

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 4:13**

Chapter 21- The Gift of God's Spirit

196 The Gift of God's Spirit- Part 3

WAOY Friday-Monday 06/06-09/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1 John**, and today I want to continue to look at what John taught about "The Gift of God's Spirit". So, let's read **1John 4:13** again together:

By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

Now this verse deals with the issue of the Certainty or Assurance of our Salvation and John has gone into this subject before in this Epistle- but he mentions it here again because it is a very important subject. I suppose that of all the things that are in the Bible- Perseverance or the Assurance and Certainty of our Salvation is one of the most misunderstood subjects that there is. And even though the Bible is very clear about this- much is taught and believed wrongly about this issue today.

Now as I told you on the last broadcast- I fought and taught and preached and persuaded as many people as I could *against* Perseverance for well over thirty years because- in my ignorance- I *wrongly* thought that Perseverance was teaching that sin was okay and that sin didn't matter and I knew that wasn't true. I knew that sin absolutely matters to God and that it is never okay when we sin. So I was *against* Perseverance because I was *for* Holiness. I was zealous that God's people would act like God's people and that we walk like God's people and that we live like God's people and I was against the laid back attitude that so many have today and I was against the cavalier attitude that people have about the horror of sin and of how terribly offensive sin is to God.

So I was against Perseverance because I was also against worldliness. I was against any teaching that promoted a love for this world; or a love

for pleasure more than God or anything that promoted selfishness and covetousness and greed in God's people. I was against Perseverance because I wrongly believed that being secure in our salvation promoted the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. I was against God's people getting settled down in this life and I was against the fact that most of our prayers today have more to do with the here and now rather than to prepare us for over there. I was against anything that made us more of a citizen of this country and that took away from us looking for a city Whose Builder and Maker is God. I was against any teaching that took away from us the concept that we are just strangers and pilgrims passing through this land and this world is not our home. I was against *anything* that took away from the promise that I have a home in Glory land that outshines the sun.

But what I didn't realize, dear friends is that what the Bible actually teaches about Perseverance doesn't detract from *any* of those things. I didn't realize that Perseverance actually *promotes* the very things that I was so zealous for.

So the bottom line is that I was against Perseverance because I had never been taught it correctly. And while I had learned *some* of it- I really had never heard it taught properly at all. But God was good to put me in a position where He would graciously open my eyes so that I might see what God has to say about this marvelous Truth.

So God dealt with my heart to begin a verse by verse study through the **Epistle of Romans** in our Church in October of 2002. And we studied that great letter by the Apostle Paul every single Sunday night for nine years and nine months.

And at the beginning- I was able to teach **Romans** with little or no problem. But after just a few verses- I began to run into trouble. Some things that Paul clearly wrote in his letter to the Church at Rome was *different* from what I had been taught and it was *different* from what I believed and from what I *myself* was teaching. And at first, this was little more than a tad bit annoying- kind of like a gnat buzzing around your head. And I could just swat it away and keep on going.

Now normally- I could teach or preach with no notes for over an hour with my eyes closed and both hands tied behind my back. But I had committed to go through this Epistle verse by verse and to ask and answer three questions about every single verse:

1. What does this verse actually say?
2. What does this verse actually mean by what it says?
3. How can I apply the Truth of this verse to my own personal life?

So this commitment forced me to park my rear end in my chair and study things that I had never studied before. Things like the Greek and Hebrew languages so I could understand exactly what Paul wrote and things like the tense of the verbs that Paul used so I could understand what Paul meant by what he wrote. And I found the need to study things like Jewish life in the Middle East during the first century so I could better understand what Paul meant; and things like legal and political aspects of life in the Middle East in the first century. And I also began to study what other people- who lived many hundreds of years before I was born- like Matthew Henry and the Puritans and Jonathan Edwards and Charles Spurgeon and Martin Luther and Augustine said about **Romans**. And I found myself on my face a whole lot more often because I had the need to beg God to help me and to give me understanding so that I would portray His Word properly to the people.

Soon- my annoying problem grew larger. And the more I studied God's Word; the more I took the time to investigate the meaning of the words that God inspired Paul to use; the more that I sought God to show me the Truth about what **Romans** actually said- the more I found that what I was taught about the Assurance and the Certainty of Salvation and Perseverance when I was first saved and what I had believed for over thirty years was *not* in alignment with what Paul was actually saying in **Romans**.

Now if we had been talking about fixing a car or programming a computer this would not have been that big a deal- but we were talking about some pretty important subjects that Paul was dealing with in Romans. Things like Justification and God's Sovereignty and Faith and Perseverance.

And I was slowly beginning to realize that what I was taught and what I believed was wrong and that I was going to have to do one of two things- I was either going to have to stop teaching Romans and keep what I already believed about this issue or I was going to have to get up before my Church and confess that I has been wrong about some very important and eternal matters and then I was going to have to repent

and begin to teach what the Bible actually said rather than just what was popular or convenient. And little did I realize at the time that this was exactly why a line upon line and precept upon precept study of God's Word is so important.

