

the fifth discourse to a treatise by

**JOHN BUNYAN**

entitled

**THE WORK OF JESUS CHRIST AS AN  
ADVOCATE CLEARLY EXPLAINED  
AND LARGELY IMPROVED FOR THE  
BENEFIT OF ALL BELIEVERS**

*“And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the  
Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1).*

Introduction Compiled & Edited by  
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This treatise was published in London in 1689, one year after John Bunyan's death. Our reading of this work, as well as the preface and introduction come from a three volume collection edited by George Offor, Esq., and entitled, *The Whole Works of John Bunyan*. George Offor's edition of Bunyan's works was published in Glasgow in 1862.



John Bunyan was born in Elstow, England, near Bedford, on November 28, 1628. After squandering much of his life away in worldly wantonness, Bunyan was converted to the Christian faith and soon afterward, became an excellent expositor of the Holy Scriptures. He was imprisoned in November 1660 for the crime of preaching without a license from the state church. He remained incarcerated for twelve years, with only a few, and brief occasions of liberty. Though he began writing his famous *The Pilgrim's Progress* while in prison, Bunyan may have finished the work a few years after his release in 1672. *The Pilgrim's Progress* was published in 1678. Bunyan also wrote many other excellent works such as *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, *Some Gospel Truths Opened According to the Scriptures*, *A Vindication of Some Gospel Truths Opened*, and this treatise, *The Work of Jesus Christ as an Advocate Clearly Explained*. A contemporary with such men as John Owen, Thomas Goodwin, and Richard Baxter, John Bunyan is recognized as possibly one of the greatest of the Puritan writers. Bunyan died on August 31, 1688, after taking ill from traveling through inclement weather. He was buried at Bunhill Fields.

George Offor's "Advertisement By the Editor" and John Bunyan's "Epistle to the Reader" are not in our audio reading of Bunyan's treatise. They are, however, very worth the time to read. Both are included in the document provided with the first reading of this work.

I have also included some footnotes that I thought might be helpful, especially for 17<sup>th</sup> century legal terms. Still, my desire is to use the footnotes very sparingly, so as not to disturb the flow of this work; one in which I consider to be one of John Bunyan's most excellent expositions.

## **Bunyan's 5<sup>th</sup> Discourse:**

### **THE NECESSITY OF HAVING CHRIST FOR OUR ADVOCATE**

FIFTHLY, I come now to the fifth thing, which is, to show you what necessity there is that Christ should be our Advocate.

That Christ should be a Priest to offer sacrifice, a King to rule, and a Prophet to teach, all seeing men acknowledge is of necessity; but that he should be an Advocate, a pleader for his people, few see the reason of it. But he is an Advocate, and as an Advocate has a work and employ distinct from his priestly, kingly, or prophetic offices. John says, "He is our Advocate," and signifieth also the nature of his work as such, in that very place where he asserteth his office; as

also I have showed you in that which goes before. But having already showed you the nature, I will now show you the necessity of this office.

*First.* It is necessary for the more full and ample vindication of the justice of God against all the cavils of the infernal spirits. Christ died on earth to declare the justice of God to men in his justifying the ungodly. God standeth upon the vindication of his justice, as well as upon the act thereof. Hence the Holy Ghost, by the prophets and apostles, so largely disputeth for the vindication thereof, while it asserteth the reality of the pardon of sin, the justification of the unworthy, and their glorification with God (Romans 3:24; Isaiah; Jerermiah; Malachi; Romans 3, 4, 8; Galatians 3:4). I say, while it disputeth the justness of this high act of God against the cavils of implacable sinners. Now the prophets and apostles, in those disputes by which they seek to vindicate the justice of God in the salvation of sinners, are not only ministers of God to us, but advocates for him; since, as Elihu has it, they “speak on God’s behalf,” or, as the margin has it, “I will show thee that there are yet words for God,” words to be spoken and pleaded against his enemies for the justification of his actions (Job 36:2). Now, as it is necessary that there should be advocates for God on earth to plead for his justice and holiness, while he saveth sinners, against the cavils of an ungodly people, so it is necessary that there should be an Advocate also in heaven, that may there vindicate the same justice and holiness of God from all those charges that the fallen angels are apt to charge it with, while it consenteth that we, though ungodly, should be saved.

