

So That You May Know

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

Chapter 23- The Believer's Boldness in the Day of Judgment

205 The Believer's Boldness- Part 1

WAOY Tuesday 06/24/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today we're going to begin a new section of our study by looking at what John taught about "The Believer's Boldness in the Day of Judgment". So, let's open our Bibles and read **1John 4:17-21-** together.

17 By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

19 We love, because He first loved us.

20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

21 And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

Now in these five verses that complete Chapter 4 of **1John**- the Apostle is once again giving us insight into the Assurance and Certainty of our Salvation by discussing the Boldness or the Confidence that Believers have in the Day of Judgment.

Now as I have said many times on these broadcasts- Judgment and the Wrath of God being poured out on lost souls is a subject that more and more people today would just rather not get into. Besides the issue of Sovereign Election- Eternal Damnation of the wicked is probably the single most unpopular subject that there is. And an increasing number of leaders in the modern Church preach and teach that we do not even need to mention this subject and that those who do

are unloving and perhaps even unchristian. And I find this trend to be very disturbing.

To suggest that because we are so sophisticated in the 21st Century or because we have become so mature in our faith that we do not need to stoop to discussing God's wrath against the lost is to deny a full two thirds of the Bible and to betray our calling as faithful ministers of the Gospel. Hell and eternal damnation is a part of Scripture. Every single major character in Scripture preached and taught about this subject. And as I have told you many times before- Jesus spoke more about eternal Judgment than He did about Heaven and forgiveness and I would assume that Jesus was a fairly loving and spiritual Person.

So do not fall for the trap, dear friends, that the accurate and full preaching and teaching about hell; and eternal damnation of the wicked; and the wrath of God; has no place in civilized society or polite company. That is simply not true. And also, do not be deceived into thinking that discussing these things is legalistic or bondage or mean or hard hearted- it isn't any of those things- it is simply being faithful.

We have to come to a place where we realize that the reason that the "Good News" is "Good" is because there is some "bad news" out there that is true. And it is the reality of that "bad news" that makes the "Good News" to be "good". If there was not any "bad news" that was true and certain and sure- then the "Good News" would simply be "News". But the "Good News" of Redemption is "Good" precisely because the "bad news" of God's wrath against all unbelievers is absolutely guaranteed.

In nearly every page of the Bible, descriptions of God's punishment against the unbeliever and the ungodly are impossible to miss- it is unmistakable. Yet today, in spite of a 2,000 year history of tens of thousands of men of God from every nation under heaven faithful proclaiming hell and God's eternal judgment against the wicked- the preaching of these things is as unpopular and unwanted today than at any time in history.

Contrary to popular opinion, the New Testament's treatment of future judgment is especially clear and includes at least seven primary features:

1. The final aspect of God's Divine Wrath relates to a specific future event— that is- the second coming of Jesus Christ.

You see, at the end of this age- the Lord Christ will return to this earth to execute His Own righteous Judgment against all the wicked. Our glorious God has set a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through Jesus Christ, Whom He has appointed as Heir of the whole world, having established His Divine Credibility by raising Him from the dead. No preacher; no prophet; no human knows the exact hour or day of the second coming—only the Father knows- but God has already established the precise moment when His Son will return to the earth.

2. This Judgment will be general and it will be public.

For instance, **Matthew 25:31-33** tells us about a time when Jesus Himself will publicly separate between the sheep and the goats. That time is sure to come- so the good minister will faithfully warn people to repent and serve God so that they will not fall into that judgment.

But the modern theology of tolerance and vagueness says that we should just ignore that day of judgment and hope that no one falls into it.

Beloved, in the day in which our Lord returns, no one anywhere will be able to hide from his or her sins or be able to escape responsibility for them. The Great White Throne Judgment, at the end of earth's history, will be even more extensive—as all of God's enemies from every age are brought before Him for final sentencing. (**The Revelation 20:7-15**).

