

So That You May Know

An Expositional Study of the Epistle of **1 John**

Chapter 5- The Call to Holiness

41. Our Advocate and Propitiation- Part 6

WAOY Wednesday 06/20/07; WOSM Monday 11/28/22

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1 John**, and today I want to continue to look at what the Apostle John taught about "The Call to Holiness". So, let's read **1John 2: 1&2** again together:

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;

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

Now on the last broadcast, we were examining the first verse of chapter two and today I want to look at the second verse.

Now John uses a very odd word here. The Greek word that John uses here was translated as "**propitiation.**" Now in the NIV this word was translated as "atoning sacrifice"; and in the Revised Standard Version- this same word was translated as "expiate".

The Greek word that was used here is hilasmos (e)cila/skomai) which has several meanings. In ancient pagan writings, the word, *propitiation*, was used to denote the appeasement of an angry god through offerings. Many today reject that definition because most people in the modern Church cannot even fathom the God of the Bible being angry about *anything*- even though Scripture clearly reveals that He is.

For example- the Bible teaches that God is very angry about sin and in **Psalms 7:11**, the inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of the living God says:

God is a righteous judge, And a God who has indignation every day.

But many would say that this “indignation” is an Old Testament concept of God and that through the New Testament we only see God as Love. But that is simply not true. Of course, God is Love; He is pure Love, and He is total Love and infinite Love. But God has *always* been Love. God didn’t *become* Love in the New Testament- God is eternal and His Character and Nature have never changed. So, to believe that there is an angry God in the Old Testament and a loving God in the New is ridiculous.

God was Love in the Old Testament just as He is angry in the New. The Bible reveals to us that God is- right now- what He has *always* been and that He *never* develops new character traits, and He *never* alters His behavior, and He never changes.

God loves Himself and because there is nothing in all of Creation as beautiful and as important and as lovely and as worthy as God. Therefore, God cannot love anything or anyone with the same love that He has for Himself, or He would be in idolatry.

Now if I were talking about a man here- we would call a man who loved himself, “egotistical”- and we would be right. But I am *not* talking about a man here- I am talking about the one true living God Who is infinitely glorious and absolutely Perfect and so this Love that God has for Himself is both right and proper. I but we need to go even further because not only does God love Himself infinitely- He desires that we love Him with the very same Love by which He loves Himself. Read with me **Matthew 22:36-40:**

36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"

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.'

38 "This is the great and foremost commandment.

39 "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

40 "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

So based on this- the highest and best form of love is not the love that we have for our wife or our children or our job or our country- but the highest and best form of love is for us to love God. But this love *for* God

and this love *to* God must not be in part- but it must be love to four degrees.

1. With all our heart
2. With all our soul
3. With all our mind
4. With all our strength (**Mark 12:30**)

So, any love for and to God that is not to these four degrees is idolatry because to love anything or anyone with the same love that we love God is to put that other thing or that other person on equal footing with God- and that is the classic definition of idolatry. And so, God is correct to be offended and insulted when anyone or anything robs Him of the worship and the adoration and the devotion that only rightly belongs to Him.

And the point here is that no human on earth possesses love for God on that level. So, in order for us to love God like this- takes God graciously and sovereignly *giving* us that kind of love.

So, here's how this all works. God desires that we know Him to the same extent that He knows Himself. And God desires that we love Him to the same extent that He loves Himself. And by us doing that- we give to Him the Glory that He is entitled to receive. And when we give God the Glory that He is entitled to receive- He places His unlimited Joy within us. And when God places His unlimited Joy within us- our own joy will be full.

And this is what genuine "spirit and truth worship" is all about. You and me *delighting* ourselves in God and in those things that bring Glory to God.

So, we can sing all the songs that we want- but until we *delight* ourselves in God- we are not really worshipping Him. And we can work real hard- trying to obey God- but until we actually find delight and joy and satisfaction in serving God- we are really not worshipping Him.

Brothers and sisters- until God Himself becomes our joy and until serving God and submitting to God and obeying God and surrendering to God and denying ourselves becomes the finality of our satisfaction- we are robbing God of some or all of the Glory that He deserves. And when we do that- we are not truly worshipping Him.

And God knows all this- a whole lot better than we do. And so in order to give us the honor and the privileged of knowing Him to the same extent that God knows Himself and in order for God to give us the honor and privilege of loving Him with the Love that He has for Himself - so that we may worship Him in the manner and to the degree that He is entitled to be worshipped- the barrier of sin- that stops us from doing all this- must be moved. And so, for us to know and love and enjoy God- we must be saved- because only saved people have the desire and the power to do this.

So, we can see that Salvation is really not about us. Now- to be sure- we will be re-united with our saved loved ones who have gone before us into Heaven. And we will surely walk on streets of gold and pass through the gates of pearls when we go to Heaven. This is all true- and it is all wonderful- but that is *not* why God saved us.

God saved you and me so that we would have the high honor and the distinct privilege to know and love and enjoy God- to the same extent that God knows and loves and enjoys Himself. And the result of us knowing and loving and enjoying God is that we will worship Him in the way that He deserves to be worshipped. And the result of that is that His Joy will be in us and then our joy will be full. *That* is why God saves us.