That the fallen angels are bold enough to charge God to his face with unjustness of language, is evident in the 1st and 2nd of Job; and that they should not be as bold to charge him with unjustness of actions, nothing can be showed to the contrary. Further, that God seeks to clear himself of this unjust charge of Satan is as manifest; for all the troubles of his servant Job were chiefly for that purpose. And why he should have one also in heaven to plead for the justness of his doing in the forgiveness and salvation of sinners appears also as necessary, even because there is one, even an Advocate with the Father, or on the Father’s side, seeking to vindicate his justice, while he pleadeth with him for us, against the devil and his objections. God is wonderfully pleased with his design in saving of sinners; it pleases him at the heart. And since he also is infinitely just, there is need that an Advocate should be appointed to show how, in a way of justice as well as mercy, a sinner may be saved.

The good angels did not at first see so far into the mysteries of the gospel of the grace of God, but that they needed further light therein for the vindication of their Lord as servants. Wherefore they yet did pry and look narrowly into it further, and also bowed their heads and hearts to learn yet more, by the church, of “the manifold wisdom of God” (1 Peter 1:12; Ephesians 3:9-10). And if the standing angels were not yet, to the utmost, perfect in the knowledge of this mystery, and yet surely they must know more thereof than those that fell could do, no wonder if those devils, whose enmity could not but animate their ignorance, made, and do make, their cavils against justice, insinuating that it is not impartial and exact, because it, as it is just, justifieth the ungodly.

That Satan will quarrel with God I have showed you, and that he will also dispute against his works with the holy angels, is more than intimated by the apostle Jude (Jude 1:9), and why not quarrel with, and accuse the justice of God as unrighteous, for consenting to the salvation of

sinners, since his best qualifications are most profound and prodigious attempts to dethrone the Lord God of his power and glory.

Nay, all this is evident, since “we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” And again, I say, it is evident that one part of his work as an Advocate, is to vindicate the justice of God while he pleadeth for our salvation, because he pleadeth a propitiation; for a propitiation respects God as well as us; the appeasing his wrath, and the reconciling of his justice to us, as well as the redeeming us from death and hell; yea, it therefore doth the one, because it doth the other. Now, if Christ, as an Advocate, pleadeth a propitiation with God, for whose conviction doth he plead it? Not for God’s; for he has ordained it, allows it, and gloriously acquiesces therein, because he knows the whole virtue thereof. It is therefore for the conviction of the fallen angels, and for the confounding of all those cavils that can be invented and objected against our salvation by those most subtle and envious ones. But,

*Second.* There is matter of law to be objected, and that both against God and us; at least, there seems to be so, because of the sanction that God has put upon the law, and also because we have sinned against it.

God has said, “In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die”; and, “the soul that sinneth, it shall die.” God also standeth still upon the vindication of his justice, he also saveth sinners. Now, in comes our accuser, and chargeth us of sin, of being guilty of sin, because we have transgressed the law. God also will not be put out of his way, or steps of grace, to save us; also he will say, he is just and righteous still. Ay, but these are but say-so’s. How shall this be proved? Why, now, here is room for an advocate that can plead to matter of law, that can preserve the sanction of the law in the salvation of the sinner— “He will magnify the law, and make it honourable” (Isaiah 42:21). The margin saith,<sup>1</sup> “and make him honourable that is, he shall save the sinner, and preserve the holiness of the law, and the honour of his God. But who is this that can do this? “It is the servant of God,” saith the prophet (Isaiah 42:1, 13), “the Lord, a man of war.” But how can this be done by him? The answer is, It shall be done, “for God is well pleased for his righteousness’ sake”; for it is by that he magnifies the law, and makes his Father honourable— that is, he, as a public person, comes into the world under the law, fulfills it, and having so done, he gives that righteousness away, for he, as to his own person, never had need thereof; I say, he gives that righteousness to those that have need, to those that have none of their own, that righteousness might be imputed to them. This righteousness, then, he presenteth to God for us, and God, for this righteousness’ sake, is well pleased that we should be saved, and for it can save us, and secure his honour, and preserve the law in it’s sanction. And this Christ pleadeth against Satan as an Advocate with the Father for us; by which he vindicates his Father’s justice, holdeth the child of God, notwithstanding his sins, in a state of justification, and utterly

