

Saved to the Uttermost

1 John 2:1-2

I. INTRO

- A. The vast majority of us know what it feels like to get stuck in the Shame Cycle
 - 1. Temptation → Sin → Accusation → Shame → Promises → Temptation
- B. The enemy is called the Accuser of the Brethren so shame is his game
- C. He loves it when we are stuck in that cycle b/c it inevitably shames our worldview
 - 1. Shame changes the way we think about ourselves
 - 2. It changes the way we think about God
 - 3. It shapes our actions, our lives
- D. Here are the questions that sit alongside the cycle of shame and condemnation
 - 1. How does God view me when I am weak? What is His posture toward me when I fail?
 - 2. Is He watching me closely, waiting for me to mess up? Is he keeping score?
 - 3. Why won't he help me change? Does he want me to learn the hard way? To just try harder next time?
 - 4. How does He respond when I sin again... and again?
 - 5. And then the other side of it: How do I view myself?
 - a) Should I feel this way after failing again and again?
 - b) Why can't I change? How do I change?
 - c) Do I just live with this low-grade guilt all the time?
- E. I am willing to guess questions life that have passed through your mind at times
- F. Maybe you even had answers flash through your mind just now. The question is this: are those answers true, biblically accurate about God and self?
 - 1. It's one thing to know the right answer
 - 2. It's another thing entirely to actually think it... to believe it... to live out of it
 - a) As a man thinks in his heart, so is he
- G. We are commanded to take every thought captive and make it obedient to Christ. This means we have to ask: Is this true? Is this the Father's voice?
- H. So, as we consider the shame cycle, let's not guess. Let's see what God says:
 - I. *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."*

II. First: How does God see you?

- A. *"My little children..."*
- B. John is not writing to kids. He may be old at this point in time, but he is writing to grown adults, men and women just like us
- C. Why not call them brothers? Why little children? I think it's more than age.
- D. He is reflecting the heart of God

1. God is not cold and distant
 2. God is not annoyed by your presence
 - E. The Father speaks LOVE over you. "My little children..."
 1. This is like a loving parent pulling their child aside after a difficult day
 - a) I know how hard life is... I know that you are weak... I know that you are growing... I know that the enemy is unfair...
 - F. Those words are loaded with affection, intentional care, not passivity
 - G. Don't believe me? Think of someone hard to love and then imagine them as a little 7 year old. See them before the layers of pain and hurt – see them as the Father does. It changes your heart!
 - H. Friends, if you are IN CHRIST, that is the Father's heart for you. Always.
- III. Second: What does God desire for you?
- A. *"I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin."*
 - B. God is not casual about sin, nor is He is indifferent to it
 - C. Sin enslaves → "Everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin"
 1. Like we talked about two weeks ago: God's desire is not that you manage sin, hide it, or cope with it, but that you would be FREE from it.
 - D. So when God speaks through John, He is not condemning by saying he doesn't want us to sin, but coming alongside you like a child.
 1. "I know you are just made of dust, but into that dust I have breathed the breath of life. These dry bones have come alive!"
 2. His voice is encouraging, calling, instructing, strengthening, warning
 - E. God doesn't WANT us to be enslaved to sin. Why?
 1. Because he wants to deny us fun?
 2. Because he wants us to sit around on clouds with harps all day?
 3. Because he LOVES us and he knows the pain and suffering that sin causes!
 4. He is for your freedom! He doesn't want me to get trapped in the cycle of sin and shame, or to have my joy plundered by sin
 - F. So we hold both of these truths together:
 1. God is a Father who loves you deeply
 2. As a loving Father, God wants good things for you – not sin
- IV. Third: What happens when you do sin?
- A. *"But if anyone does sin..."*
 - B. What happens if ANYONE sins? What happens when I sin? When YOU sin?
 1. Does God roll his eyes at you?
 2. Does he view the Apostle Paul differently than someone at Revolve who's a recovering addict?
 - C. And here is the answer: When ANYONE sins... *"We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."*
 - D. What is an advocate?
 1. The word points us to the idea of a helper... one who comes alongside... one who speaks on behalf of another
 2. In the Gospel of John, it refers to the Holy Spirit

