

# So That You May Know

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

### Chapter 18- The Manifest Love of God

#### 181- The Manifest Love of God- Part 5

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WAOY Tuesday 04/29/08

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.**

So we see in verse 10 that John says that Love; true Love; genuine Love is defined by the fact that God loved us- and not that we loved God. And the way that the Apostle John phrases this here illustrates a very important aspect about God and about the things of God. You see, dear friends, over the last 100 years or so- Christianity has become increasingly more and more about Man and less and less about God- and that effort is a very tragic mistake.

Christianity is about God. Christianity is about the full expression of God in and by and through Jesus Christ- Who was God in human form. Christianity is about the Salvation of undeserving and wicked sinners by Grace through Faith in Christ alone absent any human works. Christianity is about God's Love being manifested in and by and through the death, burial and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ to save unworthy sinners from the just wrath of God.

Christianity celebrates God; it exalts Jesus Christ; it relishes in the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christianity focuses all attention and all adoration and all worship and all singing and all praise and all preaching and all study on the Person of Jesus Christ as being King of kings and Lord of Lords. Christianity is about Jesus

being Master and Lord and King and Elder Brother and Raboni and Savior and the Head of the Church and the Owner of our purchased souls and the Author and Finisher of our Faith and the Alpha and Omega and the First and the Last and the Beginning and the End and the Way and the Truth and the Life and the Lion and the Lamb and the Lilly of our valley and the Bright and Morning Star and the beautiful Rose of Sharon and the fairest of Ten Thousand of our souls.

Christianity teaches that every single human being born of woman is born in sin and is shapen in iniquity and is a vile sinner before God and is lost and undone and without God and without any hope at all to save himself or to affect his own Salvation or to improve his own condition. Christianity teaches that Salvation is in the name and b the Power and through the Person of Jesus Christ alone- that Jesus is the sole method; the only way; the single vehicle by which anyone from any nation; living under any culture; and born in any generation can enter into Heaven.

All who ever came before Jesus are thieves and robbers and anyone trying to climb up into Heaven by some other or by any other method will find ruin for his soul.

Christianity teaches that the New Covenant is a far superior revelation than the Old Covenant and that Jesus is a far superior Sacrifice; a far superior High Priest; making far superior Promises than anything found under the First Covenant.

So Christianity is all about God; it is all about Jesus; and it is all about the Holy Spirit- and it is not about Man. It is about what God did for us- not what we do for God; it is about what Jesus said and what Jesus did and Who Jesus is- not what we say or what we do or who we are. And Christianity is about God loving us- not that we love God. It is about God loving us enough to choose us before the foundation of the world. It is about God loving us enough to override our rebellion; loving us enough to come down inside us and change our nature and alter our will and to supersede our desires so that we- who one time hated God- would love God; we- who one time rebelled against God- would faithfully serve Him; that we- who one time rejected God would follow God and obey God and serve God.

Christianity is not about building up Man- it is about exalting Jesus. Christianity is not about us becoming fat and wealthy and safe and secure and prosperous- it is about us becoming loving and joyful

and peaceful and longsuffering and good and full of faith and meek and able to dominate and subjugate and control and rule over the fallen nature of self that lies inside of us.

In Christianity Jesus increases and man decreases. In Christianity Jesus is exalted and Man is abased. In Christianity the pride and arrogance and self-centeredness of Man is insulted and wounded and hurt and attacked and brought down and exposed and humiliated and harmed and destroyed.

Christianity is not about releasing some inner giant that we have trapped inside of us that yearns to be free- no, Christianity is all about bringing that inner man under complete and total subjection to the preeminence and the honor and the majesty and the glory of the risen Christ. Christianity is not about us coming to Jesus so that we can be all that we can be- it is about us coming to Jesus so that we may die- die to ourselves; die to our lusts; die to our own self-righteousness; our own self-interests; our own self esteem; our own self-fulfillment and that we live solely and totally for the Glory of God.

Christianity is all about miraculously and supernaturally altering the very DNA of the human nature so totally and so completely that we love what we onetime hated and we hate what we onetime loved. Christianity is all about God loving us so much that we now love our friends and we love our brothers and sisters and we love our enemies and we love those who want to harm us and we hate sin and we hate filth and we hate wickedness and injustice and lies and false teaching and heresy and that we hate even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Christianity is not about us having the power to be great and important people or the power to do great and important things. No, Christianity is about us having the power to do very simple things that the world disdains and rejects and to do them with passion and to do them faithfully. It is the power to forgive those who wrong us; the power to do good to them who spitefully use us and persecute us; the power to pray for our enemies; the power to be kind; the power to be gentle; the power to turn the other cheek; the power to give; the power to offer; and the power to live in radical faith on behalf of the cause of Jesus Christ and for His Glory alone.

