

(1 John 1:8-2:2, NIV84)

"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives. My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world."

Isolation, it's not just what we've been experiencing for the past few weeks during the government's stay-at-home order. Isolation is what happens to us every time we stray from our Father's door and wander in the wilderness of sin. We've all felt it. We've all known the sorrow and loathing associated with it; in that sense we're never alone. At such times the devil has tempted us to think: "well, there's no turning back now; the damage is done. I might just as well plow ahead with the sin and enjoy it for all it's worth." But, as always, the devil is a damned liar -- literally -- and he would love nothing more than for us to join him in hell. But while the devil does not have a savior, we do!

God is under no illusion that we are without sin. He knows exactly what we are and He knows exactly what we have done, and He loves us -- amazing grace! The fact is: when we sin, we can always turn back to God in repentance and faith and He forgives us. What a friend we have in Jesus!

Forgiven in Christ with you,
Pastor Golm

April 16

A Friend in the Father's House

It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes [present tense!] intercession for us.
Romans 8:34

Few memories of childhood are more vivid in later years than those melancholy moments when, having offended our father by some childish misdemeanor, we were "afraid to go home". What would Father say? What would Father do? Would there be any escaping the dreaded punishment? If only someone at home, perhaps Mother or Brother, would take our part, would "put in a word for us", and would incline our father to forgive us! If only we had a friend . . .

We have such a Friend -- in the Father's house above! At this very moment he is "taking our part", is "putting in a word for us", is pleading with the Father to forgive us. That Friend is Jesus. "My little children", says John, "if anyone sins, we have an advocate [one who speaks for us] with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous." Of this great Friend of sinners we are told in Hebrews 7:25: "...He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Admittedly, our unaided human reason cannot grasp this scriptural truth, but we have God's clear word for it. He who on Calvary's cross, while dying for the sins of all mankind, exclaimed: "Father, forgive them", still looks down in love upon his believing children, and still is pleading: "Father, forgive them!" Oh, what a comfort, what a blessing beyond description to know that we have such a Friend in the Father's house above. Of him we can sing with joy and confidence:

He lives to bless me with His love, He lives to plead for me above,
He lives my hungry soul to feed, He lives to help in time of need.

He lives to silence all my fears, He lives to wipe away my tears,
He lives to calm my troubled heart, He lives all blessings to impart.