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<sup>1</sup> Bunyan refers to the margin notes of Isaiah 42:1, 13 from the **Geneva Bible**, the translation used by the Puritans. **Isaiah 42:1**, “That is, Christ, who in respect to his manhood is called here servant. The prophets used to make mention of Christ after they declared any great promise, because he is the foundation on which all the promises are made and ratified. For I have committed all my power to him, as to a most faithful steward: some read, I will establish him: that is, in his office by giving him the fulness of my Spirit. Only he is acceptable to me and they that come to me by him: for there is no other means of reconciliation, (Matthew 12:18; Ephesians 4:1). He will declare himself governor over the Gentiles and call them by his word, and rule them by his Spirit.” **Isaiah 42:13**, “He shows the zeal of the Lord, and his power in the conservation of his Church.”

overthroweth and confoundeth the devil.

For Christ, in pleading thus, appeals to the law itself, if he has not done it justice, saying, “Most mighty law, what command of thine have I not fulfilled? What demand of thine have I not fully answered? Where is that jot or tittle of the law that is able to object against my doings for want of satisfaction?” Here the law is mute; it speaketh not one word by way of the least complaint, but rather testifies of this righteousness that it is good and holy (Romans 3:22-23; 5:15-19). Now, then, since Christ did this as a public person, it follows that others must be justified thereby; for that was the end and reason of Christ’s taking on him to do the righteousness of the law. Nor can the law object against the equity of this dispensation of heaven; for why might not that God, who gave the law his being and his sanction, dispose as he pleases of the righteousness which it commendeth? Besides, if men be made righteous, they are so; and if by a righteousness which the law commendeth, how can fault be found with them by the law? Nay, it is “witnessed by the law and the prophets,” who consent that it should be unto all, and upon all them that believe, for their justification (Romans 3:20-21).

And that the mighty God suffereth the prince of the devils to do with the law what he can, against this most wholesome and godly doctrine; it is to show the truth, goodness, and permanency thereof; for this is as who should say, Devil, do thy worst! When the law is in the hand of an easy pleader, though the cause that he pleadeth be good, a crafty opposer may overthrow the right; but here is the salvation of the children in debate, whether it can stand with law and justice; the opposer of this is the devil, his argument against it is the law; he that defends the doctrine is Christ the Advocate, who, in his plea, must justify the justice of God, defend the holiness of the law, and save the sinner from all the arguments, pleas, stops and demurs that Satan is able to put in against it. And this he must do fairly, righteously, simply, pleading the voice of the self-same law for the justification of what he standeth for, which Satan pleads against it; for though it is by the new law that our salvation comes, yet by the old law is the new law approved of and the way of salvation thereby by it consented to.

This shows, therefore, that Christ is not ashamed to own the way of our justification and salvation, no, not before men and devils. It shows also that he is resolved to dispute and plead for the same, though the devil himself shall oppose it. And since our adversary pretends a plea in law against it, it is meet that there should be an open hearing before the Judge of all about it; but, forasmuch as we neither can nor dare appear to plead for ourselves, our good God has thought fit we should do it by an advocate: “We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” This, therefore, is the second thing that shows the need that we have of an Advocate—to wit, our adversary pretends that he has a plea in law against us, and that by law we should be otherwise disposed of than to be made possessors of the heavenly kingdom. But,

*Third.* There are many things relating to the promise, to our life, and to the threatenings, that minister matter of question and doubt, and give the advantage of objections unto him that so eagerly desireth to be putting in cavils against our salvation, all which it hath pleased God to repel by Jesus Christ our Advocate.

