

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John**

Chapter 10- The Test of Truth **1John 2: 18-27**

83. Part 8

WAOY Wednesday 09/12/07; WOSM Wednesday 01/25/23

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1 John**, and today I want to continue to look at what John taught about "The Test of Truth". So, let's turn in our Bibles and let's read **1John 2: 18-27** again together:

18 Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.

19 They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but *they went out*, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.

20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.

21 I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth.

22 Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.

23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.

24 As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.

25 This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life.

26 These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you.

27 As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

Now on the last broadcast, we were going over the three points that John is making in these ten verses.

1. Realizing the Danger
2. The Ability and Power that is given to us so that we may realize the Danger
3. The Way to Fight Against the Danger

And on the last broadcast, we were looking at the first point- Realizing the Danger and I want to continue that first point today. So, in order to understand just what danger John is talking about- let's read again verses 18 & 19 together:

18 Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.

19 They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but *they went out*, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.

Now here in verse 18, the Apostle John is passionately warning the Christian Church about the danger of Divinely inspired Truth being lost; stolen; twisted; changed or altered by these "many antichrists"- who move into the Church to preach and teach deception. And he says that the very fact that many of these people are alive and well and are operating inside the Church- that this fact proves that we are living in the last time.

Then here in verse 19, John says that when confronted about what they are teaching; when what they are teaching is held accountable to Scripture- these people do not repent for teaching false things- but these people prove that they do not belong to Jesus by steadfastly refusing to humbly submit themselves to the authority of God's Word and they abandon Christianity altogether.

John tells us that the fact that they continue to live at odds with Scripture; the fact that they continue to teach contrary to Sound Doctrine; the fact that they leave the Faith proves that they were never born again to begin with. So, one after another these antichrists began to be exposed by Truth and one by one, they left the Faith.

The first group of antichrists that John was talking about were the Judaizers- who taught that in order to be a good Christian- you have to first be a good Jew and keep the Sabbath and continue with Jewish traditions and laws that were designed only to be temporary and which are not moral laws and which were fulfilled through the Life, Ministry, Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. These Judaizers are exposed by what the Apostle Paul wrote in the Book of **Galatians**- which completely dismantles their argument. The Judaizers were confronted and denounced by the Jerusalem Council which is recorded for us in the 15th Chapter of **The Book of the Acts of the Apostles** and were exposed to be the false antichrists for what they were.

The Judaizers were the forerunners of the modern day “Legalists”- those people who teach that Salvation is brought about by what *we* do- that somehow we can earn or be worthy of being justified by a holy God by keeping certain laws; or partaking of certain Church Sacraments or by being baptized; or by taking communion; or by speaking in tongues- that somehow if we do these things- we can *earn* Salvation or be worthy of it.

The issue of the modern day Judaizers is the issue of Righteousness. We all agree that in order to go to Heave- we have to become Righteous. Jesus taught in **Matthew 5:48** that if we plan to go to Heaven- we must be perfect or as Righteous as God Himself is. Jesus said in **Matthew 5:20**:

For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses *that* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

So, these people take this verse and teach that unless our righteousness is better; more complete- unless our righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees- we cannot go to Heaven.

So, what these Judaizers or Legalists do is they take this verse and then they examine what the Pharisees and scribes were doing, and they add things to it- thinking that by doing more than the scribes and Pharisees were doing- then we can earn our Salvation.

For example- If the scribes and Pharisees prayed for one hour a day- then we must need to pray for two hours. If they studied Scripture for 4 hours- then by all means, let’s study it for five hours. If we can

just wear our sleeves longer or grow our hair out longer or stay away from bad things more often- then we can earn enough points with God to be worthy of Heaven.

But that is not what Jesus was meaning when He said this. What Jesus was doing was showing to his disciples that earning Righteousness cannot be done. It is impossible for human beings in and through their own power and abilities to improve themselves to the point that they are righteous enough to go to Heaven.

The reason that this is true is because of the reality of sin. All men sin. All men sin all the time. No man escapes from sin. Not you; not me; not Paul; not John. All men sin and that reality is the great equalizer in all the earth. It brings all men guilty before God regardless of status or financial abilities and proves to us that we need a Savior.