- a) *John 14:16, And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever...*
- b) *John 14:26, But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.*
- c) *John 15:26 "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.*
- d) *John 16:7, Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.*
- e) The Spirit is sent to help, to comfort, to guide
- 3. Jesus was that helper on earth; The Spirit is that helper within us
- 4. And Jesus continues to be that helper for us in heaven
 - a) *Romans 8:34, Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.*
 - b) *Hebrews 7:25 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.*
- (1) He lives to intercede and is able to save to the uttermost
- E. So when we sin, there are a few voices in your head, in your heart
 - 1. When you sin? The voice of the accuser
 - a) That voice condemns. It drives toward despair
 - b) It says: you are done... you are finished... you are defined by this... you always mess up... this is why God isn't blessing you...
 - c) The condemnation and shame of the enemy is like that scene from Home Alone w/ the spider and the bat
 - (1) It does more harm than good
 - (2) It doesn't drive you to God, to the light
 - (3) It destroys, keeps you away, kills
 - 2. When you sin? There is the voice of man (Self or Others)
 - a) Proud when you do a good job
 - b) Condemning when you mess up
 - c) The voice of man is fickle
 - 3. When you sin? There is the voice of our Advocate
 - a) It is the voice of conviction, a subtle scalpel incision to bring about health and healing
 - b) It doesn't tolerate sin, but it deals with it strategically to bring you closer to the Father
 - c) Condemnation pushes you away from God in hopelessness
 - d) Conviction draws you toward God in repentance and hope
 - (1) The Spirit convicts // The accuser condemns
- F. Jesus, your Advocate... He is the Righteous One

1. That means The ONLY ONE in the room who COULD condemn you... doesn't
2. The only one in the room who could say, "It's not that hard, bro, just stop sinning" — doesn't
3. Instead, He intercedes
 - a) He prays for you
 - b) He speaks on your behalf
 - c) He pleads your case
 - d) He is for you, not against you
 - e) He is able to save to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25)
 - (1) To the uttermost in time → forever
 - (2) To the uttermost in extent → completely, in every way
 - (a) No part left untouched
 - (b) No sin left uncovered
 - (c) No failure outside His reach

G. But how can that be true?

1. God is the judge. Isn't it his job to condemn us for our sin?
2. How is it that he advocates for us instead of condemning us?

V. *"He is the propitiation for our sins..."*

A. This takes us back to the Day of Atonement

1. Once a year, the high priest would enter into the presence of God
 - a) A sacrifice would be made for sin → Blood would be shed
 - b) One goat would be sacrificed, its blood poured on the mercy seat
 - c) Another would symbolically carry the sins of the people away into the wilderness
 - d) During the Day of atonement two things happened: Sin was dealt with and sin was removed
 - e) But there were problems
 - (1) The priests themselves were not righteous. Before they could go in, they had to offer sacrifices for their own sin
 - (2) And the sacrifices were limited. It had to happen every year. The blood of animals could not truly take away sin
2. The Day of Atonement pointed forward, but it did not complete the work it needed to do.
3. Then comes Jesus
 - a) Jesus the Righteous One
 - b) He is both the priest, the sacrifice, and the scapegoat
 - c) He does not need to offer a sacrifice for Himself
 - (1) He is without sin
 - d) And He does not offer the blood of another
 - (1) He IS the sacrifice for sin
 - e) He is the atoning sacrifice
 - (1) His body broken
 - (2) His blood poured out

- (3) He bears shame... Publicly... Fully
- B. And unlike the old system... THAT sacrifice is not repeated
 - 1. The [scape] goat has left the building
 - 2. The work is finished
 - 3. His sacrifice was sufficient. It paid it all
 - a) Sufficient for your sin
 - b) Sufficient for my sin
 - c) Sufficient for the sins of the whole world
 - (1) Not meaning that all are automatically saved, but that there is no limit in the value of what Christ has done
 - (2) There is a limitless fountain of grace
 - (a) Fully sufficient for all
 - (b) Applied to those who believe

VI. CONCLUSION

- A. So when you listen to the voices around you... and within you...
 - 1. Satan accuses... Condemns... Seeks to destroy
 - 2. Man is inconsistent... Celebrates you one moment... Tears you down...
 - 3. But Jesus Christ the righteous... Advocates for you
- B. Jesus is ALWAYS for you, not against you
 - 1. He lives to intercede on your behalf
 - 2. He alone is able... eternally willing... never fickle... never weary... never wavering... never too busy...
 - 3. Always faithful... Always ready...
 - 4. He is the Great High Priest who intercedes for us
 - 5. He is Jesus the Righteous One
 - a) Jehovah Tsidkenu → The LORD our righteousness
- C. So cling to what is TRUE in Him and not just what you feel after another mess up
 - 1. You are not tolerated → You are loved
 - 2. You are not left alone → You are helped
 - 3. You are not condemned → Jesus was condemned in your place
- D. Story of Self-Mutiliation and why people do it
 - 1. "I deserve to be punished"
 - 2. "I need to feel something"
- E. Friend, if this is you too... physically, verbally, emotionally, know this: There is now no condemnation
 - 1. No more shame as a verdict over your life
 - 2. No more wrath left for you to bear
 - 3. You do not need to punish yourself
 - a) Christ has already borne the punishment in full
 - 4. Because the debt has been paid
 - a) Completely
 - b) To the uttermost