1. There are many things relating to the promises, as to the largeness and straitness of words, as to the freeness and conditionality of them, which we are not able so well to understand; and,

therefore, when Satan dealeth with us about them, we quickly fall to the ground before him; we often conclude that the words of the promise are too narrow and strait to comprehend us; we also think, verily, that the conditions of some promises do utterly shut us out from hope of justification and life; but our Advocate, who is for us with the Father, he is better acquainted with, and learned in, this law than to be baffled out with a bold word or two, or with a subtle piece of hellish sophistication (Isaiah 50:4). He knows the true purport, intent, meaning, and sense of every promise, and piece of promise that is in the whole Bible, and can tell how to plead it for advantage against our accuser, and doth so. And I gather it not only from his contest with Satan for Joshua (Zechariah 3:1-10), and from his conflict with him in the wilderness (Matthew 4), and in heaven (Revelation 14), but also from the practice of Satan's emissaries here; for what his angels do, that doth he. Now there is here nothing more apparent than that the instruments of Satan do plead against the church, from the pretended intricacy, ambiguity, and difficulty of the promise; whence I gather, so doth Satan before the tribunal of God; but there we have one to match him; "we have an Advocate with the Father," that knows law and judgment better than Satan, and statute and commandment better than all his angels; and by the verdict of our Advocate, all the words, and limits, and extensions of words, with all conditions of the promises, are expounded and applied! And hence it is that it sometimes so falleth out that the very promise we have thought could not reach us, to comfort us by any means, has at another time swallowed us up with joy unspeakable. Christ, the true Prophet, has the right understanding of the Word as an Advocate, has pleaded it before God against Satan, and having overcome him at the common law, he hath sent to let us know it by his good Spirit, to our comfort, and the confusion of our enemy. Again,

2. There are many things relating to our lives that minister to our accuser occasions of many objections against our salvation; for, besides our daily infirmities, there are in our lives gross sins, many horrible backslidings; also we oftentimes suck and drink in many abominable errors and deceitful opinions, of all which Satan accuseth us before the judgment-seat of God, and pleadeth hard that we may be damned for ever for them. Besides, some of these things are done after light received, against present convictions and dissuasions to the contrary, against solemn engagements to amendment, when the bonds of love were upon us (Jeremiah 2:20). These are crying sins; they have a loud voice in themselves against us, and give to Satan great advantage and boldness to sue for our destruction before the bar of God; nor doth he want skill to aggravate and to comment profoundly upon all occasions and circumstances that did attend us in these our miscarriages— to wit, that we did it without a cause, also, when we had, had we had grace to have used them, many things to have helped us against such sins, and to have kept us clean and upright. "There is also a sin unto death" (1 John 5:16), and he can tell how to labour, by argument and sleight of speech, to make our transgressions, not only to border upon, but to appear in the hue, shape, and figure of that, and thereto make his objection against our salvation. He often argueth thus with us, and fasteneth the weight of his reasons upon our consciences, to the almost utter destruction of us, and the bringing of us down to the gates of despair and utter destruction; the same sins, with their aggravating circumstances, as I said, he pleadeth against us at the bar of God. But there he meeteth with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Advocate, who entereth his plea against him, unravels all his reasons and arguments against us, and shows the guile and falsehood of them. He also pleadeth as to the nature of sin, as also to all those high aggravations, and proveth that neither the sin in itself, nor yet as joined with all its advantageous circumstances, can be the sin unto death (Colossians 2:19), because we hold the head, and have

not “made shipwreck of faith” (1 Timothy 1:19), but still, as David and Solomon, we confess, and are sorry for our sins. Thus, though we seem, through our falls, to come short of the promise, with Peter (Hebrews 4:1-3), and leave our transgressions as stumbling blocks to the world, with Solomon, and minister occasion of a question of our salvation among the godly, yet our Advocate fetches us off before God, and we shall be found safe and in heaven at last, by them in the next world, who were afraid they had lost us in this.

