

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 4:9&10**

Chapter 18- The Manifest Love of God

180- The Manifest Love of God- Part 4

WAOY Friday-Monday 04/11-14/08

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 "The Manifest Love of God". So let's open our Bibles and read **1John 4:9&10** again together:

9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

Now on the last broadcast- we saw how that the phrase- "only begotten Son" given here in our English translation is best understood as Jesus being "God's One and Only Son". And on today's broadcast- I want to look closely at what John taught us in verse 10- so let's read that verse again together:

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

In this verse- John defines for us what Love really is and I want you to notice here that as John defines what love really is in this verse- his definition does not include us or any action on our part- in fact John's definition of love completely excludes us and it completely excludes any action on our part.

John says- "You want to know what real and genuine and true love is? I'll show you love- here is love. Love has absolutely nothing to do with how we feel towards God or what we do for God or what we do in God's Name. John says, "Here is love"

... not that we loved God, but that He loved us ...

Love is defined correctly and fully by what God did for us- and not by *anything* that we do for God. You see, dear friends, we say that we love God and many times we say that we love God with all our hearts- but is that statement true? We may indeed love God- but if we were to love God with all our hearts- we would not sin and since we still do sin- we cannot say that we love God with all our hearts.

We may indeed love God. We may even love God a lot. We may even sacrifice some things because of our love for God- but we must acknowledge brothers and sisters that *our* love towards God is something that is changing every day. In some people- their love for God is *diminishing* and growing cold- Jesus said that this was caused by iniquity abounding- while the love for God in other people is actually growing- and Jesus said this was because those people pray and study God's Word.

But whether our love for God is growing cold or growing stronger- our love for God is changing and it is changing every day. For example- my own love for God has grown since I was saved in 1971. I love Jesus now more than I loved Him then- primarily because I understand Him much better now after having read and studied God's Word for nearly forty years.

Now I am not more saved than I was the very instant Christ washed my sins away- no, at that very instant- I was made fit for Heaven- but my love for God has grown dramatically. As a result- my *walk* with God is much better now than it was then and my *worship of* God is more intense and brings me much more satisfaction and the result of my love *toward* God and my *worship of* God growing is that my *obedience* to God is much better and the result of my obedience becoming better is that Christ is now much more glorified in me than before and the result of Christ being glorified in me is that my joy is much more full now than when I was first saved.

And I pray that as I continue to grow in my comprehension of God through the understanding of His precious Word- that my love for God will continue to grow; my worship of God will continue to grow; that my obedience to God will continue to grow so that Christ will be more and more glorified in me and through me so that my joy will be full.

But God's Love toward me and God's Love toward us does not behave like that. You see, even though our love for God grows and changes- hopefully every day- God's love toward us does not grow

because unlike us- God loved us completely from the beginning and His Love for us does not grow- it never waivers; it never diminishes; it never has a day off; it never grows cold- God's Love toward us does not change at all- it is perfect and complete and absolute and eternal from the very beginning.

You see, dear friends, God loved us- the Bible says that He “**set His Love upon us**”- from the very beginning- even before we were born- even before he formed Creation. Now that is love! And John tells us here that Love is manifested in that God loved us- not that we loved God.

And this is true- because only God's Love is steadfast- it never changes or alters and it is true because God's Love toward us is not based upon anything that we do or do not do- but God's Love is based upon that which brings to Him the most Glory.

And whereas our love for God *does* change and it *does* grow because our understanding and comprehension of God changes- Here is something to ponder. Way before God ever made the world; way before God made either Heaven or Earth- and way before any of us were born or did anything good or evil- the Bible says that He chose people to set His Love upon them so that He might give them something that they do not deserve; something that they didn't work to receive; something that they are not entitled to and something that they could never be worthy of. Yes the Bible says that God determined to set His Love upon some people way before the foundation of the world in order to give them the gift of Salvation. Let's read **Ephesians 1:3-6**:

- 3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,**
4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love
5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,
6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

Now this passage brings up a very unpopular subject that many people do not want to deal with. This unpopular subject is Predestination and the concept of Sovereign Election. And contrary to popular opinion- Predestination is the best and the fullest way for us to

discuss the great Love of God. Yet in spite of God Sovereignly choosing people before they were born being the best illustration of God's Love- of all the subjects that are contained in God's inspired Scriptures- this one- Predestination or Sovereign Election is the most troubling and disturbing and one about which there is more misinformation and misunderstanding about than any other subject in the Bible.

