

# So That You May Know

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

### Chapter 3- The True Test of Salvation- Part 1

#### 24. Belief in God and Belief in the Reality of Sin Part 7

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WAOY Friday/Monday 05/11-14/07; WOSM Thursday 11/03/22

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing to our verse by verse “journey” through the Epistle of **1 John**, and today I want to continue to look at what John taught about “The Biblical View of Sin”. So let’s open our Bibles and read **1John 1:8-10** 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.**

Now on the last broadcast, we were going over the Apostle John’s test of true Salvation by going over his Biblical definition of sin. In order to comprehend the human condition correctly- we must have a biblical view of humanity rather than the view that the pagan world gives.

John wrote the three verses that we just read for a very specific reason. We must understand, brothers and sisters, that John He wasn’t just writing generically about sin in these verses- no, John was giving the Christian Church inspired guidance on how to combat very specific false teaching about sin that was abounding in his day.

All throughout Asia Minor during the first century- there were a great number of false and deceitful teachers proclaiming a warped message about Christ and Sin.

In addition to the Gnostic lie of Docetism, that we already studied, which taught that Christ’s Body only *appeared* to be human- but was really nothing more than spirit- there was an assortment of other heresies that were gaining in popularity in that region during that time

like Cerinthianism, which taught that Christ's divine spirit descended down to Him at the moment of His baptism- but left Him at His Crucifixion; and various versions of Greek philosophy which is the foundation of all Gnosticism.

Although these teachings were all different- they did have one thing in common- they all denied the biblical reality of both Sin and Evil.

Those who were deceived by these teachings came into the Christian Church in John's day and began to teach believers that since all spirit was good and all flesh was bad- that what they did in their flesh was not a real serious issue- since it was bad anyway. The net result of this false teaching is that sin began to be not only acceptable in people's minds- but sin was actually *welcomed* to these deceived people as defining the great difference between the flesh and the spirit.

As the Apostle John came into contact with these false teachings- he knew that he has to stop them at the door, or they would seep over into the Church and the Truth about Sin would be forever lost.

So, John wrote these inspired words in these three verses to give us a true test about the reality of sin.

Now let me pause here for just a moment and say this. Anytime we begin to discuss Doctrine like this- we must return back to what we have already studied. In **1John 1:3**- the Bible clearly teaches that if we desire to be in right fellowship with God the Father and with Jesus Christ- we must also be in right fellowship with John.

As an Apostle- John was specially chosen and ordained and along with all the other Apostles- John had the God given authority to establish Christian Doctrine. All Christian Doctrine was established by those men whom God inspired to write Scripture- especially the Epistles. So, when John describes something for us- this is not just John's opinion.

Brothers and sisters – you and I cannot read what John or Paul or Peter says and then put our own spin on it- no, it is our duty to study what John and the other Apostles said and then research it and break it down so that we may comprehend what these holy men wrote so that what we believe and what we teach is in accordance with them.

Think about it. How could anyone be correct if what they believe or teach is out of sync with the men whom God Almighty anointed to pen down the New Testament Scriptures? That would be impossible. If

my view or my understanding of sin or if your understanding of sin is different than what John says here in these three verses- Then our understanding of sin is a false and a wrong understanding. Another way of saying this is that if our view of sin or anything else is not in alignment with John's view- then it is unscriptural or unbiblical- because John's view is what the Bible says because John helped to write the Bible.

So, John's view as recorded in Scripture is inspired; John's view here in this Epistle is inerrant; John's view is infallible; and John's view of Sin and Salvation and Everything else is the one true and correct view- because it is in alignment with Peter and Paul and Jesus and Moses and is the correct view for all of us today.

This further distinguishes those men from us. If I were to say that my view is inspired- or if any man today were to say that if anyone doesn't agree with them- then they are wrong- they would be overstepping their authority. If any man today says that they hear directly from God and that their words are equally inspired as Scripture and equally as infallible and equally as inerrant as Scripture- and that all men must agree with them- then that person is self- deluded and should not be followed, because no man can say that today.

But what we *can* say and what we *must* say is that Scripture is inspired, and Scripture is infallible and Scripture is inerrant and the best that any of us can say today is that we are in agreement with Scripture because the one single true interpretation of Scripture is absolute and objective and is not a matter of opinion or personal viewpoint and every person on earth including all the Pastors are subject to the authority of Scripture.