But all these points must be managed by Christ for us, against Satan, as a lawyer, an advocate, who to that end now appears in the presence of God for us, and wisely handleth the very crisis of the word, and of the failings of his people, together with all those nice and critical juggles by which our adversary laboureth to bring us down, to the confusion of his face.

3. There are also the threatenings that are annexed to the gospel, and they fall now under our consideration. They are of two sorts— such as respect those who altogether neglect and reject the gospel, or those that profess it, yet fall in or from the profession thereof.

The first sort of threatening cannot be pleaded against the professors of the gospel as against those that never professed it; wherefore he betaketh himself to manage those threatenings against us that belong to those that have professed, and that have fallen from it (Psalm 109:1-6). Joshua fell in it (Zechariah 3:1-2). Judas fell from it, and the accuser stands at the right hand of them before the judgment of God, to resist them, by pleading the threatenings against them— to wit, that God’s soul should have no pleasure in them. “If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.” Here is a plea for Satan, both against the one and the other; they are both apostatized, both drawn back, and he is subtle enough to manage it.

Ay, but Satan, here is also matter sufficient for a plea for our Advocate against thee, forasmuch as the next words distinguish betwixt drawing back, and drawing back “unto perdition”; every one that draws back, doth not draw back unto perdition (Hebrews 10:38-39). Some of them draw back from, and some in the profession of, the gospel. Judas drew back from, and Peter in the profession of his faith; wherefore Judas perishes, but Peter turns again, because Judas drew back unto perdition, but Peter yet believed to the saving of the soul. Nor doth Jesus Christ, when he sees it is to no boot, at any time step in to endeavour to save the soul. Wherefore, as for Judas, for his backsliding from the faith, Christ turns him up to Satan, and leaveth him in his hand, saying, “When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin” (Psalm 109:7). But he will not serve Peter so— “The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged” (Psalm 37:33). He will pray for him before, and plead for him after, he hath been in the temptation, and so secure him, by virtue of his advocacy, from the sting and lash of the threatening that is made against final apostasy. But,

*Fourth.* The necessity of the Advocate’s office in Jesus Christ appears plainly in this— to plead about the judgments, distresses, afflictions, and troubles that we meet withal in this life for our sins. For though, by virtue of this office, Christ fully takes us off from the condemnation that the unbelievers go down to for their sins, yet he doth not thereby exempt us from temporal punishments, for we see and feel that they daily overtake us; but for the proportioning of the punishment, or affliction for transgression, seeing that comes under the sentence of the law, it is fit that we should have an Advocate that understands both law and judgment, to plead for equal

distribution of chastisement, according, I say, to the law of grace; and this the Lord Jesus doth.

