

So That You May Know

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

Chapter 3- The True Test of Salvation- Part 1

22. Belief in God and Belief in the Reality of Sin Part 5

WAOY Wednesday 05/09/07; WOSM Tuesday 11/01/22

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 first part of John’s apostolic test which is covered in verses 5-7 - which says that if a person is saved- then he does not walk in darkness. Today I want to go over the second part of John’s test that is found in verses 8-10 which discusses the reality of sin. So, let’s read those verses again together:

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.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, the greatest issue with Mankind is sin. Sin is the great problem for all people. This has been true ever since the Garden of Eden. But even though this is true- over the last several years, many in the modern Church have tried to shift the focus of God's people unto other things like money, possessions, health, self-esteem, and psychological well- being.

These false teachers say that a lack of money; a lack of good health; a lack of possessions; or low self- esteem are the biggest problems that people face today- and that is simply not true.

Since the end of the Second World War, the Christian Church- especially here in America- has been under a relentless assault over just what Message it is supposed to preach. Part of the reason that this assault has occurred is because the United States of America has enjoyed unprecedented financial and material prosperity for nearly 60 uninterrupted years.

This nation has been more blessed than any nation in the history of the world and this overwhelming material and financial prosperity has captured our hearts and minds and it has successfully brought forth a new "gospel" in the Christian Church- the "gospel" of health, wealth, and prosperity.

But the Bible teaches that man's greatest problem is not a lack of money or a lack of material goods or low self- love. The Bible doesn't teach that Jesus died to save us from low expectations and unfulfilled dreams. The Bible doesn't teach that it is God's will that every believer have lots of money and new shiny cars and big homes and the Bible doesn't teach that a sign of Christian Faith is a large bank account and a leer jet. That kind of teaching is heresy; it is a lie; it is false- that kind of teaching promotes covetousness, and it is evil, and it is counterproductive to true Christian Faith.

The Bible teaches that Man's biggest problem, man's greatest enemy: man's greatest hindrance is sin. Sin is the great problem with man. Sin is the great evil in life. Sin is the largest and most prevailing enemy that ever was confronted by any man.

Today- very few Churches and very few preachers preach and teach about sin the way that Christians have done for over 19 centuries-

and even when they do mention sin- they seldom teach about it in a Biblical sense. Many teach today that sin is wrong because it negatively affects *us*- that the reason that sin is wrong is because it costs *us* money, or it costs *us* our marriage or it hurts people that we love; or that it stops *us* from fulfilling our dreams; or that it makes us sick or it puts us in jail or makes *us* feel empty.

Now there is no doubt that sin does all that- but none of that is what makes sin to be wrong. Sin is wrong- beloved- because sin offends God. Period. That is why sin is wrong. You see, sin- like Righteousness is not about us. Sin is about God. Sin and righteousness is about God- not Man. The “gospel” of self- centeredness that is so popular today has caused us to think that God revolves around us- when actually the very opposite is true.

Sin is wrong, beloved, because sin insults the holiness of God. Sin provokes God. When we sin- we are shaking our fist into the Face of a holy God and telling Him that we don't agree with His Ways and that we don't love His Ways and we don't want His Ways and that we think that our ways are better than His and we think that our will is more important than His and we think that our desires are more vital than His- and John says that if you feel like that on an ongoing basis- it is because you are not a Christian.

And any teaching that would promote that attitude in people does not come from the Bible, nor from the Holy Spirit. If you hear a sermon and the net result of that sermon is that you are important and that you are enlarged and that people and even God Himself needs to make much of you- then that sermon that you just heard is a lie from hell.

I have heard it said that *“Boy that was a great sermon- it really pumped me up!”* But if that is the result of the sermon you heard- then that sermon did not come from the Heart of God. True sermons are not supposed to pump us up- beloved- they are supposed to pull us down and lift Jesus up. We are not the one who is to be enlarged; we are not the one to be exalted; we are not the one to be made much over- Jesus is.

