

So That You May Know

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

Chapter 22- The Apostolic Witness and Testimony

200 The Apostolic Witness and Testimony- Part 1

WAOY Friday-Monday 06/13-16/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1 John**, and today we are going to begin a new section of our study by looking at what John taught about "The Apostolic Witness and Testimony". So, let's open our Bibles and read **1John 4:14-16-** together.

14 We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *to be* the Savior of the world.

15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

16 We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

Now this passage is another one of those magnificent statements that John makes continuously in this Epistle. I can't help but think as I read **1John** that while this entire Epistle is elevated above the world and its confusion and babble like a mountain range- that periodically there are great majestic peaks that reach even higher than normal. This statement by the Apostle in this passage is one of those great peaks.

This is one of the reasons why I highly recommend that as you study the Scriptures you do so in a verse by verse fashion- preaching and teaching expositionally through an entire Book and not jumping around from one verse that stands out to the next. It is those obscure verses and passages that you will pass over in a shallow look- that are the very ones that make the others so important.

As I have told you before – going verse by verse through Paul's Epistle to the Romans changed my life and the entire focus and thrust

of my ministry. I was saved for over 30 years before I began a verse by verse journey through **Romans**- but it was *that* expositional study that I began back in 2002- that brought what I believe- into alignment with what the Bible actually teaches.

So here we are- having journeyed through **1John** now for these fourteen months; reading every verse; stopping to inhale the fragrance and the beauty of each Word that came out of God's Mouth; pondering the implications that every Word makes upon us; and being changed by the power that only comes from the knowledge of God. And I know that if I were to start this study all over again- that I would do God much more justice and I would teach this Epistle with more passion and so much more earnestness and in so much more depth because truly God's word is the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Now I could take this passage and I could preach a short little sermonette that would tickle your ears and that would probably get me some personal benefit- but that would be a reproach to the Gospel. My only desire is that the power and glory of God's precious Word will be unleashed to you- one verse at a time.

My friends, we are living in powerful days where we are witnessing huge changes in both our culture and in the Church. We are witnessing the dismantling of Western Civilization and the systematic eviction of the Judaea/Christian ethic from our nation. And that is bad and it frightens me and it angers men and I don't want this to happen.

But what is going on inside the Church is even more frightening and troubling than what is occurring in the culture because what is going on inside the Church is far more serious because it has to do with things that are eternal.

For over 1800 years, the Church of Jesus enjoyed a singleness of heart about what the primary source of Revelation was and what held final authority in the Church. For almost the first eighteen centuries of Christianity- there was almost unanimous agreement that the Scriptures was the primary source of Revelation from God to Man and there was almost universal agreement that when there was a dispute over a matter of eternal Truth – that Scripture and Scripture alone had the final authority.

But we can't say that today because the reliability and the trustworthiness and the integrity of Scripture has come under such an assault from both ungodly theologians and from the people of the

modern Church that today most people do not trust what the Bible says. And I would suggest to you that that place of doubt to which we have arrived is not a place of advancement and it is not a place of intellectual greatness- but it is simply a return to old fashion paganism and barbarism that the earth knew before we ever had the Bible and men did what was right in their own eyes.

It is popular today to ask the very same question that the serpent asked Eve in the Garden concerning God's Word, "*Yea, did God say?*" The evil serpent put doubt in Eve's heart when he asked "*Are you sure that is what God said?*" as he beguiled her to eat the forbidden fruit. But he didn't stop there and he then came right out and rejected what God had spoken when he said, "*Ye shall not surely die!*" And we all have all paid the price for not knowing and then doubting and finally rejecting what God had clearly said.

Today more people who have more access to more information about more things than any generation in history are the very people who know less about what God has said than any generation before them. And I will say again- that is not advancement; and that is not progress- that is slouching back down the mountain and it is pitching our tent toward Sodom.

