

Words of Grace Seasoned With Salt
BIBLE STUDIES, PERSONAL OPINIONS ABOUT CURRENT AND
FUTURE EVENTS

Edited By Pastor Arthur L. Watkins

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The Advocate

*By David Rimmer, Circuit Judge
First Judicial Circuit of Florida*

The true story of a lawyer who never lost a case even though all his clients are guilty and who never charges for his services

By David Rimmer, Circuit Judge, First Judicial Circuit of Florida

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

This is the only place where “advocate” occurs in Scripture. An advocate is someone who assists, defends, or pleads for another; one who renders legal advice and aid and pleads the cause of another before a court. A person learned in the law, and duly admitted to practice who assists his client with advice, and pleads for him in open court.¹ An advocate is also known as a lawyer.

Although lawyers are important to the administration of justice and the resolution of disputes, the Bible has a negative view of them:

Luke 7:30 says: ***But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.*** (John the Baptist)

Luke 11:46 says: ***And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.***

Luke 11:52 says: ***Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.***

There appears to be one exception. Paul told Titus to: ***Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.*** (Titus 3:13)

Since Paul had many legal problems, as seen in the book of Acts, it's not surprising that he needed the services of a lawyer.

Lawyers are not only known as advocates, but also as **Counselors at law**. My license to practice law, which was issued to me by the Florida Supreme Court, says in part that I am "...hereby licensed as an Attorney and Counselor at law." "As an advocate, a lawyer zealously asserts the client's position under the rules of the adversary system."² People who are accused of violating the law need an Attorney and Counselor at law to be their advocate. Isaiah 9:6 says this about Jesus Christ our advocate: ***For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.***

One of the fundamental rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution is the right to be represented by a lawyer:

*"In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defense [sic]."*³

Under the American system of justice, all persons accused of a crime are presumed to be innocent unless and until the prosecution proves two things beyond a reasonable doubt:

- (1) The crime that has been charged was committed.
- (2) The accused is the person who committed the crime.

The accused does not have to prove anything.⁴

Under God's Law, Everybody is Already Guilty

Contrary to our system of justice, no one is presumed innocent...everyone is guilty. Many believe that they will make it to heaven if their good works outweigh their bad works. They don't realize the issue of guilt has already been decided. There will be no trial. Our guilt has already been proven.

Romans 3:19 says: ***Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.***

James 2:10 says: ***For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.***

1 John 3:4 says: ***Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.***

Eccl. 7:20 says: ***For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.***

Romans 3:23 says: ***For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.***

Once a person has been found guilty they can file an appeal. However, the appeal is limited to errors that contributed to the conviction. The conviction is presumed to be correct and the burden is on the convicted defendant to convince the appellate court that error occurred and the conviction should be overturned.⁵ That is very difficult and the convicted defendant will need a good lawyer to handle the appeal. Since there were no errors that contributed to the sinner's guilt, his conviction will not be overturned. His only hope is Jesus Christ the Advocate. If a person faces the Judge of all the earth in eternity without the Bread of Life as their advocate...they will be toast!

Some Lawyers are Better Than Others

Somebody joked that they knew a lawyer who was so good he got a blind man a driver's license. Some lawyers claim they have never lost a case. But that's because they never handled very many cases or they only took easy ones they knew they couldn't lose. A good lawyer will not be afraid to take a case to court just because he might lose. The famous baseball player, Babe Ruth, said: *Never let the fear of striking out get in your way.* There isn't a baseball player who ever played the game that did not strike out; or a football player who never fumbled. The more they play, the more likely they will strike-out or fumble. The same goes with good lawyers; the more times they go to court, the more often they will lose. No lawyer is perfect.

The Prosecutor Files the Accusations

The prosecutor has the duty to prove the allegations against the accused. This is referred to as the burden of proof. It is the duty of the prosecutor to present the evidence of guilt and if the defendant is convicted, to argue for an appropriate penalty. In some States, such as Florida, the prosecutor files formal charges by way of a document called an *Information*. This document serves to inform the defendant of the allegations against him.

The Apostle Paul encountered such a prosecutor in Acts 24:1-2: ***And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul. And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence.***

According to the Touch Bible App for the King James Bible which I have on my I-Pad, the name "Tertullus" means *triple hardened*. He must have been a real hard-nosed prosecutor. He is referred to as an *orator* and according to the Touch Bible App, *orator* means lawyer. There is another lawyer who is also a very hard-nosed prosecutor; someone who brings allegations against the saints day and night. He is relentless and never offers a plea bargain. He always seeks the maximum penalty. He is described in Revelation 12:9-10 as follows:

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ:

for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

If You Go to Court Against the Devil, You Need a Good Lawyer

When a guilty person files an appeal to a higher court, he has the burden of persuading the court that his guilty verdict should be overturned. His guilt has already been established and the prosecutor has nothing more to prove. In our system, if the guilty person cannot afford to hire an attorney to handle his appeal, one will be appointed to represent him.