Suppose a man for transgression be indicted at the assizes;<sup>2</sup> his adversary is full of malice, and would have him punished sorely beyond what by the law is provided for such offence; and he pleads that the judge will so afflict and punish as he in his malicious mind desireth. But the man has an advocate there, and he enters his plea against the cruelty of his client's accuser, saying, My lord, it cannot be as our enemy would have it; the punishment for these transgressions is prescribed by that law that we here ground our plea upon; nor may it be declined to satisfy his envy; we stand here upon matters of law, and appeal to the law. And this is the work of our Advocate in heaven. Punishments for the sin of the children come not headlong, not without measure, as our accuser would have them, nor yet as they fall upon those who have none to plead their cause. Hath he smote the children according to the stroke wherewith he hath smitten others? No; "in measure when it shooteth forth," or seeks to exceed due bounds, "thou wilt debate with it: he stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind" (Isaiah 27:8). "Thou wilt debate with it," inquiring and reasoning by the law, whether the shootings forth of the affliction (now going out for the offence committed) be not too strong, too heavy, too hot, and of too long a time admitted to distress and break the spirit of this Christian; and if it be, he applies himself to the rule to measure it by, he fetches forth his plumb line, and sets it in the midst of his people (Amos 7:8; Isaiah 28:17), and lays righteousness to that, and will not suffer it to go further; but according to the quality of the transgression, and according to the terms, bounds, limits, and measures which the law of grace admits, so shall the punishment be. Satan often saith of us when we have sinned, as Abishai said of Shimei after he had cursed David, Shall not this man die for this? (2 Samuel 19:21). But Jesus, our Advocate, answers as David, What have I to do with thee, O Satan? Thou this day art an enemy to me; thou seekest for a punishment for the transgressions of my people above what is allotted to them by the law of grace, under which they are, and beyond what their relation that they stand in to my Father and myself will admit. Wherefore, as Advocate, he pleadeth against Satan when he brings in against us a charge for sins committed, for the regulating of punishments, both as to the nature, degree, and continuation of punishment; and this is the reason why, when we are judged, we are not condemned, but chastened, "that we should not be condemned with the world" (1 Corinthians 11:32). Hence king David says, the Lord hath not given him over to the will of his enemy (Psalm 27:12). And

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<sup>2</sup> ASSIZES, *n.* [L. *assideo*, to sit by, of *ad* and *sedeo*, to sit.] 1. Originally, an assembly of knights and other substantial men, with a bailiff or justice, in a certain place and at a certain time, for public business. The word was sometimes applied to the general council, or Wittenagemote, of England. 2. A court in England, held in every county by special commission to one of the judges, who is called a justice of the assize, and empowered to take assizes, that is, the verdict of a jury, called the assize. 3. A jury. In this sense the word was applied to the grand assize, for the trial of property, and to the petty assize, for the trial of possession. In Scotland, the assize consists of fifteen men, selected from a greater number. 4. A writ; as an assize of novel disseisin, which is given to recover the possession of lands, tenements, rents, common, &c., of which the tenant has been lately disseised; assize of mort d'ancestor, which lies against an abator, who enters upon land after the death of the tenant, and before the heir enters; assize of darrein presentment, which lies against a stranger who presents a clerk to a benefice. 5. A particular species of rents, established and not subject to be varied. 6. The time or place of holding the court of assize. 7. In a more general sense, any court of justice. 8. A statute of regulation; an ordinance regulating the weight, measure and price of articles sold in market; and hence the word came to signify the weight, measure or price itself; as the assize of bread. This word is, in a certain sense, now corrupted into size, which see. ASSIZE, *v.t.* To fix the weight, measure or price of commodities, by an ordinance or regulation of authority. (Webster's 1828 Dictionary)



again, “The Lord hath chastened me sore; but he hath not given me over unto death” (Psalm 118:18). Satan’s plea was, that the Lord would give David over to his will, and to the tyranny of death. No, says our Advocate, that must not be; to do so would be an affront to the covenant under which grace has put them; that would be to deal with them by a covenant of works, under which they are not. There is a rod for children; and stripes for those of them that transgress. This rod is in the hand of a Father, and must be used according to the law of that relation, not for the destruction, but correction of the children; not to satisfy the rage of Satan, but to vindicate the holiness of my Father; not to drive them further from, but to bring them nearer to their God. But,

*Fifth.* The necessity of the advocateship of Jesus Christ is also manifest in this, for that there is need of one to plead the efficacy of old titles to our eternal inheritance, when our interest thereunto seems questionable by reason of new transgressions. That God’s people may, by their new and repeated sins, as to reason at least, endanger their interest in the eternal inheritance, is manifest by such groanings of theirs as these— “Why dost thou cast me off?” (Psalm 43:2). “Cast me not away from thy presence” (Psalm 51:11). And, “O God, why hast thou cast us off for ever?” (Psalm 74:1). Yet I find in the book of Leviticus, that though any of the children of Israel should have sold, mortgaged, or made away with their inheritance, they did not thereby utterly make void their title to an interest therein, but it should again return to them, and they again enjoy the possession of it, in the year of jubilee. In the year of jubilee, saith God, you shall return every man to his possession; “the land shall not be sold for ever,” nor be quite cut off, “for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me. And in all the land of your possession, ye shall grant a redemption for the land” (Leviticus 25:23-24).

