

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of 1John

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

7. The Person of Jesus Christ Part 3

WAOY Thursday 04/12/07; WOSM Friday 10/03/08; Tuesday 10/11/22

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing our “journey” through the Epistle of 1John and today we are going to continue to look at “The Declaration of the Apostle John” as listed in **1John 1:1-4** so let's read those verses again 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 on the last broadcast, we were examining John's declaration that Jesus was God. That is what John meant when he said in verse 1:

What was from the beginning...

Now when we start talking about the Deity of Jesus Christ- we run into a serious Theological dilemma unless we begin to carefully and rightly interpret the Bible. When we are discussing these kinds of issues, we must remember that the New Testament is *not* in conflict with the Old. We do not have one God in the Old Testament and another in the New. No, the New Testament has the very same God as does the Old Testament. And the Old Testament is in agreement with the New that there is only one God. Look with me at **Deuteronomy 6:4:**

Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!

Now this statement is what is called the “Shema” and is the definitive statement about what we call “Monotheism”- which is the teaching that there is only one God. Monotheism is the opposite of “polytheism”- which teaches that there is more than one god. Hinduism and the ancient Greeks and the Romans were polytheists- while Judaism and Christianity hold to monotheism.

But if the “Shema” is true- which it is- then just how do we explain the fact that Jesus was God? If Father is God and Jesus is God does that not mean that there are two gods? And if we are to stretch it even further and say that Holy Spirit is God- does that not mean that we worship three gods? If we teach that Jesus is Deity- which John says that we must- we are forced to have to explain how Jesus can be Deity at the same time that Father and Spirit are Deity without having three gods. So by accepting John’s declaration that Jesus Christ is God- we are left with trying to explain how that can be true and not be in contradiction to the Shema

The Christian Church solves this problem by teaching that God is a Triune God. The Christian Church confesses that the Bible clearly teaches what is called the Tri-unity of God- that is that God is one in Essence- but is eternally manifested in three distinct Persons of God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Spirit.

Now if you do not accept the Doctrine of the Trinity- then you are left with either denying John’s Apostolic declaration here that Jesus is God- or you are left with being a polytheist and believing in three gods or you are left with a very convoluted ancient heresy called “Modalism”- which is a perversion of what the Bible teaches.

So if we are to accept John's declaration of Christ's Divinity as being inspired, inerrant, and infallible- and if we are to accept Moses testimony that there is only one God as being equally inspired and inerrant and infallible and if we are to accept the fact that because the entire Bible is inspired, inerrant, and infallible that it contains no contradictions- then there is one way to do that fully and correctly- and that is by accepting the Doctrine of the Trinity.

As I said- the Doctrine of the Trinity teaches that by carefully examining all of the inspired, inerrant, and infallible Scriptures and by studying what they clearly and boldly reveal about the Character and Nature of God and the Person of Jesus Christ and the reality of the Holy Spirit- we are *forced* to accept and believe that God the Father is Deity; God the Son is Deity and God the Holy Spirit is Deity.

Now at first glance- this seemingly puts us into a contradictory position with the Shema which says clearly that God is one. But upon a closer examination- there is an answer to this apparent dilemma. We can accept all that the Bible says about God and Jesus and the Holy Spirit and still be in unity with the fact that God is one by accepting the Doctrine of the Trinity- that God is one in *Essence* and yet is eternally manifested in three distinct Persons of God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Spirit.

Now I realize that here in the twenty first century- even among Church members- that most people could care less about this stuff- but it is precisely because we *don't* care about this very important Doctrine and it is precisely because we have not wrestled with this issue and precisely because we have *not* settled this matter in our own hearts that cults like Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons and Oneness Pentecostals- who reject the Trinity are growing by leaps and bounds.

One of the most famous and popular television preachers (T.D. Jakes) on the Hay, Wood and Stubble Television Network is a man who boldly and consistently rejects the Doctrine of the Trinity and who espouses the ancient heresy of Modalism. But understanding the Doctrine of the Trinity *biblically* would eliminate people being deceived by this man.

Now 1900 years ago, when the false teaching of Modalism first raised its ugly head- this modern preacher would be denounced as a heretic and would have been excommunicated from the Christian Church. But today- undiscerning sheep- who love to hear "some new

thing” lap up what he teaches without the slightest reservation- simply because he is popular.