You see, dear friends, we *all* have beliefs that we have picked up over our lifetime. Every human being on earth believes certain things and disbelieves other things. And what you believe and what you reject combined together is called your Doctrine. So that is why it is so silly for anyone to say that we don't need Doctrine today- because everybody already *has* a Doctrine. The problem is not that we have Doctrine- the problem is that some of what we already believe- is not Biblical; it is not in accord with Scripture and thus- it is not true- God didn't say it.

We may hear something on the radio; read something in a book; hear some preacher or experience something in our lives and it makes sense on some level and so we add that to our own personal Doctrine about God and the things of God. So if something makes sense to us- on a human level- we adopt that thing into our own personal belief system. Then we add human reasoning and human logic to that mix and what we have is a jumbled, hodge podge bag of beliefs that are extremely contradictory and extremely inconsistent and that for the most part resemble little if anything that the Bible actually says. And we all do this. We all do what the Bible has told us *not* to do in **2Peter 1:20**:

But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is *a matter* of one's own interpretation,

So what we have done is to place our own interpretation on what God's Word says and means. And that is why we have 19,000 different beliefs out there. And so after 2,000 years of Christianity we are very splintered and very scattered- and this is directly due to the fact that very few if any of us ever take the time to analyze those three questions:

1. What does this verse actually say?
2. What does this verse actually mean by what it says?
3. How can I apply the Truth of this verse to my own personal life?

Because if we would just ask and answer those three very simple questions about every verse that we read in Gods' Word- almost every single thing that divides us would be removed almost overnight.

Now some people have wrongly concluded that since what we believe divides us that we don't need to believe anything or that it doesn't matter what we believe. And that is the worst possible conclusion that you could come to. The best way to solve this dilemma is to employ the concept of "Sola Scriptura" which is a Latin phrase developed by the Reformers of the 16th Century that means: "*From the Scriptures Alone*".

And this concept was one of the main *causes* of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century and it teaches that everything that we believe and teach must come from the Scriptures and from the Scriptures alone.

For example- personal experiences may be nice- but they are *not* infallible because we *misunderstand* and we *misappropriate* our personal experiences all the time. So personal experiences are not trustworthy enough to be the basis for our Doctrine. Likewise, history proves to us without any doubt at all that the best people in the Church who love and serve God faithfully can and do err- sometimes grievously. So we cannot use Church Councils; Church History or writings and books by Church leaders as the basis of our Doctrine either. And since Man is fallen we certainly don't want to base what we believe on frail and fallible human logic and wisdom. And history proves to us without any doubt at all that the greatest departure from Biblical Truth throughout the ages comes from those people who base their doctrine on dreams; visions; prophecies; or angelic visitations.

So we are left with one single Source that is to be the foundation of all that we believe and teach. And that one single Source that has proven to be trustworthy and reliable and dependable is the Scriptures and the Scriptures alone. And since that is true- then a line upon line; precept upon precept study of the Holy Bible- in a verse by verse manner- is the very best way to actually know and understand what God has spoken in the Holy Bible.

So it isn't that we don't need *any* Doctrine. What we don't need is *wrong* doctrine; *bad* doctrine or *man-made* doctrine. We don't want to believe anything that came out of the Mind and Heart and Mouth of frail sinful Man. What we need is that which has come out of the Mind and Heart and Mouth of Almighty God. Or in other words- what we

need is to alter and change our own personal Doctrines to make them come into alignment with the Word of God.

And we must realize, dear friends that it doesn't matter how long you have believed something or how sincerely you believe it or how many people agree with your beliefs. *None* of those things brings any validity at all to anything that we believe.

We must remember that there was a time when most educated people on earth believed that the world was flat and the fact that most people believed that- made it correct in many people's minds. I mean all you had to do was look out over the horizon and obviously the world came to an abrupt end. But the fact is that the world is *not* flat and it has *never* been flat and it never *will* be flat and so *regardless* of how many people believed that- and regardless of how it actually appeared to the naked eye and regardless of how much sense it made to so many people- they were all wrong.

Something is not true simply because a lot of people believe it. Something is true only if it is, in fact, true. And so as believers, we have duty and an obligation to subject ourselves to being accountable to the Bible over what we believe. And me getting into that kind of intense study of Romans is what exposed to me my *own* inconsistent and contradictory beliefs that I had accumulated over my lifetime. And although at the time this made me very uncomfortable- it was God opening my eyes to the joy of the Certainty and Assurance of my Salvation that John is talking about here.

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.

© 2007- 2023 by Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America
Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. PO Box 147 Saucier, Mississippi 39574 www.covenantofpeace.net

Scripture quotations, except those noted otherwise, are from The New American Standard Bible © 1995 by The Lockmann Foundation. Used by permission.

This is a single transcript in a larger series of teachings taken from a verse by verse Journey through the Epistle of 1John. You are free to reproduce it and distribute it as the Lord leads you- without cost or reimbursement to us with the stipulation that you may not add anything or take anything away from this transcript without the express written permission of The Covenant of Peace Church and that this complete copyright statement be at the end of all copies.

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.