3. God's judgment will be just and impartial (Romans 2:11; Galatians 2:6; cf. Genesis 18:25).

The Apostle Paul declared in **Romans 2:11** and in **Galatians 2:6** that neither the openly wicked nor the self-righteous will escape the judgment of God. You see, only God (in His triune glory) is fit to judge, because only He is perfectly holy and righteous (**Exodus 15:11; 1 Samuel 2:2; Psalms 47:8; Isaiah 6:3; 57:15; Luke 1:35; Acts 4:27; Hebrews 7:26; Revelation 3:7; 4:8**).

4. The Promise of Divine Judgment is intended as a warning.

The Lord designed the concept of eternal damnation to produce fear of His wrath in the heart of Man. (**Exodus 20:20; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 10:27; 11:7; cf. John 19:8; Acts 24:25**). Many people don't want to hear any preaching about hell or judgment today because they say it scares them. Well, that is exactly why God said to preach it- because if the thought that God is as serious as the Bible says that He is about hell really scares us- then surely we will not engage in sin nearly as often as we do. This is what is called, the fear of God, and it is directly related to our accurate understanding of God's wrath against sin. Jesus promoted this reverential fear in **Matthew 10:28**, when He said:

Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

The Book that we are studying, Jude, tells us clearly in verse 23 that the proper and correct fear of the eternal wrath of God is a tool that can be used in evangelism.

In fact, all preaching should be done with a broken heart and a contrite spirit and a clear comprehension of the reality of God's certain plans to judge the ungodly. Look at the first part of **2Corinthians 5:11a**:

Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men ...

Genuine Gospel preaching has always been accompanied with a clear pronouncement of God's wrath against the sinner until about 100 years ago. But to listen to the spiritual liberals who have invaded the Church today- you would think that preaching about hell is some off the wall kind of strange new corruption of the Gospel that is designed to enslave people, instead off what it really is- the true love of God which is to save lost souls *from* the certainty of that holy wrath.

5. God's judgment is based on His Law

Because our hearts are deceitful and desperately wicked, human beings are not only *unable* to keep God's Law; they are also willfully disobedient to it. Everyone person born of woman has violated the Law

of God- you, me- we are all guilty- and consequently, everyone *deserves* God's wrath. But God extends forgiveness to those who genuinely believe in Jesus Christ. Believers will not face God's final wrath because they have been saved through Faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ- and their names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life- Alleluia!

On the other hand, those who persist in breaking God's law, and who show no signs of true repentance, will be judged for their rebellious unbelief.

6. God's retribution ultimately results in eternal damnation in hell:

Just as the ungodly tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Now I could go on further with this, but suffice it to say that the reluctance on the part of many today to preach and teach or even to listen to anyone who does preach and teach about hell is not the result of being more spiritual; nor is it the result of being more loving or more compassionate or more Christian.

No, the reason that preaching and proclaiming what the Bible clearly teaches about hell is unpopular today- even among those in the Church is because we are living in the last days and we are seeing the great falling away that the Lord said would come.

The same reason that we are seeing a general lawlessness in our culture today; the very same reason that we are seeing a complete dismantling of our civilization; the same reason that we are seeing a breakdown of law and order today; the same reason that we are seeing scores of parents who do not have the courage or the stability to discipline their children; the very same reason that we see schools lose all order and discipline is the same reason that we see a lack of preaching and teaching about hell and eternal damnation; about right and wrong and about serving God with gladness of heart and sincerity.

The flip side, of course, is that the byproduct of a healthy and Biblical understanding of the certainty of eternal judgment of the lost is

that we will begin to see the magnificence of Salvation. When we see Hell accurately, we will see the glory of God's Mercy; we will see the absolute miracle of regeneration and we will comprehend the wonder of this Amazing Grace that God would love us and save us. A clear picture of hell always produces a clear appreciation of Salvation. But the absence of an understanding of eternal judgment always produces a people who abuse Grace and who do not fear God.

True love; genuine love; Biblical love; godly love will teach and preach the Truth so that all men can hear and realize where they really stand and be smitten in their hearts and repent and so that through the shed Blood of the Lamb and the Mercy of a good God, they can escape the terror of the Lord and so they can spend eternity in indescribable joy and glory in Heaven.

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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