



**VERSE BY VERSE MINISTRY**  
INTERNATIONAL

*TEACHING THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD*

# 1 John 2A

## Chapter 2:1-6

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- Let's quickly review Chapter 1
  - The Word of Life is Jesus from the beginning of creation.
  - Jesus brought the way to have fellowship with God resulting in eternal life.
  - The apostles were eye witnesses to Jesus' physical resurrection.
  - Believers have sin but should avoid sin.
- Continuing in Chapter 2

**1John 2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;**

**1John 2:2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.**

- v 1 How does John begin? (My little children)
  - Who is John addressing? (Believers)
  - What is the message John has for these believers? (I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.)
- John does not say you will not sin or cannot sin, but that you MAY not sin.
  - What is provided to those believers who sin? (And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;)
  - Who is the 'anyone' referring to? (The believers)
  - When believers sin what do we have? (an Advocate)
  - Who do we need an Advocate with? (the Father)
  - Who is the Advocate? (Jesus Christ the righteous)
- What is an Advocate? (A person who pleads for or on behalf of another; intercessor.)
  - v.2 How is Jesus Christ the Advocate for the believer? (and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins;)
  - What does it mean that Jesus Christ is the propitiation for our sins?
- Propitiation is a biblical doctrine we need to take time to understand.
  - First we begin looking for this word elsewhere in scripture.
    - We find it used in this same book in 1 John 4:10

**1John 4:10 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.**

- It is because God loved us He sent Jesus, His Son, to be the propitiation for our sins.
  - How was this propitiation demonstrated? Romans 3:21-25

**Rom. 3:21 But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been**

**manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,**  
**Rom. 3:22 even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;**  
**Rom. 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**  
**Rom. 3:24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;**  
**Rom. 3:25 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;**

- v.21 What has been manifested? (*the* righteousness of God)
  - v.22 How is the righteousness of God manifested? (through faith in Jesus Christ)
  - This faith in Jesus Christ is for who? (all those who believe)
  - v.23 What is true for all those who believe? (for all have sinned)
- All believers have sinned.
  - Because all believers have sin what is true? (fall short of the glory of God,)
    - When we fall short of the glory of God we can't be in the presence of God.
- v.24 All believers are what? (being justified as a gift by His grace)
  - What does justified mean.
    - The word is a legal term meaning acquitted not innocent.
    - Sinners fall short of the glory of God and need to be justified to be in the presence of God.
  - To be justified is what? (a gift)
    - This is not something you can earn.
    - This gift is given how? (by His grace)
- How are believers justified? (through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus)
  - v.25 How was this redemption demonstrated (whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith)
  - When did God display Christ Jesus publicly in His blood? (At the cross)
  - When was the blood displayed at the cross (After Jesus died) See John 19:32-34

**John 19:32 So the soldiers came, and broke the legs of the first man and of the other who was crucified with Him;**

**John 19:33 but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.**

**John 19:34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.**

- This is the gospel description of when God publicly displayed Jesus in His blood.
  - Romans describes this as a propitiation in His blood.

- Why is the blood of Jesus so important? See Hebrews 9:14.

**Heb. 9:14** how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

- The blood must be from someone without blemish who does not have any reason for the wrath of God to be poured out on Him, and only Jesus met this standard.
  - The wrath that must come from God for sin was poured out on Jesus.
  - God cannot look beyond our sin and be considered just.
  - God accepted a substitutionary payment of Jesus' death with His blood in place of our death and blood for our sin.
    - Jesus took God's wrath in our place...This IS our propitiation.
- 1John 2:2 This propitiation is for who? (and not for ours only, but also for *those of the whole world.*)
  - Who is the whole world referring to?
  - Is this propitiation applied to the whole world?
  - Will there be men who are not saved? Romans 2:5-8, Ephesians 5:5-6

**Rom. 2:5** But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

**Rom. 2:6** who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS:

**Rom. 2:7** to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life;

**Rom. 2:8** but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.

**Eph. 5:5** For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

**Eph. 5:6** Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

- If this blessed propitiation is not for the whole world, or every man then what is John referring to?
  - John is saying this propitiation was not only for the apostles, it was not only for the Jews, it was for the all the world to receive.
  - Jesus is the only propitiation from God for man, there will be no other.
- Let's continue in 1 John:

**1John 2:3** By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His

**commandments.**

**1John 2:4** The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;

**1John 2:5** but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:

**1John 2:6** the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

- v.3 How can someone confirm they truly know Jesus Christ? (By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.)
  - Who is the “Him”? (Jesus)
  - v.2 ended with “He Himself is the propitiation for our sins”. That is Jesus.
- John has already established that all men have sin so he is not now saying believers can find themselves in a state of being with no sin by keeping His commandments.
  - What is the test about? (that we have come to know Him)
  - Do we really know Jesus or do we know about Jesus.
  - How do we get to know Jesus? (if we keep His commandments)
  - What commandments? Let’s look at Matthew 22:42-40, Luke 10:25-29, 36-37

**Matt. 22:34** But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together.

**Matt. 22:35** One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him,

**Matt. 22:36** “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?”

**Matt. 22:37** And He said to him, “‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’

**Matt. 22:38** “This is the great and foremost commandment.

**Matt. 22:39** “The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’

**Matt. 22:40** “On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

**Luke 10:25** And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

**Luke 10:26** And He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?”

**Luke 10:27** And he answered, “‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’”

**Luke 10:28** And He said to him, “You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE.”

**Luke 10:29** But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

- After this Jesus tells the parable of the ‘good Samaritan’, and ends with these two verses.

