

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 5:18-20**

Chapter 30- What We Know

276 What We Know- Part 2

WAOY Thursday 11/06/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today we are going to continue to look at the summary of all that we know- based upon this great Epistle of **1John**- so let's read **1John 5:18-20** again together:

18 We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him.

19 We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in *the power of the evil one*.

20 And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

Now on the last broadcast- we were looking at the fact that the *reason* why John and Paul and Peter and James and the others wrote the New Testament Books was so that we would not wonder; or guess; or hope- but so that we would *know* what we believe and we would know *why* we believe it. In other words- the *reason* John wrote this Epistle was so that we would understand Divine Truth so that we would not be deceived.

So John summarizes here in these three verses all that he has taught throughout this entire Epistle and he begins each of these three verses with the very same phrase, "**We know**".

So exactly what is it that John says that we know? What are those foundational Truths that John has taught us here over five Chapters of inspired Words that he can now summarize all that he has said in three verses? John says here that we should know:

1. That the person who has genuinely been born of God does not

dwell continually in sin

2. That those who are saved are truly of God
3. That the Son of God has come and has given us knowledge of the one true living God.

So let's look at these one at a time. Let's begin by looking at verse 18 again:

We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him.

Now John's first statement of fact about true genuine Biblical Christianity is that those who are truly born of the Spirit of God do not dwell continually in sin. Now as I told you before- many times it helps us to go back to the original Greek when reading and studying the Bible because that is the language that the New Testament was written in. And when you do that- you quickly discover that the Greek actually reads that "*whoever is born of God does not continue in sin*". So the Greek verb here is in the present tense- so that means that while saved people are not perfectly sinless- they do not dwell continually in sin on an ongoing basis. In other words- sin no longer dominates the life of a genuine believer like it did when they were lost.

So the statement that John is making here is not that the Christian cannot *ever* fall into sin at all- because they can and they do. But it is that while he may periodically fall into sin- a saved person cannot *continue* in that sin indefinitely. The Holy Spirit Who dwells inside the believer will not allow saved people to dwell continually in sin. So what John is saying here is that if the individual is truly born of God- the Power of the New Birth will result in new behavior. And if it does not result in new behavior- then that individual was never truly saved to begin with.

Now earlier, when John had talked of the fact that the one who is born of God does not sin- he explained what he meant by saying that such a person "abides" in God and that "God's Nature 'abides' in him."

So from this we can see that in the first part of verse 18- John is teaching that for the saved person- God has forever broken the tyrannical domination that sin had on him- that is upon every lost soul. And the combination of the new Divine Nature that God has sovereignly

given to the believer and the fact that sin's domination has been forever broken- results in all truly saved people walking with God and no longer dwelling continually in sin.

So here in verse 18- John attributes the assurance of his Salvation to the fact that Jesus sovereignly "keeps" the Christian. And Jesus keep him in a very unique way.

Now read the middle part of verse 18 again with me:

but He who was born of God keeps him...

Now here John says that Jesus Christ- the One Who was born or begotten of the Father keeps all those who are truly saved. So we are to understand from this that we cannot keep ourselves by what we do for ourselves but that God keeps us saved. And in order to get the full meaning of what John is teaching here- please turn with me and read **1Peter 1:5:**

who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

John says that Jesus Christ keeps the believer and Peter says that we are protected by the Power of God. So are we to say then that John is teaching something different than Peter about how a believer is kept? Not at all.

It is true that we have to do certain things after we are saved in order to remain with Jesus. But we must understand, dear friends, that this does not mean that we keep ourselves saved merely by what we do for ourselves. No, the way this works is that we *cooperate* with God in the keeping or the preserving of our souls.

So yes, we are supposed to follow after Jesus and obey Jesus and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. But we must understand that the only reason we have both the "will" and the "power" to do that- is because of the sovereign Work that God through Christ has already done in us.

So yes, we pray and we read our Bibles and we fellowship with other believers and we resist temptation. Yes, we do all those things. But *why* do we do those things? *Why* do we put forth all that effort so that we will be kept? Because God the Holy Spirit dwells in us and gives us the strength AND because God has Sovereignly changed our nature so

that we *want* what God wants; we desire what God desires; and we love what God loves.

So yes, we work hard to keep ourselves- but it is only because of what God has already done in us and what God has already given us and so- in reality- God is the One Who keep us.