Christianity is all about suffering the loss of all things in this life with joy- precisely because we know that we have in Heaven a far better and a more enduring substance than anything that we could ever have

down here. Christianity is not about us being safe and secure and to be able to retire in comfort and peace and to be able to idle our lives away playing shuffle board and collecting sea shells- but it is about expending our lives and being inconvenienced and of risking it all and laying it all down and maybe even losing it all in pursuit of a city whose Builder and Maker is God.

Christianity is about rejoicing in manifold temptations; glorifying in infirmities; praising in trouble; singing in prison; worshipping in hospital emergency rooms and of not grieving as those who have no hope in funeral homes. It is about living by faith and not by sight; it is about believing radically for others and to suffer without complaint; and to be persecuted without reviling. Christianity is about enduring hardship as a god soldier; and suffering public ridicule and humiliation and it is about going through affliction and tumults and unfair treatment and sorrow with joy.

When the world sees a real bondsman of Jesus Christ- they stand in awe. The rich are made poor; great speakers grow silent; strong men are weakened; and proud men are humbled. Christianity is the greatest; the most glorious; the most beautiful; the most powerful and the sweetest force that the world has ever seen; it breaks hearts and then mends them back again; it wounds and then heals; it tears up and then puts back together; it fights against and then befriends.

In Jesus, the poor are saved and uplifted; the weak are made strong; the humble are lifted up; the blind receive their sight and the lost are found. In Jesus, those who mourn are comforted; those who weep laugh; those who are arrogant and abased and those who are meek inherit the earth. That's because Jesus is sweeter than honey; He is more important than any human being; He is more valuable than gold or silver or diamonds; and His loving kindness is better than life itself.

The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is not led by professional heirlings who care nothing about the sheep. It is not led by cruel taskmasters who use the sheep to advance their own agendas. Godly ministry is not built up on the backs of God's people- godly ministry is the people.

The Christian Church is not led by men who are trained to do man's work. It is led by men who are schooled to do Christ's Work. They are not men who are highly esteemed. No, for the most part throughout history the men who led God's Church were rejected and

ridiculed and laughed at and persecuted and chased down and stoned to death. They were sawn asunder; they were fed to wild beasts; they were hunted down like animals; they were hated and despised and cast into prison. The glorious Church of the Risen Lord is led by sinners who have been glorious saved by Grace through Faith in the finished Work of Christ alone; Men whom God has called from their mother's womb and chosen by God to carry God's Word and God's Truth and God's Message and God's Glory and God's Love to the people- and they are the most unlikely group the world has ever seen.

The men who lead the Christian Church are not self-appointed, unaccountable opportunistic men of pomp and prestige and advantage- no- they are unimportant, unnamed; unrecognizable earthen vessels who bear the marks of the Lord Jesus on their backs. They are simple clay pots; privy pots- who have no credibility in and of themselves; who do not speak their own opinions or their own words; men who do not become wealthy off the backs of God's people; men who feed the sheep but who do not fleece the sheep. Men who handle the Word of God with great care and who don't make merchandise of God's precious Word.

The men who lead the Church of Jesus are men of godly integrity; saved, sanctified; and filled men; sold out men; bought and paid for men; purchased and owned slaves of Jesus who labor day in and day out- most of the time without recognition and without thanks; men who do God's bidding; men who prophesy God's Word; men who teach God's Truth and men who actually live what they teach.

The Christian Church is led by men who fear God; men who are of a contrite spirit; men who are broken, shattered remnants; men who weep over the sins of God's people; men who cry out against evil; men who confront good people with their sins; men who call men to repentance and men who tremble at God's Word.

These men don't want to be seen or heard- no, they want others to see Jesus; they want others to hear Jesus; they want others to know Jesus; they want others to love and serve and follow and obey and to cherish Jesus.

This is the kind of man that John was. When Jesus called John- he was unloving and violent and rebellious and untrainable. John- along with his brother James- was called the Sons of Thunder. But God loved John even when John didn't love God and God's Love broke John; God's love shattered him; God's Love utterly dismantled this man who

today is called the Apostle of Love. John didn't know Love when Jesus called Him- but John *learned* Love. He was molded by the pain and the suffering and the rejection and turmoil that God graciously allowed John to go through. He was boiled in oil; He was cast off; he was sent into exile and he leaned on Jesus' breast. John saw Jesus' Lips move when Christ spoke the Words that thrill our hearts today; John said that he personally handled the very Word of Life. John said that he saw and touched and walked with God made flesh; with Immanuel; with Yahweh Himself- Who was draped with humanity.

And so John was uniquely qualified to tells all of us that it isn't about us- it is about God- and it isn't about our love for God- it is that God loved us and that he sent His Son- Jesus Christ to be the propitiation for our sins.

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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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.