

## **Christ: Advocate – Interceder - Mediator**

In the college age Bible class recently I posed a question to the students, and after we batted it around for a little while I realized we, including me, weren't real clear on the answer. This was a biblical concept I had heard all of my life, but I realized in that moment that I didn't fully understand it. So now I will use this opportunity to look at this question again, and maybe do a better job explaining it, so that we can all understand it better.

In I John 2:1 we are told that, "we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous". Then in Hebrews 7:25 we are told that, "He always lives to make intercession for us". And finally, in I Tim 2:5 we are told, "There is one mediator between God and men, the Man Jesus Christ". So, Christ is called our advocate – he makes intercession for us – and he is called our mediator. The word advocate here means, "one called along side", or "a calling to one's side". The word intercession means, "to make petition", "to plead with" or more specifically, "to plead for". And then there is the word mediate, which means, "a go between".

So, we have Christ – called to our side – pleading for us – with the Father, as we can't do this for ourselves. And the question I asked the class was, why? Why do we need Christ to be an advocate and a mediator for us? And I think the reason I didn't like my own answer to the question was because I didn't fully understand what these words really meant. Now in our class discussion some of the correct concepts came out, primarily because this is a smart group of young people, but, we need to make sure we are all getting the whole picture here.

The first thing we need to understand here is that man was (is) guilty of sin and destined for eternal punishment. Under the old law (Mosaic) there was no way for man to completely rid himself of these sins. If we read Hebrews chapters 8 and 9, we see that the old law was imperfect. There needed to be a better law, with a better sacrifice – not a sacrifice of goats and calves

that had to be offered daily, weekly or even yearly, but a sacrifice so perfect that it only had to be offered once, for all time – and that sacrifice being Jesus Christ our Lord.

Heb 9:15 says, “And for this reason, He is the mediator of the New Covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance”. This verse tells us that Christ is the mediator of the New covenant, and the way the word is used here it means He is the guarantee – He is securing our salvation, which could not have happened without His death. Christ was the perfect sacrifice, which was able to take our sins away (as well as man’s sins under the first covenant).

Man needed a mediator between his sinful self and the righteous Father. Christ was the only Man who could do this for us. So not only was Christ the perfect (and only) sacrifice that could have been used to remove sins – He was also the right Person for the job because He was both human and divine. Christ lived as a man on the earth for 33 years. He understood the human nature with all of its weaknesses. Christ had also been in heaven, and is back there again living with God (Rom 8:34), and He understands God’s great and divine nature. Man could not have negotiated his own salvation with God. Christ is the only one who could have done this for us.

Now, remember Heb 7:25, let’s look at this verse again. The end of the verse says that Christ, “always lives to make intercession for them”. The “them” here are those who are in sin (anyone). The previous verse (24) says, “But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood”. Christ is eternal. His advocating and mediating for mankind is forever or at least for as long as there are men on the earth. Christ is there – in heaven – ever waiting to make intercession for us. His blood is always ready to be used to forgive our sins – whether we are coming to God for the first time through baptism, desiring that our sins be washed away, or coming for the hundredth time, asking God to forgive us of our sin. Christ is there offering His blood to

cleansing those sins, and that is the intercession that Christ is doing for us and all of mankind. And I think this is where some of my confusion was coming in.

It's not that Christ negotiates with God about whether to forgive our sins or not. Christ's advocating and mediating is not like our human court where our attorney is trying to convince the judge whether we are guilty or not. In "Gods court" (heaven), if we need Christ to come to our side to intercede for us with the Father– we are guilty of sin, and there is no question about that. And, we need the cleansing blood of Christ to get rid of that sin.

So He is there, by our side (advocating for us) – being the only perfect and acceptable sacrifice (mediating for us) – bringing our petition of asking forgiveness of sins before God (interceding for us) – so that His blood can be used to wash our sins away, never to be remembered again (Heb 8:12). So, why do we need Christ to be an advocate and a mediator for us? Because - we need Him by our side. We need His perfect blood sacrifice, and we need Him to go to the Father on our behalf, because we can't do these things for ourselves.

I hope this helps us understand a little better the role that Christ plays between us, our sins and the Father. If it weren't for Christ we would all be eternally lost and without hope. Christ was the only one that could provide a perfect sacrifice for the sins of man, so I hope we really appreciate Him. And even though he died on the cross almost 2000 years ago, He is still working for us every day in heaven, making sure His blood is still doing the job it was designed for, cleansing us of our sins. And, Christ is there for all of us, you - me - everybody. So, if you are struggling with sin, Christ is waiting for you – ready and willing to do His part – now you do yours.

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