And this is the very same mystery that works in us to live the Christian life. Do we live the Christian life or does God live the Christian life through us? And the answer to both of those questions is, "Yes". Yes, we live the Christian life and we want to live the Christian life and we choose to live the Christian life based on our being saved. But we also know that the only reason why we want to serve God in the first place; and the only reason why we love Jesus; and the only reason why we are willing to walk with God is because of the sovereign Work that God has done and continually does in us. So both our desire to love and serve God and our ability to love and serve God- are both gifts from God to all those who are truly saved.

Now this teaching is absolutely true and absolutely Scriptural. But this teaching is also hated and despised because it insults the pride and arrogance of fallen Man.

You see, the Bible teaches that nobody loves God as a natural outflow of their own human desires. Nobody desires to love and serve Jesus based upon human will power or human energy. The natural inclination of all lost people is to run and hide from God. We lost our love for God in the Fall of Adam and all human beings born after the Fall are born without any love for God at all.

Therefore- our love for God is a gift from God. And so the only reason why you love God and the guy sitting next to you does not love God- has got nothing to do with anything good or noble in you. God has graced you with the gift of His Love and God has sovereignly changed your nature and taken out of you a stony heart and given you a heart of flesh; and God has put inside you the desire to love and serve Jesus. And that is the only reason why you love Jesus; that is the only reason why you obey Jesus; and that is the only reason why you are saved.

And because that is true- no human can take any credit for the fact that he loves Jesus- because there was a day when you did *not* love Him. And the only reason why you love Jesus now- is because God has graciously visited you and did something for you that you did not deserve.

So while it is true that the Christian is to keep himself- it is also equally true that the Christian must take heed that his confidence does not rest on that effort to keep himself but that he fully trusts that it is God Who keeps him.

So instead of taking confidence in our own ability to do anything- including keeping ourselves in the love of God- we need to place all of our confidence on the efforts of the Lord Jesus Christ Who labored on our behalf.

Okay Brother Blair- but why do we need Jesus to keep us in the first place? The answer is seen in John's mention of the one who would do us harm. Read with me the last part of verse 18:

... and the evil one does not touch him.

Now why can't the evil one touch us? Because we are strong? Because we are powerful? Because we are full of faith? No, no, and no. Satan's inability to touch us has got nothing to do with us or anything we do precisely because satan is not afraid of us. Satan has been destroying men for 6,000 years. He knows us inside and out and he fears no man and he fears no human weapon nor any human power.

The only reason that satan can't touch us is because it is God Who keep us. If God didn't keep us- the strongest one among us would fall in ten seconds. So please don't ever get so puffed up in your own importance, dear friends, that you begin to think that satan could not rip you to shreds if all you had was your own wisdom and your own power and your own ability.

Satan can't touch the soul of saved people- because God keeps us. God chose us in Him before the foundation of the world; God called us; God drew us; God washed us; God forgave us; God regenerated us; God saved us; God empowers us; and God keep us. And finally one glad day- God will glorify us in Heaven.

100% of the saved are children of God and 100% of those who are not saved are children of the devil. And so satan doesn't need to get them because he already has them. They are already slaves to sin by virtue of being lost. They are already bond-slaves of satan himself and they cannot cease from sin. And that is what it means to be lost.

I suppose one of the biggest lies that satan ever told anyone is that we are the Masters of our own Destiny; that we are in charge; that we

call the shots; that we are in control; that we are omnipotent and that our free will is so powerful and so Sovereign that God Himself can't do something unless we allow Him to. What a joke!

Human beings have never been in charge. We have never been Masters over anything. There is not a single soul who was born after the Fall whose will has ever been "free". Look what Jesus said about this in **John 8:31-34**:

31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, **"If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;**

32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

33 They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, 'You will become free'?"

34 Jesus answered them, **"Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.**

Now many times teachers in the modern Church water this word down to say employee or servant- but Jesus said here that when we sin- we are a slave to sin. And that makes sin to be our master.

And lost people are dominated by sin while saved people have been set free from that domination of sin. So even though saved people periodically commit sin- they do not *dwell* in sin like lost people do.

So the power that satan had over us when we were children of the devil has been forcefully removed by the Power of God when we are saved and that is the only reason why we ever got saved to begin with and so that same God Who gloriously saved us keeps us by the same Power that saved us to begin with and that is why the devil cannot touch us anymore.

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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