But, this is not true when the books are opened at the Great White Throne Judgment.⁶ When that day comes the accused will be on his own; too bad for him if he does not have the Advocate. Many people lose in court because they had a bad lawyer. I saw a homeless man standing on a street corner one day holding a sign that said: *My wife had a better lawyer.* Those who face God the Judge at the Supreme Court without Christ the Advocate will have to represent themselves and it has been said: *He who represents himself has a fool for a client.*

Christ is the Only Lawyer the Devil Cannot Beat

Consider the following facts about Christ the Advocate

He never charges a fee. Some lawyers charge \$275 an hour and some charge higher depending on the complexity of the case and the experience of the lawyer. There's a joke about a man who went to a lawyer for legal advice. The lawyer said: *For five hundred dollars you get to ask me two questions. Five hundred dollars... isn't that a little expensive, the man said. Not really, said the lawyer, Now, what's your second question?*

He never turns down a case. No matter how overwhelming the evidence the prosecutor has, the Righteous Advocate never lets the fear of striking out get in his way. His case load is never so heavy that he has to turn anyone away. Everyone who is in distress, and everyone who is in debt are the ones He represents.⁷

All of His clients are guilty. Romans 5:8 says: ***While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*** Some attorneys will only represent people they believe are actually innocent. But Christ the Righteous Advocate only represents the guilty.

He knows the law better than anyone because He wrote it. He knows every verse and every word. When the Devil challenged Him in the wilderness, He overcame him with the Word.⁸ Lawyers are required to provide competent representation to a client. Competent representation requires the legal knowledge, skill, thoroughness, and preparation reasonably necessary for the representation.⁹ A lawyer who fails to provide competent representation can be sued for legal malpractice. The only lawyer competent enough to face the Devil in court is the Righteous Advocate. Anyone who puts their trust in another lawyer to represent them will lose. Church membership, good works, and the best character witnesses on earth are not competent. When lawyers go to court it is expected of them that they will know the law. Many a case has been lost because the lawyer was not prepared and did not know the law that was applicable to the case.

Florida Statutes contain over 1,000 chapters...lawyers must look it up to know what it says...but Christ the Advocate knows it all by heart. Lawyers and judges often make legal mistakes resulting in reversible error. Cases get reversed because the defense attorney, the prosecutor, or the judge made a mistake.

He has never lost a case. He has been in practice for thousands of years and has represented millions of guilty people and has never lost a single case; no not one!

He never lets the fear of striking out get in His way because He has never struck out. If I'm facing the death penalty in court, that's the lawyer I want to represent me!

The Judge is His Father. In our system, judges are required to avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in all of their activities.¹⁰ It would be inappropriate for a judge to rule on a case if one of the attorneys was his son. No one would have confidence that the judge could be fair and impartial. But God the Father is impartial and is well pleased with His Son.¹¹ In 1969 when man first landed on the moon, there was great celebration all over the world. I saw a handwritten note on a wall that said, *Why go to the moon...I've been to the Son.*

Christ the Advocate Stood Up and Paid the Fine

Early in my legal career I was in court one day when a woman was present who was charged with DUI (driving under the influence). She had struck the back of another car that had been stopped at a red light. Her arm was in a sling as a result of the accident. She had no defense to the charge so she pled guilty. The judge imposed the penalty which included a mandatory fine. The lady just hung her head and said, she could not pay the fine. Then a man stood up in the courtroom, raised his hand and said, *I'll pay her fine.* The judge looked at the lady and said, *Well lady, it looks like you have a friend.* When a sinner stands before the Judge and has no choice but to plead guilty, there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother who will pay the fine. (Prov. 18:24)

1Peter 1:18-19 says: ***Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*** Not only does the Righteous Advocate represent the guilty sinner, He also pays the fine. (*We did the crime, but he paid the fine*)

Christ the Advocate is Able to Get the Conviction Thrown Out

Guilty verdicts are very difficult to get overturned on appeal. A lawyer representing a convicted person on appeal has a very heavy burden. He must convince the court that the defendant did not receive a fair trial because of some error by the prosecutor, the defense attorney, or the judge or that the evidence was insufficient to support the guilty verdict. Sometimes a conviction might be overturned because of a legal technicality that a good lawyer is able to discover. Christ the Advocate can get the guilty conviction thrown out on a technicality...because technically there is no longer any evidence to support the conviction after he forgives our sins. All charges against us are thrown out and, therefore, they no longer exist. The prosecutor no longer has a case. When the prosecutor opens his file he finds.....

All the evidence is gone. All the witnesses have disappeared.

John 8:1-11 says: ***When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.***

When the evidence room is unlocked... it's empty.

When the trial record is examined ...all the pages are blank, everything has been wiped clean.

No evidence...no witnesses...no record...no case.

The defendant must be released and all charges are dismissed!

Someday when I get to heaven, if anyone should ask me how I got there in spite of all the crimes I was convicted of, I'll just smile and say, **I had a really good lawyer.**
Judge David Rimmer - 2014

Footnotes

¹ law dictionary.org/**advocate**/

² RULES REGULATING THE FLORIDA BAR CHAPTER 4. RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT PREAMBLE: A LAWYER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

³Amendment VI, U.S. Constitution (1789)

⁴ Florida Standard Jury Instructions-Criminal 3.7

⁵ *Stanton v. Florida Department of Health*, 129 So.3d 1083 (Fla. 1st DCA 2013)

⁶ Daniel 7:10

⁷ I Samuel 22:2

⁸ Matt. 4:1-11, Luke 4:1-13

⁹ Rules Regulating the Florida Bar 4-1.1

¹⁰ Code of Judicial Conduct for the State of Florida, Canon 2.

¹¹ Matt. 17:5

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