

So That You May Know

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

Chapter 3- The True Test of Salvation- Part 1

21. Belief in God and Belief in the Reality of Sin Part 4

WAOY Tuesday 05/08/07; WOSM Monday 10/31/22

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing our verse by verse “journey” through the Epistle of **1John**, and today I want to continue to look at what the Apostle John taught about “A Genuine Belief in God and a Belief in the Reality of Sin”. So, let’s open our Bibles and look at **1John 1:5- 10** again together.

5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and *yet* walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

Now on the last broadcast, we were studying the concept that John promotes in these six verses that it is the responsibility and duty of the leaders of the Church to identify those who are truly saved and those who are only deceived into thinking that they are saved. And we saw last time that we- as leaders- are held accountable by God if we do not warn the wicked to repent. If and when God’s sure Judgment against the unsaved comes- they will fall under God’s Wrath to be sure- but their blood will be upon our hands- unless we were faithful to warn them.

We also saw last time how that this carefree attitude about sin in

the modern Church that says that being deceived is a “private” issue between that person and God and is nobody else’s business cannot be backed up with either Scripture or Church History.

So, we saw that the real question is not do Church leaders have the duty and responsibility to warn the wicked- because the Bible clearly teaches that we should- no, the real question is just *how* do we identify people who are deceived into thinking they are saved when they are actually lost- *how* do we do this in accordance with Scripture?

Well, in these six verses of **1 John**- the Apostle gives us the answer to that question by presenting two crucial doctrinal tests to determine who in the Church is genuine and who is not. Those two doctrinal tests are:

1. An accurate and Biblical belief in the Character and Nature of God and
2. A genuine belief in and Biblical understanding of sin

And on the last broadcast we went over verse 6 and today, I want to look very closely at verse 7- so let’s read that verse again together.

but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Now in verse 6- John put forth one of his apostolic tests as to who is saved and who is not by saying that if anyone says or thinks that he is saved and yet walks in darkness- he is a liar and does not walk in truth.

Now if I were to set up a test like this and teach that if someone doesn’t meet my expectations- then they really are not saved- I would be rightly called a Judaizer and a legalist and a false teacher- who was in effect- adding to what inspired Scripture says about Salvation. And everyone on the face of the earth could rightly ignore what I said about this.

But John was able to impose this test upon the entire Christian Church precisely because he was an Apostle who was given authority by Jesus Christ Himself along with Peter and James and Paul and the others to set up or to establish the Christian Church and all Christian Doctrine and the rule and practice of the Christian Faith.

John was empowered to issue this test by Christ Himself and this test in this passage here in **1 John** is for every single Christian in every single Church who lives in every single nation under every culture for all time.

Christians who lived in the first century were subject to this test and Christians who live in the 21st century are subject to this test. This test is accurate and enforced on every single human being on earth who lays claim to Christ as Savior.

You either measure up to this test and pass it- or else you do not belong to Christ. You either pass this test- given here by the Apostle John or you are yet in your sins. So, what is the test? Look at verses 6&7

6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and *yet* walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

If we are saved- we will walk in the light and we will walk in that light to the same degree and to the same level as Jesus Christ is that light. And because of that walk- we will naturally have fellowship with all those who are also walking in the light. Why is this? Because the Blood of Jesus has cleansed us from all sin.

In other words- John is saying here that all saved people no longer walk in darkness- but they do walk in the light precisely because they are saved. Being saved; being born again; being cleaned from all sin is what gives me both the desire and the ability to walk out of darkness and into light.

You see, brothers and sisters, walking in the light and walking out of darkness in and of itself does not save you- that is true. Simply by adopting some moral code into your life doesn't save anyone- that is true.

But it is also true to say that all saved people do not walk in the darkness, but they all walk in light.

In other words, walking in the light and away from darkness is the result or the proof that Jesus Christ's Blood has cleansed me from all sin. And that is exactly what happened to me.

Before I was saved- I didn't care one whit about God. I wanted to do what was fun; what was popular; what brought me attention and what brought me a feeling of belonging and what gave me personal satisfaction. I couldn't have cared less what pleased God or what brought honor and glory to God. I only dwelt on what would bring me what I wanted.

I didn't want to get in trouble though- so periodically I was willing to modify my behavior in order to escape punishment or to fool somebody long enough to get what I wanted. But even in those times when I modified my behavior- I was doing that for self- centered reasons- not to bring glory and honor to Jesus Christ.

