

# So That You May Know

## An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1John**

### Chapter 2- John's Declaration **1John1:1-4**

#### 9. The Person of Jesus Christ Part 5

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WAOY Tuesday 04/17/07; WOSM Tuesday 10/07/08; WOSM Thursday 10/13/22

Welcome again, my brothers and sisters in Christ. We are continuing our “journey” through the Epistle of 1John and today we are going to begin to at “The Declaration of the Apostle John” as listed in **1John 1:1-4** so let's read those verses together.

**1 What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life —**

**2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us —**

**3 what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.**

**4 These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.**

Now on the last broadcast, we were exploring the five attributes that John gives to Jesus here in these first four verses. Those five attributes are:

- That Jesus is God
- That Jesus is the fulfillment of all of the over 400 Old Testament prophecies that foretold of the coming Jewish Messiah
- That John literally saw Jesus Christ with his physical eyes
- That John literally looked upon Jesus and touched Him
- That Jesus is the Word of Life

Now what John is declaring here in the first verse is what is called “The Eternal Pre-existence of Christ”. And this Doctrine teaches that before Creation- God was- and that God was in His entirety of His three

Persons of God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Spirit. And that means that John is telling us here in the first part of the first verse of the first Chapter of **1John** that Jesus always was and always will be.

Now of course this statement is a great mystery and a miracle and one that we should marvel at and stand in awe of. As I have told you many times before- *everything* about Jesus is a miracle- from His Virgin Birth; throughout His sinless Life; His vicarious death; and His bodily Resurrection; His physical Ascension into Heaven; and even His current ministry in Heaven as the Apostle and High Priest of our Profession.

So John is very careful here to tell his readers in the first verse about the human aspect of the Divine Christ when he gives us three indications of Christ's physical appearing. Let's look again at the first verse:

**What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life —**

John is telling us here that even though Jesus was God and even though Christ always was with the Father- that even though all this is true- it is *also* true that Jesus was also fully Man. And this is what makes Jesus to be so very unique. And so in His capacity as fully Man- Jesus had a physical body; He spoke with His physical Mouth; and that John and all the other Apostles- except Paul- had physically looked upon this physical presence of Jesus Christ and had physically touched Jesus and had literally heard Him speak with their physical ears.

Now the reason that John went to such great lengths to say all of this is because of a very serious threat to Christianity that existed at the time that John wrote this Epistle- which was called, "Gnosticism".

And as I discussed with you in our "journey through Jude"- the heresy of Gnosticism was a very real and serious attack against Biblical Christianity during its early days. In fact, Gnosticism was one of three heresies that are actually recorded for us in the Bible that Paul, Peter, James, John, and Jude dealt with during their ministries- the other two being the Judaizers- which we would call legalism today and Antinomianism- which is lawlessness and which teaches that once you are saved- you have no further obligation or duty to serve God and walk in holiness.

Now the 15<sup>th</sup> Chapter of **The Book of the Acts** gives us a snapshot of how the Church came together in the very first Church Council and dealt with the issue of legalism and Paul wrote the entire Book of Galatians and part of Romans to completely destroy any affect that the Judaizers might have in the Church in the future.

The Epistle of James and the 15<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Gospel of John was written to denounce Antinomianism and to uphold the fact that bearing godly fruit; and doing good works; and obeying the Word of God- while not earning Salvation- is part and parcel to being a Christian. These men clearly taught that no one should ever have any confidence that they are saved unless they bear godly fruit in their lives.

So the Apostles wrote what they wrote to make sure that no one ever thought that anyone could ever earn their Salvation through being baptized or by speaking in tongues or by keeping Communion or by praying certain prayers or by going to Confession or by walking down an aisle or by singing in the choir or by joining the Church or doing any good deeds. The Apostles taught that Salvation was a free gift of Grace from a merciful God which was extended to those who had been chosen by God from before the foundations of the world and was not a “payment” for services rendered.

We do not deserve Grace and we cannot work to be worthy of it- but it is freely and genuinely extended to us based- not upon any good that we have done- but solely based upon God’s Own Good Pleasure.

So anyone who for any reason teaches that Salvation can be earned or that we can work to deserve our salvation is not teaching Christian Doctrine- no matter how well meaning they are.

Legalism is a heresy because it *ignores* Grace and forces all men to try to earn Salvation through human effort. But Antinomianism is equally a heresy because it *abuses* Grace and allows men to escape the responsibility and the joy of humbly submitting our lives to the authority of Scripture and to live as God has commanded that we live once we are saved.

But no sooner had the Apostles successful taught against these two heresies that another even more sinister heresy began to be taught which fell primarily on John to correct. This new false teaching was and is called Gnosticism.