I believe that I am safe to say that in many areas of the modern Church- Predestination is actually hated and despised and in some corners- Predestination or Sovereign Election is actually said to be of the devil and that it is evil.

I hear people say all the time, "*Well I don't believe in Predestination*" as though what we do or not believe or what we like or do not like has any bearing at all upon God or His Holy Word.

I teach and preach and discuss Predestination, brothers and sisters, for only one reason. It is not because I particularly enjoy it or that it necessarily appeals to me or that I am attracted to it. That is not the case at all. In many ways- the concept of Predestination- as the Bible clearly teaches it- profoundly disturbs me and has shaken me to the very core of my being.

"Well, Brother Blair, if Predestination disturbs you so much- then why in the world do you teach it?" I teach and preach Predestination dear friends, because God saw fit to put it in His Word and I cannot escape it. It is what God has said and since I am not the one who is in charge of what goes into God's Word or what stays out- I really don't have much wiggle room here.

The fact is that God talked at great length about Predestination from cover to cover in the inspired, infallible, inerrant Word- so therefore we should too. And how much it may or may not disturb us or trouble us or how much the Biblical Doctrine of Predestination is at odds with what we have been taught all our lives should not be of any concern to us at all.

We must be careful, dear friends, that we do not cling to the soft and easy parts of the Bible at the expense of the hard and difficult parts. All of the Bible is true and all of the Bible is God's Word and we are commanded to love and believe and teach and preach and obey and defend *all* the Bible with equal passion and to take heed to ourselves that we are not ashamed of what God has clearly said.

I know people who avoid Predestination because they think that it makes God look bad or unfair or mean. But we must remember that what is in the Bible is Gods' Revelation to Man that He Himself gave to us. So if it is in the Bible- then God wanted us to know about it and we don't need to worry about trying to make God measure up to any of our fleshly, carnal, and human qualities that we deem to be important.

God is not interested, dear friends, in meeting up to our expectations- No, God is interested that we meet up with His expectations. Biblical Predestination taught and understood correctly makes God look just like He wants to look- like He is Sovereign; like He is Almighty; like He is in total and complete charge; like He is merciful and gracious to those who do not deserve it; and like He is Love.

If God loves us because that is what He chose to do then His love to us is not based upon anything that we do or don't do and therefore it is eternal and never changes. But if God only loves us based upon what we do- then God's Love has to fluctuate because we fluctuate and therefore God's Love would not be eternal or steadfast and it would change all the time.

That doesn't mean that God loves everything that do. He doesn't. The Bible says that God hates sin, and the Bible says that God is angry with sinners all day long and God will judge all sin and all who are not saved before they die will suffer Gods' Vengeance and Fury against sin throughout all eternity.

But we must admit, dear friends, that even *after* we are saved- God is not pleased with a lot of what we do- but since His Love toward his elect is not based upon what we do- then God's Love will expose our sin to us; it will convict us of that sin; and God's Love will draw us out of what we do that is wrong and bring us into what is right. Read with me another passage found in **1Peter 1:2:**

according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.

Now what is commonly thought is that the word, "foreknowledge" used here means that God "knew" something beforehand. In other words, most people assume that since the word, "fore" means before and since the word, "knowledge" means "to know"- that therefore the word,

“foreknowledge” means that God knew something ahead of time and that this shows us the Characteristic of God called Omniscience.

And that is great because God is Omniscient but the problem with that logic is that the word, “foreknowledge” doesn’t mean “to know before”- it means “to love before”.

Foreknowledge is the act of God whereby God sets His Love upon an individual for no other reason other than it pleases God to do so. And foreknowledge is when God sets His Love upon that person regardless of and many times in spite of what that individual does or does not do. And God didn’t do this once or twice- but He did it over and over again all throughout the Bible.

So in all those Old Testament Scriptures which tells about God “setting His Love upon Israel” is the very same root word from which we get the word, “foreknowledge” and it is also the very same root word, from where we get the word, “Predestinate”. So Predestination and foreknowledge are simply two other ways in which we describe the great act of Love that John describe for us here- not that we loved God but that God loved us.

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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