I gave to the poor- not because it honored God- but so I could get a good feeling about myself. I helped people- but once again- I didn't help anyone because it was a form of worship to Jesus Christ- I helped people because it made me feel better about my own personal goodness.

I never read the Bible because it looked very boring to me- the only time I remember ever praying was when I thought I was going to die in Hurricane Camille and when my grandfather had a heart attack.

I went to Church because my parents made me, and I was an altar boy because that allowed me to play cards during the service with another altar boy in the back instead of having to listen.

I played football; went to parties; loved the girls and made the Honor Roll- primarily because I was afraid of the wrath of my father. So I guess you could say that I was red bloodied all American male. But I was lost. I was a nice guy- but lost. I was popular- but lost. I was fun loving and energetic and upbeat – but I was lost.

My friends and I would go buy several cases of beer and go to the football stadium and drink until late at night talking about things like girls and Heaven and girls and hell and girls and God and girls and eternity. I never maliciously hurt anyone- but I couldn't have cared less about God.

A lot of people liked me; I was very popular; always was around a crowd and was the life of the party. I was asked to go to West Point and Annapolis and several colleges scouted me and wanted me to attend and I had my sights on becoming a high powered lawyer and making tons of money.

But something happened to me on the way to fulfilling all my dreams. On Friday, June 28th, 1971, I was riding around the football

stadium drinking beer with Rio Graves and saw that the lights of the Stadium were lit up. We wondered why cars were parked there since it was way too early in the year for football.

We finally decided that it must be a semi-pro practice session and so we drove up and got out. I remember walking into the stadium thinking to myself- *“Well it won’t be a total waste of time- because we will probably meet some girls in here.”*

We found a seat and I was looking for the team- when I noticed that there was a wooden platform down on the track. Over the top was assign that said, *“Just as I am”*. I had no idea what that meant. I was looking through the crowd and saw some people; that I knew and was waving at them when a young man by the name of James Robison got up to speak.

I didn’t have a clue what he was going to talk about- but when he started talking- my whole life changed. This strange man told me that I was lost; that my sin condemned me before God; that I was lost and that I was helpless to save myself. He told me that if I would repent and accept Jesus into my heart that I would be saved.

The more he talked- the guiltier I felt. I looked down and my hands looked dirty, and I began to rub them on my pants to try to wipe away the stain that I saw. I don’t know how I knew it- but I knew that what this man was saying was true. I knew that I was lost, and that Jesus could save my soul.

So, he invited whoever to come down front and I got up and started to walk down those bleachers. People started coming out of the crowd to run up and hug me. They were crying and told me that they had been praying for me. One woman told me that she has been praying for me for two years. I didn’t know how to pray. I didn’t know one single verse of Scripture. I didn’t even know John 3:16. I had no idea what I was doing except that I knew I was lost, and I knew I was headed for hell. I didn’t bow my head- I looked right at this man and begged God from the very depth of my heart for Jesus to forgive me and save my sinful soul.

And He did. That night interrupted all my plans; changed all my dreams and altered my life forever. I began to desire to walk on a straight and narrow path. I began to devour the very Bible that used to bore me. I went to Church every time the doors were opened. I prayed

all the time. I went to sleep reading the Bible: I took the Bible to school with me.

I told everybody that I knew what Jesus had done for me- my parents; my friends; my teachers and all my relatives until I drove them crazy. I passed out tracts at the Edgewater Mall parking lot on Saturday afternoon; and in front of the nasty bookstore downtown. I started a Bible study group and within two months we had eight young people in that Bible Study.

Why did I do all this? What happened to me? Why did I all of a sudden begin to love the things that I used to hate and hate the things I used to love? Was it just because it was a fad; or because I was going through a stage in my life or because I was such a great person? No. It was because I really did get saved that night and God changed my nature and 36 years later I am still preaching the Gospel that I used to make fun of, and I am loving the Christ who saved my wretched soul.

When I changed it created no small stir. It upset and worried everyone who knew me. It was a dramatic change; it was radical, and it was complete. I no longer had any desire to walk in darkness and I began to love the light. This is what John meant by what he says here in these two verses and so we all need to examine our own hearts, beloved to see if we really are in the faith. Because he who walks in darkness is not saved and he who is saved walks in light. 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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