

# So That You May Know

## An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 4:7&8**

### Chapter 17- Being Born of God

#### 175. Being Born of God- Part 3

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WAOY Thursday 03/27/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today I want to continue to look at what John taught about "Being Born of God". So let's read **1John 4:7&8** again together:

**7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.**

**8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.**

Now on the last broadcast- we were going over the kind of selfless, giving and not expecting anything in return love that John was talking about here and today I want to look closely at verse 8- so let's read that verse again together:

**The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.**

Now here in verse 8 in John's classic style- the Apostle is repeating what he has just said in verse 7 but in the negative. In verse 7- John said that we should love one another and the reason that we should love one another is because Christianity is based on love and it is sustained by love and so those who are Christians- love.

And here in verse 8- John is saying the same thing that he said in verse 7- but he is saying it by using the negative and John says that those who do *not* love each other and who do not love God with this selfless godly kind of love is proving beyond any doubt that he is not saved; that he does not belong to God; that he has not experienced the wonder and miracle of the new birth.

John says that God is love and since God is love- those who are of God; those who belong to God; those who have been born of God are like God in that they too will exhibit this godly kind of love.

Now there is a tendency in our day to redefine just what this love actually means and what it entails- so it is important that we stay focused on what John is talking about here- rather than on what we have redefined what John was saying here.

I suppose that one of the greatest contrasts to the Christian love that John is talking about here is manifested by the demonic religion of Islam. Islam is a religion of hate. Islam has a very clear and very public record for over 1300 years of using threats and violence as the main method by which new converts are made.

In the Islamic theological system- they have a serious glitch that even their own theologians acknowledge cannot be bridged. You see, in Islam- their false god- allah is said to be absolute. And the Koran also teaches very clearly that allah is just and righteous. Then the Koran goes on to say that this just and righteous god of theirs is also merciful. And herein lies their problem. If their god is just and righteous- then he has to judge all unrighteousness. If allah is righteous- then he cannot tolerate sin and he must judge all sin and he cannot be lenient toward any sin- because if this god will ever be lenient toward sin in any way- then he ceases to be just and he ceases to be righteous.

So allah by definition cannot be both righteous and merciful toward the same people at the same time or else he is contradicting himself and anyone who contradicts himself by his own actions cannot be god.

Islamic theologians try to bypass this theological dilemma by appealing to allah's sovereignty by saying that since allah is sovereign he can do whatever he wants to- but again doing anything he wants to does not prove sovereignty but living and operating without any contradiction proves sovereignty.

In Christianity- the one true God of the Bible is described as being Sovereign. But that Sovereignty does not mean that God can do whatever He wants to. For example- **Titus 1:2** says that God *cannot* lie. The word Greek word that was translated here as "cannot" means: *does not have the ability or power*. So Paul is telling Titus here that Almighty God does not have the ability or the power to lie. Well doesn't that mean by default then that God is not Sovereign? Not at all. You see God cannot lie because God is not able to operate or function in any way that is contrary to His Own holy and righteous Nature and Character. God is Sovereign. He is Omnipotent- but because God is

God- there are *several* things that God *cannot* do precisely because He *is* Omnipotent. As we have already seen, God cannot lie. God also cannot die. God also cannot be God and *not* be God at the same time. God can never in any way cease to be God because God cannot act in any way that is in violation of His Own perfect Nature.

What Omnipotence *does* mean is that God holds all power and all authority over His Own Creation. No part of Creation stands outside of God's Sovereign control. Omnipotence means that nothing in God's Creation can restrict God's Power. Job had it right when he said in **Job 42:2:**

**I know that You can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted.**

And yet at the very same time that it is true that nothing in all of Creation can restrict Gods' Power- God's Power is absolutely restricted by What and Who He is.

Therefore- sin is *impossible* for the one true living true God because no one can sin without *willing* to sin. And God *cannot* commit sin because He never *wills* it. Read with me **James 1:13:**

**Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.**

Now unlike the false god of Islam- the one true living God being Sovereign is a great source of comfort to the Christian. We can rest in the powerful assurance that God is in control because He is Omnipotent over all of his Creation. We also know that the very same power that God displayed in creating the Universe is at His disposal to assure our Salvation. He showed that great Omnipotent Power in the exodus of His people from Egypt's bondage and He also showed it when He raised Christ from the dead. The Bible is clear- no part of God's Creation can in any way frustrate God's Plans for the future. There are no maverick molecules running loose in the universe that could possibly disrupt His Plans. Though powers and forces of this evil world threaten to undo- we as born again believers have absolutely no fear because we can rest confident in the knowledge that nothing can withstand the Power of our Sovereign, Omnipotent God- He is the One Who is Almighty!