Now Gnosticism, like all heresy, is a perpetual threat to Christianity in that it perverts the right way of the Lord and changes what it means to be a Christian. I realize that many today do not view heresy and false teaching as a big deal- but these people are naïve and are being unfaithful to both Scripture and 2,000 years of Church History.

Let me give you a very clear example of what I am saying. When I was young, the word, “gay” meant “happy” and “carefree”. And we used it all the time in songs and books and in general discussions. A “gay” person was a person who was happy and upbeat and to have a “gay” time was to celebrate.

Now I’m not sure exactly when the change occurred, but today to be “gay” means to be sexually perverted; it means to engage in unspeakable activity that most animals will never do. And it is crystal clear in Holy Scripture that God Almighty condemns homosexuality in all of its forms- even the inclination toward homosexuality- but by changing the term from homosexual to “gay” those who promote this perversion have softened the impact of the term.

And that is why I refuse to use that term. They do not have the right to confiscate a perfectly good word and to change the definition of that word by fiat, and I am simply not going to help them by using this word in the way that they want me to. I say the word, “perverted” because that is an accurate description of the acts that perverted people commit and I use the term, “homosexual” because that is a clinical term that accurately describes who they are. Besides, there just isn’t anything happy or celebratory about dying with AIDS.

So when we use terms and words like “Christian” or “Salvation” or “Justification” or “Deity” or “Imputation of Righteousness” or “Trinity” or “Church” or “Gospel” - all of these terms and words mean something specific and all of these words and terms are used in very a particular way to mean a particular thing. But just like the word, “gay” has been changed to mean something entirely different than what it really means- all of these theological terms and words are under assault in our day to change their meaning and their usage.

For example, we say today that if somebody believes in God- that that means that they are a Christian. But is that true? Does that mean that Muslims are Christians? They believe in *a* god- just not the God of the Bible- but because they believe in *a* god- does that qualify

them as being labeled “Christian”? No, it doesn’t- if you use the word, “Christian” accurately.

But if you succeed in changing the way that the word is used- then *anyone* who believes in *any* god could be called a “Christian” or at least be called “someone who is on the same path as Christians”. But by that definition, even fallen angels could be called “Christian” because in **James 2:19**, the Bible says:

**You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.**

So of course that is ridiculous- demons are not saved and cannot ever be saved. But the point that I am making is that by continuing the current trend to dumb down the culture; and by continuing to define words any way using any definition; and by continuing to lower the bar about what it means to be saved- we are fast losing a firm and clear definition about very important and eternal matters.

For example, more and more people and groups and organizations who outright reject what the Bible teaches about Jesus and who do not accept what the Bible teaches about Salvation and Redemption and the Imputation of Righteousness and groups who officially teach another Gospel are somehow today being readily accepted as our brothers and sisters in Christ- simply because we agree on certain social issues- and that has caused a huge shift in what should and should not be taught as being true and holy.

Today it is fashionable for Churches to be as vague as possible about Doctrinal matters so as to remain more attractive to as many people as possible. More and more we are defining genuine spirituality by using secular terms- which only further confuses the issue. The results of all of these changes are that people don’t know how to respond to the uncertain sound that is being given.

We are creating new and strange sounding terms that add to our confusion. Terms like “people of faith” which seek to include groups who do not and who will not hold to Biblical Truth about Salvation and Jesus Christ are quickly replacing Biblical terms like “born again believer” simply because we agree with these groups on the social problems of our day. Listen, it is fine to hold hands with all kinds of people and groups because we agree that abortion is murder- and we

must be sure that we are treating everyone- even our enemies- with godly love and dignity and respect- but if these groups insist on teaching things about Jesus Christ and Salvation and the elements of the Gospel that is in direct opposition to Scripture- they are not Christians and they are not our brothers and sisters in Christ and we must be sure that we maintain that being saved and being Christian is not the same thing as being on the right side of our cultural problems.

And we are all going to be faced with this issue as we may very well elect a man to be our next President who teaches and believes that God was once a man and that we can all become gods and that Salvation is something that we can earn.

Listen, I am as patriotic as the next guy- but simply because we wave the flag during a time of war doesn't mean that our sins have been washed away- and the Church needs to clearly say that- lest we make patriotism to be the new idolatry. Christians historically have put God above Government and they always put Truth above tolerance and they have always put the Gospel above agreement on social ills.

And the Apostle John saw this same trend in his day and he fought against it. In fact, I am convinced in my very soul that if Paul and Peter and James and John were alive today that many groups and Churches would ostracize these godly men as being too harsh; too serious; too intolerant; too unloving and some would even call John "unchristian" for statements that he made under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and which are recorded for us in Scripture.

So examine the words that you use. Make sure that you are in agreement with Scripture about eternal and important issues and make sure that you stand on the side of Biblical Truth, so that we may be found faithful when we all stand before the Lord.

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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