

So That You May Know

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

Chapter 30- What We Know 282 What We Know- Part 8

WAOY Wednesday 11/19/08

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 we are in the middle of studying how that in these three verses- the Apostle John is giving us a summary of all that he has taught in this great Epistle. And he begins each of these three verses with the phrase, "We know".

In these three verses- John wants us to know three things:

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 born of God
3. That the Son of God has come and has given us knowledge of the one true living God.

And on the last broadcast- we were looking at the second Truth that John says that we should know, and I want to continue that today- so let's read **1John 5:19** again together:

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

Now John says here that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. And that means that the entire world system is not of God and is not subject to the Law of God. So as believers- we are to view the world with that basic Truth in mind. We are to live in this world and function in this world; and we are to make our living in this world. But at the same time- we are to struggle very hard to never be a part of this world- because this world lies in the power of the evil one.

So for anyone to be a part of this world; for him to adopt the ways of this world; and for anyone to look at life through the lens of the world and not through the lens of Scripture- is exactly what it means to be “worldly” or to engage in the sin of “worldliness”.

By feeding constantly on secular news programs and Hollywood movies and Television programs and even newspapers and magazines- our view of life and of the way we live is affected and molded and shaped by the logic of a fallen and sinful world. But what happens when we constantly feed on the values of the world- is that we then begin to agree with what the world agrees with and we then begin to believe and talk and act like those who do not know Jesus Christ.

Now I am not suggesting for a minute that we completely withdraw from society and become monks in a monastery. But what I *am* suggesting is that God’s people should feed on a steady and ongoing diet of God’s Word so that our view of life is shaped by inspired infallible Words- and not worldliness.

We must realize, dear friends that every single television program; every movie; every book; every song are actually sermons that are designed on purpose to teach you something. The producers of those media edit what is said and they adjust the camera angle and the background music and the expression on the faces of the people in order to convey a particular message. In other words- they are preaching a sermon to you.

And the sermon that they are preaching to you is designed on purpose to persuade you about a particular issue or to encourage you to modify your behavior and to help bring you into alignment with their view of life. But if their view of life is pagan- then you are being preached to- so that paganism will become more attractive to you and

that sin will become more appealing so that Biblical Christianity will appear less and less valuable in your sight.

And one of the biggest ways that they do this is with humor. As long as they can get you to laugh- your resistance to sin and wickedness will not be so high and you will drop your guard and you will sit there and laugh at something that the Bible says is evil.

Now for several decades now- I have preached and taught about the wickedness of television. Television- along with the internet- more than any other invention of Man- has robbed God's people of their time and ambition to pray and study God's Word. My generation was raised to watch television while the younger generation is now glued to their computer screens.

And the net result is not that most people are becoming more educated- but that sin has become less offensive and is promoted as being noble and good. And so many hours every day that used to be spent in prayer and Bible Study and in various acts of mercy throughout our communities are now wasted as we are literally entertaining ourselves to death.

People tell me all the time that they are just too busy to pray and study their Bibles and yet they sit for hours watching television or surfing through the internet. And yet people wonder why they can't understand the Bible.

For anyone today to even suggest that it would be far more productive and edifying for a supposed believer to read through a Puritan Book that teaches about the sin of worldliness rather than watch a movie or a football game would almost be considered to be barbaric. But I really believe that this is why we don't consider worldliness to even be a sin anymore.

Many people who say they are saved- don't even go to Church on Sunday anymore and they justify this terrible sin by saying that having a cookout with family or going boating or camping on the Lord's Day is just as spiritual and just as godly as being in the Presence of God. And the fact that they can make such a ridiculous argument like this with a straight face just proves the point that the sin of worldliness is so prevalent today that we don't even know what it is anymore.

And I don't think it is a coincidence that Sunday has become the biggest sports day of the week in this country. But I really believe in my heart that sports has become one of the most important gods to

American men and they engage in this idolatry on the Lord's Day without any conviction or remorse and then rationalize it by saying a prayer before they begin as though that makes it all better.