But the faithful muslim has a very serious dilemma about their god being sovereign and this problem surfaces when we begin to add another characteristic of God to the mix. You see, not only is God Sovereign- but God is also Holy. And the concept of God's holiness radically changes everything. The word, "holy" means two things. First of all- God being holy means that God is unlike anything and everything that He has made. God is set apart and different from everything in His Creation. God is higher and more beautiful and more powerful and wiser and more important than everything else that He made. And it is this "set apartness" or this holiness that makes God worthy and deserving of our worship.

The second meaning of God's holiness is that God is righteous and pure. God always and in all ways does what is right. God always acts in a righteous manner because he is holy.

Because God is holy- He is also great and He is good. There is no evil mixed in with His goodness. It is this Righteousness and Holiness and Omnipotence of God that prevents the one true living God from acting arbitrarily or haphazardly. God is perfectly measured in His actions toward mankind. And both His blessing and His judgments are always in perfect accord with His Own good pleasure toward His people.

Now here is the final piece of the puzzle that shows the great contrast between the false god allah and the one true living God and it is surprisingly a very simple issue. You see, along with being Omnipotent and Sovereign and Holy- the God of the Bible is also Merciful- John says here that God is love.

Now the Koran says that allah is also merciful and loving- but here is why they have such a dilemma about this. As a righteous god- allah must judge all sin. If one sin of one person escapes allah's damnation- then allah would cease to be righteous and he would cease to be just. If allah is not righteous and just- then he is not Omnipotent and if allah is not Omnipotent- then allah cannot be god.

And the Islamic dilemma is made even worse when you bring up the issue that if allah does *not* show mercy- then no one could ever go to heaven- because all men are sinners. So in Islam you have a false god who is described as being both righteous and merciful and yet he is unable to act on his mercy without being in violation of his righteousness and he is unable to act on his righteousness without

violating his mercy. So the theological issue that Islam cannot answer is how can allah be both merciful and righteous at the same time to the same person without contradicting either his righteousness or his mercy?

But you say, "Don't we have the very same problem in Christianity?" So, we don't and here's why. Read with me **Exodus 34:6&7:**

**6 Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth;**

**7 who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave *the guilty* unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations."**

Now did you notice there in verse 7 that God Himself very clearly states that He will by no means clear the guilty? Well just how does God forgive us; how does God show mercy toward us if He will not clear the guilty? And if God does clear the guilty- how does this allow for God to remain just and holy? It appears that we have the very same dilemma that Islam has. And if you stop right there- you would be right. But the answer to this seemingly unanswerable dilemma lies in the glory of the Person of Jesus Christ- Who is God's Love personified.

You see dear friends- the genius of Christianity is that because Jesus was both God and Man and because Jesus took on Himself the sins of us all; and because God poured out all of His just and righteous fury and all wrath against our sins on Jesus- that allows for God to remain just because He did indeed fully judge all of our sins and it also at the same time allows for God to be merciful in allowing us to go to Heaven. You see, God didn't simply pardon our sins- no, all of our sins were completely paid for- they just weren't paid for by us. Jesus took our place and God's wrath against our sins was poured out without measure on Jesus which allow for God to remain just and holy so that now Gods' Mercy could be poured out without measure on us.

Without Jesus- God could only be either merciful to us or righteous- but He could not be both merciful and righteous toward us. Unless all sin is judged- God is not righteous but unless God shows mercy- no one can go to Heaven. Islam does not provide for a sinless,

spotless Lamb to take on Himself the sins of the world. Islam does not provide for the just and righteous wrath of God to be poured out without measure on the Scapegoat. Islam does not provide any way for sinful man to escape the judgment of their god without violating either his righteousness or his mercy. The result of this horrible dilemma is that college educated and otherwise intelligent people become so utterly desperate to gain allah's mercy- that they are willing to blow themselves up.

Only Christianity provides the answer to this eternal dilemma. Because only Christianity speaks of God becoming Man and only Christianity speaks about this God Man taking upon Himself the sins of the world and only Christianity speaks about the just and righteous fury and anger of the one true living God being poured out without measure on this sinless Lamb and now because all of God wrath against all of our sins has been paid for- God is free to pour out His Mercy and Love upon us who are unworthy of it all. This is what John meant when he said that God is love.

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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