Now before you get angry with me for saying this- you might want to ask him why he thinks he has the right to reject a Christian Doctrine that has been taught for over 19 centuries. Dear friends- I didn't write the Bible- John is the one that said that Jesus was God- not me. Moses is the one who said that God is one- not me. Peter is the one who called the Holy Spirit- God- not me. And I promise you that I am certainly not smart enough to formulate the Doctrine of the Trinity. But like it or not- as cumbersome as it may be- it is the only game in town unless you either deny the Deity of Jesus Christ- which some have done- or you accept false teaching of Modalism- which some have done- or you do both- which some have done.

But if you accept what the Bible clearly teaches about God- you will embrace that God is one in Essence and is eternally manifested in three distinct Persons of God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Spirit- and you will be both Scriptural correct and historically accurate. But if you deny the Doctrine of the Trinity you must also reject some or all of what the Bible clearly says is true and you find yourself at odds with Scripture and the heroes of our Faith- because ever since the Apostles- the Christian Church has unanimously accepted the Doctrine of the Trinity.

All of the heroes of the Church that we love to quote and love to read about and love to hear about and all of the men who fought to defend the faith and who died being faithful and who gave up everything to serve Jesus Christ without exception- all of them believed and taught and boldly proclaimed the Doctrine of the Trinity.

Tertulian; Justyn Martyr; Clement of Rome; Augustine; Martin Luther; John Calvin; John Knox; Jonathan Edwards; the Puritans; Charles Spurgeon; Martin Lloyd Jones; Jim Boice; RC Sproul; John MacArthur; AW Pink; John Piper; Max Lucado; Joni Erickson Tada; John Stott; David Wells; Jerry Bridges; Mark Dever- all of these and many, many thousands more all believed and taught and proclaimed the Doctrine of the Trinity.

All of the most beloved Song writers- all throughout history- who wrote the great hymns of the Christian Church that thrill our soul like Martin Luther and Charles Wesley and Fannie Crosby and Johan

Sebastian Bach and Isaac Watts and John Newton all wrote about the Deity of Jesus Christ and the Tri-unity of God.

And with the possible exception of Thomas Jefferson- all of the Founding fathers and of this nation and all of our Presidents have all been men who acknowledged the Deity of Jesus Christ and the Doctrine of the Trinity.

Now I realize that great men can and do err- but when anyone today rejects the Doctrine of the Trinity and rejects the Deity of Jesus Christ- he is saying that all of these men *collectively* were completely wrong about this vital issue and that all of the combined history of the Christian Church has been carried out by people who were all wrong- which in effect means that we don't have any history.

But it also means something else. Because there have been people throughout history who have rejected the Doctrine of the Trinity. There have been people who have taught against the Deity of Jesus Christ. Heretics like Marcion and Arius and Pelagius and Erasmus and Muhammed, and modern heretics like Joseph Smith and Charles Taze Russell and Mary Baker Eddy.

And what do all of these people all have in common? These people make up the rogues gallery of Christian History. These are the people who have been officially labeled as heretics and false teachers and who tried their best to disrupt and corrupt Christianity. And they all taught that Jesus was *not* Deity and they all taught that the Doctrine of the Trinity was wrong and they all taught that the Bible was unreliable and untrustworthy and that God had chosen them to write other books which would correct the sacred Scriptures and take their place.

And so all of these people were rejected and denounced by the Christian Church and they were excommunicated by the Church many centuries ago. And so for anyone today to align themselves with these people is insanity.

So by objectively examining all that the Bible says about Jesus and God and the Holy Spirit and by honestly examining the 2,000 year history of the Christian Church is to reach one single conclusion about the matter- Jesus was God Almighty wrapped in human flesh. Jesus was God incarnate. Jesus was with God in the beginning. Jesus existed as God the Son in the beginning.

For example- in the Nicene Creed- the Christian Church believes and confesses in one Lord Jesus Christ,

The only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God; Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made. Who, for us men for our salvation, came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, And was made man; And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; And the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; And ascended into heaven, And sits on the right hand of the Father; And He shall come again, with glory, To judge the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.¹

I tell you that the Doctrine of the Trinity is right, and God is one in Essence and is eternally manifested in three distinct Persons of God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Spirit. And John was right, and Jesus was from the beginning. And so, we need to grasp this great Truth and we need to love it and proclaim it boldly and not be ashamed of it. And we need to defend this Truth against all who denounce it and teach contrary to it- regardless of how popular they may be.

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.