

“Is God Angry With Sinners?”

1 John 2:1-2

THE PROBLEM WITH MAN

1. The Bible says man has a moral/legal problem. 1 John 1:5; 3:4-5

2. The Bible says man has a reality/truth problem. 1 John 1:6, 8, 10; Cf. Rom. 1:25

- In 1 John: *true, truth* = 15 X's; *lie, lies, liar, deceives* = 9 X's; *know, knows* = 41 X's

3. The Bible says man has a relational/social problem. 1 John 1:6, 7

→ God has dealt with our moral/legal problem—by giving us a **righteous Advocate**. 1 John 2:1

→ God has dealt with our reality/truth problem—by **revealing truth** to us through **His Word**. 1 John 1:1, 2, 3, 4, 5

→ God has dealt with our relational/social problem—by providing the **propitiation** for our sins. 1 John 2:2

JESUS: THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS. 1 John 2:2a

1. **The controversy: Is God angry with sinners? Does God's wrath still remain upon sinners?**

- a. Liberal theologians: No! God has never been angry at sinners. (E.g., H.S. Coffin, W. Neil; Rob Bell, McClaren)
- b. Some Christians: No. God is not angry. (e.g., C.H. Dodd, Westcott; many pastors/teachers today)
- c. The Bible: Sin provokes God's holy anger. It must be dealt with = propitiation.

→ **Definition:** Propitiation is the removal of God's wrath from sinners by the death of Christ.

2. **God's wrath upon sinners.** Exodus 32:10; Psalm 11:5; Ephesians 2:3; Romans 1:18; 2:5-8; 3:5

3: **The fundamental issue: what did the cross accomplish?**

- The cross had an effect upon man: our debt is forgiven; we are no longer guilty; we are JUSTIFIED.
our sin is cleansed; our nature is changed; we are SANCTIFIED.
- The cross also had an effect upon God: His wrath was poured out on Jesus Christ in our place.
our relationship is RESTORED (propitiation).

4. **God's wrath removed only through the shedding of Christ's blood on the cross.**

- Romans 5:9: *Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath to come.*
- 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10: *...how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.*
- 1 Thes 5:9: *For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- Hebrews 6:18: *...we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us*

→ Jesus is the propitiation for our sins. v.2: He is the propitiation for our sins.

- John 3:36: *Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.*

→ Propitiation was pictured in the OT sacrificial system. E.g., Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16)

JESUS FOR THE WHOLE WORLD. 1 John 2:2b

1. **It is not a universal salvation.** (Universalism: God saves everyone) 1 Tim 4:1-2; 2 Pet 2:1-3; Mt 7:21-23; 25:31f

2. **It is not an unaccomplished salvation.** (Jesus 'opened the door' to heaven—you just need to walk through it.)

- This is how many Christians understand the cross – but it is unbiblical. Ref. 2 Cor 5:19; Rom 5:1; 8:1

3. **It is a salvation for all the peoples of the world.**

- Historical context of 1 John: an elite few were claiming salvation was only for them. John writes to correct them: Salvation through Jesus is for all the people groups of the world.
- The scope of salvation is the “whole world” (Gk. *ὅλος*, is used here, not Gk. *πας* meaning “every” or “all”)

4. **It is a salvation needed by everyone.**

- H. Richard Niebuhr's description of liberal Christianity: 'A God without wrath brought man without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministry of a Christ without a cross.'

→ Is God angry with sinners? Is God angry with me? Answer: It depends... John 3:36

Thoughts from fellow Pilgrims...

“Jesus! The name is as ointment poured forth; fragrant, precious. He is called Jesus because he saves his people from their sins. Jesus! my Savior! my Jesus! saving me from my sins, from myself! Art thou indeed my advocate with the Father,--standing by me, pleading for me,--by thy Spirit pleading in me,--when, in spite of my firmest purpose not to sin, and my closest clinging to thee that I may not sin, I must still, under the pressure of sin besetting me, cry, Unclean! undone! Then indeed may I hold on walking in the light, and with a sinless aim, if thou art with me. Jesus, save me from my sins!

Christ! the Anointed! whom the Father anoints through the Spirit; whom I also, through the Spirit, in sympathy with the Father, humbly venture to anoint! his Christ and mine!—with thee, O Christ, as my advocate with the Father;--with thee, True Mediator,--Revealer, Reconciler, Ruler,--Prophet, Priest, and King;--I will not, amid all that is discouraging in the experience of my remaining darkness, despair of yet becoming all that he who is light and who dwelleth in light would have me to be; all that thou art, O Christ!”

-Robert Candlish, Geneva Series of Commentaries: I John