In our human logic that has betrayed us so many times in the past- we have deemed being wealthy and being popular as being more important than being right and being faithful and the result is that we have now asked the very same question that Pilate asked Jesus in **John 18:38- "What is truth?"**

Everything is now relative; evil is not evil as long as there are extenuating circumstances- in which case "evil" could very well be "good" in the minds of many people. And the result is that with all of our intelligence and comforts- we are the most confused generation in history.

The Apostle John does not throw out statements like this at random- this is not something that suddenly sticks out without any explanation or without any apparent rhyme or reason. No, John is working out his argument about the Certainty and the Assurance of Salvation here as he has been in the last several verses. And John has arrived at this place by discussing the importance of loving the brethren- and John stresses this over and over to say that if we do not love the brethren- then we are proving that we do not know God. And that statement then

leads him to begin to discuss just what it means to know God- which John says is the single most important thing in the world- that God would know me and that I would know God.

And John has been careful with us to distinguish between knowing about God and knowing God; of belonging to the Church and of belonging to Jesus; and of believing in a generic sense of that word and believing enough to change the way that I live and the way that I love and the way that think for the rest of my life.

So now we have come to this passage and in verse 14& 15, the Apostle goes deeper into just how we may know that we have been truly saved and we see that it has a lot to do with something called our Confession.

A Confession is a set of beliefs that have been articulated and which have been formulated which includes some very specific things and which excludes some other very specific things. For example- let's read verse 14 again:

1John 4:14

We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *to be* the Savior of the world.

Now the “we” here in verse 14 is John referring to the Apostles- the men who Jesus personal chose to “go forth” and receive and articulate and write down the final, full, and completed Revelation of God to Man. It is from the Apostles and their designates that we have the New Testament.

No notice here just what John says that the Apostle do. John says that they do two things:

1. They see
2. They testify

So John is saying here that contrary to what many people believe about the New Testament- that it was not handed down from one generation to the next for hundreds of years by word of mouth- but the people who wrote the Books were eyewitnesses of what they wrote about. John wasn't told things about Jesus from other people; John didn't write down rumors or hearsay or legends; no, John actually saw

Jesus; John literally touched Jesus; John physically laid his head on Jesus' breast and heard the heartbeat of the Son of God. Listen to how John describes this in the first three verses that begin this Epistle:

1John 1:1-3

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.

And then John tells us why he wrote this Book in verse 4-

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

So we can see then, dear friends, that eh writing down of the events and times and places and people concerning Jesus of Nazareth in the 27 Books of the New Testament was not down hundreds of years after the fact- but was done while those who actually walked with Him were still alive.

For example- **The Epistle of James** is probably the very first New Testament Book that was written and it was written after The Resurrection and yet it was written before the Jerusalem Council mentioned in The Acts 15- so James was written sometime between AD 44- 49 which makes it to be written just 15 years after the Crucifixion. **The Book of the Revelation**, also written by John was the last New Testament Book that was produced and it was written just prior to John's death in AD 96.

So from the time of the Resurrection which was approximately AD 29 to AD 96 all 27 Books of the New Testament were written and were in wide circulation throughout the Churches. Christian Doctrine was being taught daily in the Churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, Corinth, and Jerusalem- even as far away as France and Spain in the first century!

In fact, **The Epistle of Paul to the Romans** which contains about 85- 90% of all Christian Doctrine by itself- especially those truths concerning

Salvation was written and was published and was in wide circulation and was being taught throughout the world just 27 years after Jesus rose from the dead. That means that **Romans** was being taught for over 40 years before John even wrote this Epistle of **1John**.

So contrary to popular opinion- what the Church believed; what the Church accepted and rejected; and what the Church taught and confessed; was not a jumbled hodge podge collection of inconsistent and contradictory beliefs by various people- no, not at all.

What was believed and taught and confessed by the Church as early as just 15 years after the Resurrection was solid, clear, concise, Truth that could be both taught and learned by other people and this body of Divine Revelation became known as the Apostles Doctrine and became the basis of the Confession of the Christian Church.

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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