The man in Israel that, by waxing poor, did sell his land in Canaan, was surely a type of the Christian who, by sin and decays in grace, has forfeited his place and inheritance in heaven; but as the ceremonial law provided that the poor man in Canaan should not, by his poverty, lose his portion in Canaan for ever, but that it should return to him in the year of jubilee; so the law of grace has provided that the children shall not, for their sin, lose their inheritance in heaven for ever, but that it shall return to them in the world to come (1 Corinthians 11:32).

All therefore that happeneth in this case is, they may live without the comfort of it here, as he that had sold his house in Canaan might live without the enjoyment of it till the jubilee. They may also seem to come short of it when they die, as he in Canaan did that deceased before the year of jubilee; but as certainly as he that died in Canaan before the jubilee did yet receive again his inheritance by the hand of his relative survivor when the jubilee came, so certainly shall he that dieth, and that seemeth in his dying to come short of the celestial inheritance now, be yet admitted, at his rising again, to the repossession of his old inheritance at the day of judgment. But now here is room for a caviler to object, and to plead against the children, saying, They have forfeited their part of paradise by their sin; what right, then, shall they have to the kingdom of heaven? Now let the Lord stand up to plead, for he is Advocate for the children; yea, let them plead the sufficiency of their first title to the kingdom, and that it is not their doings can sell the land for ever. The reason why the children of Israel could not sell the land for ever was, because the Lord, their head, reserved to himself a right therein— “The land shall not be sold for ever, for the land is mine.” Suppose two or three children have a lawful title to such an estate, but they are all profuse and prodigal, and there is a brother also that has by law a chief right to the same estate: this brother may hinder the estate from being sold for ever, because it is his inheritance,

and he may, when the limited time that his brethren had sold their share therein is out, if he will, restore it to them again. And in the meantime, if any that are unjust should go about utterly and for ever to deprive his brethren, he may stand up and plead for them; that in law the land cannot be sold for ever, for that it is his as well as theirs, he being resolved not to part with his right. O my brethren! Christ will not part with his right of the inheritance unto which you are also born; your profuseness and prodigality shall not make him let go his hold that he hath for you of heaven; nor can you, according to law, sell the land for ever, since it is his, and he hath the principal and chief title thereto. This also gives him ground to stand up to plead for you against all those that would hold the kingdom from you for ever; for let Satan say what he can against you, yet Christ can say, “The land is mine,” and consequently that his brethren could not sell it.

Yes, says Satan, if the inheritance be divided.

O but, says Christ, the land is undivided; no man has his part set out and turned over to himself; besides, my brethren yet are under age, and I am made their guardian; they have not power to sell the land for ever; the land is mine; also my Father has made me feoffee<sup>3</sup> in trust for my brethren, that they may have what is allotted them when they are all come to a perfect man, “unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13). And not before, and I will reserve it for them till then; and thus to do is the will of my Father, the law of the Judge, and also my unchangeable resolution. And what can Satan say against this plea? Can he prove that Christ has no interest in the saints’ inheritance? Can he prove that we are at age, or that our several parts of the heavenly house are already delivered into our own power? And if he goes about to do this, is not the law of the land against him? Doth it not say that our Advocate is “Lord of all” (Acts 10:36), that the kingdom is Christ’s, that it is laid up in heaven for us (Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 1:5); yea, that the “inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, is reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation” (1 Peter 1:4-5). Thus therefore is our heavenly inheritance made good by our Advocate against the thwartings and branglings of the devil; nor can our new sins make it invalid, but it abideth safe to us at last, notwithstanding our weaknesses; though, if we sin, we may have but little comfort of it, or but little of it’s present profits, while we live in this present world. A spendthrift, though he loses not his title, may yet lose the present benefit, but the principal will come again at last; for “we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”