I know Churches in our area that close down their evening services on a particular Sunday night in February so that the men can gather together and eat chili and watch the Super Bowl together. And they call this "fellowship". But it isn't godly at all- it is worldliness- and John says the whole world lies in the power of the evil one and if anyone loves the world- the love of the Father is not in them.

Now I am well aware that preaching like this will not get me invited to very many Christmas parties but we must realize that John was writing about not loving the world to those who were saved and who had experienced the miracle of the new birth. And due to the fact that we are living in the last days and that we are living in the time of the great falling away and that we are living in the time when people are lovers of themselves more than lovers of God that even to us- these words are very challenging:

Do not love the world- do not set your heart on the world or anything in it.

So, what does that mean for you? Well, it means that God should have no effective rivals for your affections. It means that God alone should be chief. It means that nothing should compete with our love for God. And that brings up some very important questions:

What are those rivals for your affections? What things in your life are in competition for your love for God? Can you find them? Can you name them?

Christian brothers and sisters, if you look honestly, you *will* find things in your life that compete with your love for God. And I suggest to you that if it is *hard* for you to find those things that are actively competing with God for your affections- it isn't because they are not there- but I suggest that it is hard for you to find those things that are in competition for your love because those things have already deceived you and blinded you so that you cannot see them easily. Beloved, when we look inwardly, we must remember the counsel of our Lord when He spoke to those lukewarm souls in **The Revelation 3:17**:

Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,

But if God would be merciful to us so that He may open our eyes and we can see and know and identify those things which *are* rivals in our lives for our affections which rightly belong only to God- we would be so blessed. So I encourage all of us to earnestly pray that God will open our hearts and minds and eyes so that we may see and fix our eyes on that competition- that we may learn the name of that rival- not just now- not just this morning- but all during the week- pray that God would grace you with eyes to see.

Because we must understand, brothers and sisters, that one of sins main attributes is that it is sly; it is stealthy; it is hard to see- so that the one who sins does not see it as sin. So for a Christian to live his life never asking to see his own sin is to arrogantly walk through this life deceived and wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.

I mean can any of us say that sin has ever walked up to us and presented his card to identify himself as sin, saying, "*I am sin, and I have come to get you to disobey God and to live in a terribly self-destructing way*"?

Satan didn't approach Eve like that in the Garden and he has continued to be more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God has made. No, if we would be honest with ourselves, we usually see our sin only through our mistakes and our agonies and our solitude and our pain and in our sufferings.

So for believers to pray and ask God to open our eyes and to reveal our sin to us- *before* we fall into it- before our sorrow- that would be a great blessing and a great help in our walk with God. Now take heed as you pray this way because God may well answer that prayer- so make your mind up ahead of time that whatever God Sovereignly brings into your life to use to open your eyes- that you see that thing as a blessing and not a curse.

Jesus said that we should *know* ourselves and not be deceived *about* ourselves- so look at where your time goes; look at what you are passionate about; what you spend time involved in; what you have given yourself to; and where your money goes. Listen to the words that

come out of your own mouth. We need to pay attention to all of these ongoing reports about the contents and condition of our own hearts.

And brothers and sisters, we should care that we are presenting a corporate witness that isn't worldly- that has stopped loving the world and John tells us why this should be the case; why we all should stop loving the world- he tells us here that we should stop loving the world because the love of the world is mutually exclusive with the Love of the Father- and that these two loves are in competition with each other for our affections and our time and our loyalty and our devotion.

You see, you and I, as believers, are not to brush off the Words of God, but we are to squarely face what God has said and be confronted with what God has said and to bow before what God has said.

John tells us here that a *persistence* of this kind of "world love" proves beyond any doubt that God is not in our hearts- because it is impossible for two loves to co-exist in the same vessel at the same time- which was exactly what John had heard himself from Jesus.

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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