We are to decrease, and Jesus is to increase. We are to become less valuable in our eyes and Jesus is to become more valuable in our eyes. We are to be reduced in importance and Jesus is to be enlarged in importance. Salvation is not about us – Salvation is about God giving vile sinners the great privilege and the high honor of being able to give

God the Glory that He is entitled to receive. Our goal and our dreams and our ambitions and our desires and our will are all supposed to crumble at the Feet of Jesus and die- and we are to be bond slaves of the Lord Christ and to take up our cross and manifest His Will in the earth.

Jesus doesn't call men to come to Him and become great. No, Jesus calls men to come to Him and die. You don't get saved so that you can fulfill all your ambitions- you get saved so that your ambitions can all cease to exist, and you live only to glorify God!

The unprecedented prosperity that this nation has enjoyed over the last sixty years has been successful in invading the Church and changing the Gospel of God to a social and a psychological "gospel". Instead of preaching that Jesus died to save us from our sins- today we preach that Jesus died to save us from low expectations. Instead of teaching people that the single biggest problem with man is his sin- we teach people today that the single biggest problem with man is not realizing his full potential.

The glorious Gospel that for nearly 2,000 years reduced men to beating their chest in agony over the realization of their own sinfulness and which compelled them to cry out to God for the Mercy and Grace to save their undeserving and wretched souls has been changed to a bubble gum pop psychology "gospel" that teaches that God owes you and you need to learn how to demand what you are entitled to and don't be satisfied with less.

How arrogant! How selfish! How wicked can we be? May God deliver us from such blasphemy. Preaching holiness and the evil of sin has become almost non-existent today in many Churches. As a result of this change of message in the pulpit- most people no longer have a true biblical view of sin today. And the consequences of this lack of a biblical view of sin is that millions of people who love Jesus are enslaved by the ravages of the greatest enemy that man has ever had- sin.

Now brothers and sisters- I realize that preaching like this is not popular today- but I fear God and I have a duty to preach the whole counsel of God- so this message is very important- even if it is hard to listen to.

The pulpit is basically silent today about things like greed; self-gratification; covetousness because these things have lost their stigma

in people's mind and are actually considered today to be godly and virtuous by the modern Church.

Ever since the Fall of Man- mankind has tried to deny the reality of sin- even though everyone is intimately aware of its presence.

Look what the inspired Word of the living God says about this in **Romans 2:14-16:**

14 For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves,

15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,

16 on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

It is normal today for people to minimize sin or to even redefine it. It is common to hear great learned men say that the reason that a person does evil is because of what others have done to him. Almost all modern Psychology and Sociology is based on the pagan notion that men are born "good" and that it is something that happens to him *externally* that makes him "bad". These people teach that the only way to make a "bad" person to become "good" is to teach him certain techniques (and give him lots of chemicals) which will cause him to *internally* change himself.

But that teaching is 180 degrees out of sync with Scripture. The Bible says that all men are born bad- they are born in sin, and they are shaped in iniquity. The Bible says that the reason that a person sins is because in his heart- he is already a sinner. The Bible teaches that what makes a person to be bad in what is on the inside of him- his nature is corrupt and evil and that every imagination of his own heart is only evil continually.

The Bible then teaches that Man is utterly helpless to his sin- he is a slave to it- and that he is at the same time dead to God and completely incapable of changing himself. The Bible teaches that what makes a man to be good is that an external Savior will deliver him from his sin by changing his internal nature by a supernatural miracle of Grace and Love.

So, these two views are completely opposite from each other, and they are diametrically opposed to each other and cannot ever be reconciled with each other.

So, because this is true- the Apostle John didn't waste his time trying to build up the self-esteem of his readers by trying to make them feel better about themselves. No, John knew that the primary problem with man is sin- so he wrote his second test of true Salvation down so that we would all have a healthy and Biblical view of sin and the ravages of sin and the importance of eliminating sin from our lives.

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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