The Law of Moses was given- not as a means to be saved- because the Law cannot save anybody. That is not the purpose of the Law. Not one human being on earth has ever at any time been saved by or through the Law of Moses. Not even Moses was saved through the Law because the only way that anybody can be saved through the Law is for that individual to keep all of the Law perfectly in thought, word, and deed without ever breaking one Law even one time.

Moses couldn't do that; neither could David, or Isaiah, nor Jeremiah, nor Daniel, nor you, nor me. No one has ever kept all the Law perfectly without breaking one commandment even one time- except Jesus Christ.

The purpose of the Law is to act as a mirror to show us that we are lost; that we are sinners; that we fall short and that we need a Savior- who is perfect and who is holy and who did keep all the Law perfectly. When we tell a lie; when we commit lust; when we dishonor our parents; when we harbor hate or build idols in our hearts- we are transgressing the Law and we are guilty of sin.

By trusting in Jesus and in His finished Work by Grace and through Faith alone- without one plea; without deserving it- precisely because we don't deserve it- but coming to God as a broken; lost; undeserving sinner and beating our chest over our grief over our sins and realizing that we are worthy of eternal damnation but asking for mercy- that is how a man is saved.

Not coming to God so that we won't have to go to jail; not coming to Christ so he will heal us; not coming to Christ so that we can get out

of the jam that we are in- but because we realize that we are lost; that because we realize that we do not and cannot ever deserve His Mercy; because we realize that our righteousness is as a filthy rag; because we have been rendered absolutely helpless by the horror of our own filth and wickedness and we are absolutely helpless as to doing anything at all about our sin and falling down before a holy God- we plead for undeserved favor- that is how a man is saved.

And what happens at that point is that the Holy, pure Blood of Jesus Christ washes away our filth and we are forgiven. But it doesn't stop there. If all that we got was forgiven- we still couldn't go to Heaven because remember- in order to go to Heaven- we must be just as righteous as God Himself is.

So at the very moment that our sins are washed away by Jesus- God Himself takes the Righteousness of Jesus Christ- that very same Righteousness that Jesus Himself earned by living a sinless life here on this earth- and by perfectly keeping all of His Father's Commandments- God takes that Righteousness and imputes it or credits it to us – even though we are not worthy of it and God Himself declares us to be as Righteous as Christ is.

So, the Righteousness that allows us to go to Heaven is not ours- it never belongs to us. It is Christ's Righteousness that has been imputed to us by the agency of Faith alone and at that very moment- Christ's Righteousness makes us fit for Heaven.

Now here is where the rubber meets the road. It is at this point that the Judaizers and the Legalists show how wrong they are and how insidious their teachings are. Since the Righteousness that makes us fit for Heaven belongs to Jesus Christ; Since this Righteousness is not ours- and can never be ours- since this Righteousness is an alien Righteousness in the sense that it is not our own Righteousness- but exists outside of us- since that is true- then it is also true that we cannot develop this Righteousness. We can do nothing to develop it; or earn it; or deserve it. We cannot increase it; we cannot add to it by anything that we do.

This Righteousness that was imputed to us by faith alone- without any human works to justify it- is a free gift from a holy and Sovereign God to undeserving sinners. Therefore- any attempt by anyone at any time to try to earn it; to try to deserve it; to try to be worthy of it- is an affront to all that Jesus did.

We come to God totally dependent on His Mercy and Grace to save us or we don't come. We come to God as admitted, unworthy sinners- who are completely unable to save ourselves or to even assist God in any way in our own Salvation- wholly leaning on unmerited favor to be saved- or else we don't come.

The staff of our pride must be destroyed and our fallen sense that we have to do something to save ourselves or at least do something to earn it has to suffer irreparable damage and we come helpless and weak and pitiful- or we cannot enter in at all.

The reason that Legalism is so evil is because it fights this by giving us hope that by doing something; by keeping laws or sacraments that we can at least earn Salvation and that we don't have to come to God for Mercy as guilty sinners- because we have improved our own condition and that teaching in any form or shape is the enemy of the Cross of Jesus Christ- and John says that those who teach this in any form or shape are antichrists.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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