for me. It is for today. It is for all sin. It is sealed by His own blood sacrifice on the cross and His resurrection from the dead. Hebrews 7:25 says: *Consequently,*

He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. He is still your Defense Attorney every single day. The example of the courtroom scene above is not just a picture of what happens on the Last Day—Judgment Day. It's a picture of what happens every single day in the life of a Christian! **Through daily repentance and faith in Jesus, your great Defense Attorney, you live forgiven!** It is this joy of sin forgiven which brings the desire to live in obedience to Him daily, knowing that satan is a defeated enemy!!

When you get what you don't deserve (heaven) . . . it's a real good thing! . . . because Jesus has secured it for you! When you don't get what you deserve (hell) . . . it's a real good thing! . . . because of Christ, your Defense Attorney. Amen.