

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 4:14-16**

Chapter 22- The Apostolic Witness and Testimony

204 The Apostolic Witness and Testimony- Part 5

WAOY Friday-Monday 06/20-23/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today we are going to continue to look at what John taught about "The Apostolic Witness and Testimony". So, let's open our Bibles and read **1John 4:14-16** again 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 over the last several broadcasts- we have been exploring just what John meant when he writes here in this passage that those who dwell in God are those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God. And we have already found out many things. So today I want to zero in on what it actually means for us to confess that Jesus is the Son of God.

The word that was translated into English here as "confess" is the Greek word, *homologeoo*, which means: *to agree with something* or *to ascent to something*. But this word also means: *to celebrate in that agreement* and *to promise to hold on to that agreement* and *to declare openly and boldly without hesitation or ashamedness*.

So this confession is much more than simply repeating a prayer or copying words that someone else tells you to say. This confession must be real to you; it must be true; it must be something that you not only speak with your lips but something that causes you to celebrate in and

to hold faithfully to when the chips are down and something about which you are not ashamed.

And there is another aspect to this confession that is often overlooked. This confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is going to periodically get you into trouble; it is going to be the source of your persecution; the source of some of your trials and the reason why some friends suddenly abandoned you.

We have to remember, beloved, that it wasn't because Jesus fed the five thousand that He was hunted down and crucified. The Jews had no problem with Jesus healing the sick or raising the dead. They had no problem with Jesus being merciful or preaching the Sermon on the Mount.

What the Jew didn't like was the fact that Jesus said that He was God. What they objected to was Jesus equating Himself to be Yahweh in the flesh. And that was too much for these people to accept. Let's read **John 5:18**

For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.

For us to confess that Jesus is the Son of God is the very same thing as saying that Jesus is God. And so for Jesus to say that He was God was blasphemy to the Jews- because they knew that God had already given them the "Shema"- that great testimony or confession about Himself found in **Deuteronomy 6:4:**

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

No other people on earth at that time had the correct understanding of the one true living God besides the Jews and the only reason that the Jews knew that God was one was because God had Sovereignly revealed Himself to them.

But if God is One then How is Jesus God? This question has puzzled people for centuries and is the one single reason why Jews reject Jesus to this day. The answer of course is found in the Trinity. God is One in Essence but at the same time- God is eternally manifested in three distinct Persons of God the Father; God the Son;

and God the Holy Spirit. And we must accept this truth- even if it is difficult for us to grasp because without the Doctrine of the Trinity- Jesus cannot be God. But if Jesus is not God- then Jesus was a liar because He said that He was God and if Jesus is a liar- then we are not saved and we are yet in our sins.

So God is One and God became flesh and John said that He dwelt among them and they saw Him with their physical eyes and they touched Him and handled Him with their physical hands and Jesus died and rose again and John says that we now confess that Jesus is the Son of God.

Now please look again at **Romans 10:9&10:**

9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

When we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord- again this is not just repeating a catchy phrase. This means something very specific and as we have already seen- to confess that Jesus is Lord means that we believe and celebrate and are not ashamed and boldly proclaim that that Jesus is, in fact, Yahweh draped in human flesh.

And no Jew and no Hindu and no Muslim and no Buddhist and no hare Krishna and no Gnostic and no pagan worth his salt would ever do that. Because if they did believe and if they did confess that Jesus was in fact Yahweh wrapped in humanity- they would immediately cease to be Jews; they would cease to be Muslims; they would cease to be Gnostics or Hare Krishnas and they would be Christians because they would be saved.

But this goes even further. Because to believe and confess something indicates that we have to live in a manner that justifies our confession and our belief. Look how Jesus put it in **John 14:15:**

If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

And look what Jesus Himself said in **Luke 6:46:**

Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?

To confess that Jesus is Lord means that you really and truly believe that He is Lord and if you really believe that Jesus is Lord- you will follow and obey and serve Him. Now I didn't set that standard, dear friends. I'm not the one who made it this way- Jesus is.

Because the truth of the matter is that if somebody does not deem what they believe to be important enough or to be worthwhile enough to live in accordance with what they say they believe and confess- then they really don't believe after all. All that is- is cheap talk- and anybody can do that.

But to honestly believe that Jesus is God to the point that we confess that fact openly and without any shame and then to believe it to the point of actually changing our lives to live in accordance with what we believe- now that shows that God had indeed done a marvelous work in that person and that God dwells in them and they dwell in God.

So we can see, dear friends, that we have no wiggle room here at all. To confess that Jesus is Lord means that we must now live our lives as though Jesus really is Lord and that we are really His bought and paid for bond slaves.

And John is teaching here that anything other than that is not genuine Salvation. God does not dwell in us and we do not dwell in God unless our confession about who Jesus is- is right and in agreement with what God revealed to the Apostles. Any other confession about Jesus negates God dwelling in us and us dwelling in God. That is exactly what John is teaching here.

Now please look again with me at **1John 4:16**:

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 in this verse- John now moves past what we must believe into what we must do. John says here the very same thing that he taught earlier in this Epistle that even though it is absolutely critical what we believe- what we believe is not enough. We must not only believe rightly- but John says here that we must also live rightly.

Now many times when I get to this verse- people are quick to say, *"Aha! See there! John says that what we believe is not nearly as important as the fact that we love."* And from that- many people get the notion that what we believe doesn't matter as long as we love one

another.

But that is not at all what John is teaching here. And I want to make this as clear as I can. John is saying here that love is vital – I agree with that. But Love is not any more vital than Truth. And Truth is not any more vital than Love. The fact is that we need both. And with all the Love in the world and no Truth- we will fail God and worship a god that is not the God of the Bible and with all the Truth in the world and no love- we will fail God and we will be self-righteous and arrogant.

So, John is not teaching Truth above Love and he is certainly not teaching Love above Truth. John is saying that by confessing the Truth about Jesus we will be saved and that by loving one another proves that we already are saved. So John is teaching here that genuinely saved people have both Truth and Love abiding in them.

How does a lost sinner come to know the Truth about Jesus? By hearing the Gospel preached to him. Read with me **Romans 10:13-15a**:

13 for "*WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.*"

14 How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?

15 How will they preach unless they are sent?...

Paul teaches here that whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved. The Name of the Lord is Jesus and Salvation can be found in no other Name under Heaven except Jesus.

And it doesn't matter how much sin they are in. It doesn't matter if they are an idol maker; or a homosexual or a drunk or a prostitute. It doesn't matter how long they have sinned or how deep their sin is. It doesn't matter if they are Jew or a Gentile; a man or a woman; Old or Young; Educated or Uneducated- whosoever shall call on Jesus out of a broken and sincere heart will be saved.

But they cannot call on the Apostle John; and they cannot call on Moses; and they cannot call on Mohammed; and they cannot call on the priest or the preacher or Mary or the Church- they have to call on Jesus- for He alone can save. And when they call- they must believe;

and as they believe- they must confess; and after they are saved- they must follow and they must love.

So the bottom line to these three verses in 1John is that it matters who you call on; and it matters what you confess; and it matters what you believe; and it matters that after you call and after you confess and after you believe that you love and you follow- and John teaches here that this is what allows God to dwell in us and us to dwell in God.

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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