**Luke 10:36 “Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers’ hands?”**

**Luke 10:37 And he said, “The one who showed mercy toward him.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do the same.”**

- That’s the answer to who our neighbor is, the one who shows mercy toward him.
  - These verses also give us our answer as to what commandments we should be obeying if we have “come to know Him”.
    - 1 John 2:4 How can we know if someone does not truly know Jesus? (The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him)
- If someone says what? (“I have come to know Him,”)
  - This is someone who says they have come to know Jesus.
  - But their behavior is what? (and does not keep His commandments)
    - What is the truth about that person? (is a liar, and the truth is not in him)
      - They do not know His commandments.
      - They do not advocate to keep His commandments.
      - They do not teach others to keep His commandments.
      - They disregard in all facets of their life His commandments.
    - These men then do not know Him.
      - They are lying when they say they know Him.
      - They do not have truth in them. Jesus is not their savior, the Holy Spirit does not indwell them.
  - v.5 What comparison does John give? (but whoever keeps His word)
  - What is true about this person? (in him the love of God has truly been perfected.)
    - What has been perfected? (the love of God)
- If the love of God has been perfected in us what do we know? (By this we know that we are in Him)
  - Do we know His commandments?
  - Do we advocate to keep His commandments?
  - Do we teach others to keep His commandments?
  - Do we regard in all facets of our lives His commandments?
    - These men then do know Him.
  - Do we have truth in us?
    - Jesus is in us, the Holy Spirit indwells in us.
- v.6 How can others know this is true about us? (the one who says he abides in Him)

ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.)

- What is the goal if we say we abide in Him? (to walk in the same manner as He walked)
- What would it mean to walk in the same manner as He walked? (To emulate the life Jesus lived out on earth in His humanity)
  - This is the goal of a true believer.
- It seems so far in this study there have been a lot of topics John is unveiling in an indirect manner and it has taken extra effort for us to understand exactly what John might be talking about.
  - Concepts like knowing God, declaring one does not have sin, light versus darkness, keeping versus not keeping commandments.
  - What exactly is John addressing in this letter?
- These concepts were important for John to highlight because they are direct refutations to a specific false teaching prevalent in the early church called Gnosticism.
  - Gnosticism (*Gnōstikós* in the Greek), means “having knowledge”
  - My understanding of Gnosticism comes from the gathering of information from researching many commentaries and websites. There is a lot of research available on this topic so feel free to do your own study time on this if you desire to delve deeper into this subject matter.
- The basic highlights of the tenants of Gnosticism are:
  - 1. A person’s knowledge, defined through mystical experiences, broadens perception of God and that learning is superior when compared to a person’s character.
  - 2. Attaining special knowledge, often obtained through experiential encounters is reserved for a few individuals not for everyone.
    - Things not literal in scriptures could only be interpreted with this special knowledge.
  - 3. God, as supreme deity, cannot have anything to do with evil so this God did not create the physical world (matter) – there is another creator for this world.
  - 4. Physical matter and spirit cannot co-exist because matter is where evil resides.
- For Deity
  - Deity did not become human only took on that form.
  - Jesus came to bring man back to the light of God. This has been repackaged often as enlightenment.
  - Physical resurrection is not possible. (This is often listed as a 5th tenet)
- For Man
  - Our physical being and our spiritual being are not interconnected.
  - The spiritual self cannot sin because what the physical self does cannot impact the spiritual self.
  - Some gave in to their physical desires because they reasoned it had nothing to do with their spiritual being. This leads to licentiousness.

- Some abused the physical body so they could go beyond it and reach the spiritual part of themselves through self abasement.
- With this understanding it becomes clear John is laying out direct refutations to the basic tenets of this belief system.
- To the first point, John refutes in Chapter 2:3 the only way to demonstrate true knowledge of God is to keep His commandments.
  - Knowledge is not superior to character.
  - True knowledge of God cannot exist without character, demonstrated through actions.
- Point 2 John refutes in Chapter 1:3 “so that you too may have fellowship with us”
  - John communicates that everyone has access to fellowship with God
  - Also Chapter 2:2 “and not for ours only, but also for *those of the whole world*” John informs the readers this is not restricted to an exclusive group of believers but all believers.
- Point 3 John clarifies in Chapter 1:1 “What was from the beginning”
  - God alone is the creator of all through Jesus.
- Point 4 John proves there were eyewitnesses to the physical life Jesus lived on earth as well as the physically resurrected Jesus, including himself.
  - Chapter 1:2 “and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us —“
  - John says the life (deity) that was with the Father was the same life (deity) manifested in Jesus’ humanity and there are many eyewitness.
  - Also to debunk point 4 that “Jesus came to bring man back to the light of God” John declares in Chapter 1:5 “God is Light”
- There are multiple ways point 4 was interpreted and applied in the false teaching. One of these ways was to claim since the spirit was saved and perfected by God then sin no longer existed for them.
  - They claimed they had no sin. John deals with this in Chapter 1:8 “If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.” and v.10 “If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.”
  - In Chapter 2:4 “The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar,” John explains anyone saying they don’t need to keep God’s commandments, and therefore not avoid sin, is a liar meaning they don’t have fellowship, or have knowledge of God.
  - John directly says if someone claimed not to have sin they lie and did not know God.
- As we continue through this letter from John we will make note when what John is declaring is a clear contrast to what this false teaching was advocating.