So, God's anger- His indignation- is kindled against those who know and love and enjoy other things besides Him- when they serve and worship the creation rather than the Creator. God is angry when people find peace and joy and happiness and contentment and fullness in things that are passing away rather than in Him. Because in doing that- God is not glorified.

So, when we think of the meaning of "propitiation"- we must include the fact that this word also means that the Righteous Indignation of a Holy God has been appeased because a Sacrifice has been offered.

So, when John tells us that Jesus is our propitiation- John is saying two things to us:

1. Jesus is that Sacrifice
2. The Wrath of God is appeased by the Sacrifice of Jesus

Now by virtue of the fact that God the Father accepts and honors the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ as being the full payment for our entrance into

Heaven- by default this also says that any *other* sacrifice is *not* accepted by God. For example- from the very moment of Christ's death on the Cross- every Old Testament animal sacrifice became obsolete and completely useless.

Now God is the One Who commanded the Jew to offer animal sacrifices in the first place. God gave the Jew the Law with its' Sabbaths and its' carnal washing and its' ordinances. The devil didn't give the Law- God gave it. And we should reverence that which God gave. But everything in the Law; every single aspect of the Old Covenant was a shadow; a type; a symbol; an inferior forerunner to Jesus- who was and is a superior Sacrifice and a superior High Priest and who gave superior Promises based upon a superior Covenant.

So even though the word, "propitiation" was used in ancient writings other than Scripture- the meaning of this word as used in Scripture is not exactly the same. In the pagan writings- the propitiation was the means by which a man could appease the anger of his false gods. But in the Scriptures- this same word is used slightly different in that it is not we who initiate this action- but God Himself who was made flesh- Who is our propitiation.

So, God wrapped Himself in human flesh so that He Himself could be that which appeases His Own Just and Righteous and Holy Anger against all sin. In other words- God's Plan for the Salvation of His elect is so certain and so sure that He could not trust it into anyone's hands beside His Own. So, God Himself appeases His Own Wrath against sin by being our "propitiation" so that God's Own Love may flow freely and save the lost sinner.

Now only by understanding fully the sacrifices of the Old Testament- can we hope to comprehend the full meaning of how Jesus is our propitiation. If anything at all is clear from studying the Old Covenant sacrificial system, it is that God Himself provides the way for Man to be able to approach Him.

And to grasp this- we must understand some basic truths about God. First of all- as we have already seen- God hates sin. Sin is a real big deal with God. Secondly, because God hates sin- He is right to punish us when we do sin. So, try to comprehend this beloved. God is Just; He is Correct; He is Right when He is angry toward sin, and He is right when He judges sin.

And God's Just Judgment against sin is not simply waving His finger at us and saying- "Please don't do that." No, God has an appropriate and proper response to our sin- death. But wait! This death- that is the punishment for all sin- is not just the end of life- this death is an eternal death.

Now if you have been deceived into believing that Man is the single most important being in the Universe- then what I just said- and most of the Bible- will seem harsh and mean and cruel to you. But if you believe that God is the most important Being in the Universe- if you believe that nothing and no one is anywhere near as valuable as God- then what I just said- and most of the Bible- will make sense.

You see, God had the Bible written from His perspective- not ours. But our human logic and our reasoning and our human imagination are from our perspective- not God's. So, when you operate in human logic- you are looking through Man's Eyes upward toward God. But when you study the Bible – you look through God's Eyes and you see what God sees and you stand in God's shoes and look downward toward Man.

So, in our own human reasoning- God sometimes doesn't make sense to us. This is why we say things like, "*That's not fair*", or "*Just who does God think that He is?*". And this is not because there is anything wrong with God- but simply that our logic and our reasoning is fallen and corrupt. But when you begin to understand God as He reveals Himself through Scripture- you see, and you understand that God correctly views Himself as the Owner and the Creator of all things- including Man. And as the Owner and Creator of all things- He has the Power and the Authority and the Right to *limit* His Creation and to do with it as He pleases.

So as Owner- God has total and complete rights over all that has been created and as Creator- God has power over all that is created. And this is the big rub that we have with God- fallen Man doesn't want God to limit him; nor to restrict Him; nor to command him. So, he lives his life as he sees fit and he does what is right in his own eyes. And so, God is right to pour out His anger upon a rebel like that.

But the saved man loves to serve and please His Maker and so he finds out what God's Will is- through the pages of Scripture- and then he struggles against the lusts of his flesh by the Power of the Holy Spirit to be humbly and joyfully submitted to the Authority of Scripture

in his daily life- all to the Glory of God. And in doing that- the saved person finds the fullness of joy.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

© 2007- 2023 by Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America
Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. PO Box 147 Saucier, Mississippi 39574 www.covenantofpeace.net

Scripture quotations, except those noted otherwise, are from *The New American Standard Bible* © 1995 by The Lockmann Foundation. Used by permission.

This is a single transcript in a larger series of teachings taken from a verse by verse **Journey through the Epistle of 1John**. You are free to reproduce it and distribute it as the Lord leads you- without cost or reimbursement to us with the stipulation that you may not add anything or take anything away from this transcript without the express written permission of The Covenant of Peace Church and that this complete copyright statement be at the end of all copies.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.