*Sixth.* The necessity of the advocateship of Jesus Christ for us further appears in this— to wit, for that our evidences, which declare that we have a right to the eternal inheritance, are often out of our own hand, yea, and also sometimes kept long from us, the which we come not at the sight or comfort of again but by our Advocate, especially when our evidences are taken from us, because of a present forfeiture of this inheritance to God by this or that most foul offence. Evidences, when they are thus taken away, as in David’s case they were (Psalm 51:12), why then they are in our God’s hand, laid up, I say, from the sight of them to whom they belong, till they even forget the contents thereof (2 Peter 1:5-9).

Now when writings and evidences are out of the hand of the owners, and laid up in the court,

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<sup>3</sup> FEOFFEE, *n.* feffee'. A person who is infeoffed, that is, invested with a fee or corporeal hereditament. (Webster’s 1828 Dictionary)

where in justice they ought to be kept, they are not ordinarily got thence again but by the help of a lawyer—an Advocate. Thus it is with the children of God. We do often forfeit our interest in eternal life, but the mercy is, the forfeit falls into the hand of God, not of the law nor of Satan, wherefore he taketh away also our evidences, if not all, yet some of them, as he saith—“I have taken away my peace from this people, even loving-kindness and mercies” (Jeremiah 16:5). This he took from David, and he entreats for the restoration of it, saying, “Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit” (1 Chronicles 17:13; Psalm 51:12). And, “Lord, turn us again, cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved” (Psalm 80:3, 7, 19).

Satan now also hath an opportunity to plead against us, and to help forward the affliction, as his servants did of old, when God was but a little angry (Zechariah 1:15); but Jesus Christ our Advocate is ready to appear against him, and to send us from heaven our old evidences again, or to signify to us that they are yet good and authentic, and cannot be gainsaid. “Gabriel,” saith he, “make this man to understand the vision” (Daniel 8:16). And again, saith he to another, “Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls” (Zechariah 2:4). Jerusalem had been in captivity, had lost many evidences of God’s favour and love by reason of her sin, and her enemy stepped in to augment her sin and sorrow; but there was a man [the angel of the Lord] “among the myrtle trees” that were in the bottom that did prevail with God to say, I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; and then commands it to be proclaimed that his “cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad” (Zechariah 1:11-17). Thus, by virtue of our Advocate, we are either made to receive our old evidences for heaven again, or else are made to understand that they yet are good, and stand valid in the court of heaven; nor can they be made ineffectual, but shall abide the test at last, because our Advocate is also concerned in the inheritance of the saints in light. Christians know what it is to lose their evidences for heaven, and to receive them again, or to hear that they hold their title by them; but perhaps they know not how they come at this privilege; therefore the apostle tells them “they have an Advocate”; and that by him, as Advocate, they enjoy all these advantages is manifest, because his Advocate’s office is appointed for our help when we sin—that is, commit sins that are great and heinous—“If any man sin, we have an Advocate.”

By him the justice of God is vindicated, the law answered, the threatenings taken off, the measure of affliction that for sin we undergo determined, our titles to eternal life preserved, and our comfort of them restored, notwithstanding the wit, and rage, and envy of hell. So, then, Christ gave himself for us as a priest, died for us as a sacrifice, but pleadeth justice and righteousness in a way of justice and righteousness; for such is his sacrifice, for our salvation from the death that is due to our foul or high transgressions—as an Advocate. Thus have I given you thus far, an account of the nature, end, and necessity of the Advocateship of Jesus Christ, and should now come to the use and application, only I must first remove an objection or two.