



What If a True Christian Sins? 1 John 2:1-6

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (1 John 2:1—KJV).

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 (1 John 2:1—NASB).

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 (1 John 2:1—NRSV).

Among the gospel writers, none of them expressed the tender love of Jesus Christ for His followers more than John, for he addressed his readers as “My little children.” Everything John wrote expressed the love of Jesus Christ that flowed in and through him. John knew the damage that sin could do to someone and to those they loved. John defined sin as lawlessness, and because he loved his brothers and sisters in Christ, he did not want them to act lawlessly. John also recognized that no follower of Christ will act, live, and speak perfectly until they meet Jesus face-to-face, either when Jesus Christ comes again or when they go to heaven to be with the

Lord. John knew that every follower of Jesus would do something lawless sometimes, but lawlessness was the exception to the standard by which they habitually lived. To avoid utterly crushing the spirit of his fellow believers, John encouraged them by writing that if we do sin, we have an advocate, a defense attorney, who will plead for and represent us before God our Father. There will be no better Defense Attorney in our behalf than Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, because Jesus “is the atoning sacrifice for our sins” (1 John 2:2). Our Advocate will only need to say in our behalf that He justly and mercifully died a sacrificial death for us so we would not suffer eternal punishment. Moreover, the Father and He had agreed to graciously give eternal life to all who would follow Him.

Thinking Further

1. Why do you think John called his readers “My little children”?
2. What reason did John give for writing them?
3. If anyone sins, what good news did John give his readers?
4. What did John say was necessary for Jesus to be “the atoning sacrifice”?
5. How can we be sure that we know Jesus?