So, our struggle today- beloved- is not to *obtain* Divine Revelation- because we already have obtained Divine Revelation. Our struggle today is not to try to hear from God- because God speaks today solely through His Son- Jesus Christ. Our struggle today is not to create any new Christian Doctrine- because all Christian Doctrine has already been created. Our job is not to establish the Christian Church on the earth- because that one single Christian Church has already been established.

No, our job is very simple. We, who make up the visible Church on earth today, are to study the already existing Scriptures so that we may be approved by God as a skilled craftsman- so that we are not

novices and so that we do not twist the Scriptures to our own destruction and so that we do not go around and tickle people's ears or entertain them with what they want to hear- but so that we may speak the truth in love.

Our job is that once we correctly and rightly interpret the Word of Truth and we arrive at the reality of what the Bible says- we are then to graciously humble ourselves to those words. By doing this- we are worshipping the Lord and we are bringing great honor to Him; and we are showing our respect and admiration for that which God has said by studying it and submitting to it.

So therefore, we must teach that the Pope of Rome does not have the authority to define Truth any more than I do. That also means that television evangelists do not have the power to create or even define Doctrine any more than you do. We cannot, beloved, reshape Christianity into our own image and likeness. We all must graciously submit to the absolute standard of Truth and Christian Faith- which is the Holy Scriptures. Any deviation from the Scriptures in either belief or practice is in effect the creation of a new religion- because true Christianity is firmly based in Scripture.

Now what all this means is this:

If by reading and studying what John says here about sin- we see that our understanding of sin is in alignment with John – then Praise God- our view of sin has been confirmed as being correct. But if after we read and study this passage here in **1 John**- we see that our comprehension of sin is out of alignment with John- then we have the responsibility and the duty to repent and to adopt that which John teaches here about sin.

Our views may make perfect sense to us- and we may be very sincere about our beliefs- but if, after studying the Scriptures- we see that our view is off base- we must reject our view and accept what Scripture says. That is what I mean by submitting to the authority of Scripture.

So, the issue is not that I am right and anybody who disagrees with me is wrong- no, no, not at all- I have never said that and I do not believe that. I have just as much opportunity to be wrong as anyone else. What I am saying here is that all of us must be very careful that what we believe and what we teach is in accordance with Scripture- because the Bible is right.

Now I want to repeat something that I said earlier here. Beloved, we do not have the right or the luxury of teaching something or even believing something that is not taught in Scripture. To teach something that is in conflict with Scripture is a sin- and most all of us would agree with that- but we have to go even further because John makes it clear here in the first part of this first chapter- that if we desire at all to be in right standing and in right fellowship with Jesus Christ- we must be in one mind and one accord with John about these issues. So that means, Christian friends, that we cannot, and we must not even *believe* any differently than John about these issues.

The understanding and interpretation of Scripture is therefore not a matter of personal opinion, beloved. Biblical Truth is not subjective, and the meaning of Scripture is not determined by emotional whims.

Biblical Truth is objective and firmly established and the correct interpretation of Scripture is not simply a matter of personal opinion. That is why it is so solid and why it is trustworthy and why it is dependable- precisely because it transcends human logic and is higher than changing cultural standards.

We are expressly commanded not to put our own personal spin on anything that is in the Bible **2Peter 1:20&21** tells us:

**20** But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is *a matter* of one's own interpretation,

**21** for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

So, we have to study and we have to spend the time to investigate; and we have to value Scripture enough, my friends, to struggle with the Bible until we come to a right and proper and true understanding of that which God has said or we will get a wrong and incorrect understanding.

Now I have been told by many that I am being naïve about this. I have been told that people simply are not going to study their Bibles, and that I am wasting my time saying these things.

My response is this. I fully realize that most people are simply not going to study their Bibles. But that is precisely what is wrong in the modern Church. Why do you think that so many today don't have answers to life's problems? Why do you think that so many people

today are investigating and accepting ancient heresies? Why do you think that so many today are falling for the same traps that people fell into 1900 years ago? It is because Bible knowledge is at an all-time low.

I really believe that the real issue with us today is not one of time at all- but how much value we place on the Bible. Most all of the people who tell me that they don't have time to study the Bible always seem to have plenty of time to watch television and they always seem to have plenty of time to go shopping; and they always seem to have plenty of time for activities that they like. So, I really don't buy the excuse that people don't study the Bible because of a lack of time.

No, the real issue for most of us today is one of value. How valuable is God's Word to us? How important is it to you on a scale of 1-10 that you know what God has said?

I hear people tell me all the time that they believe every single word in the Bible- and I know that when they say that- they mean well- but really and truly saints- how do you know you believe every word in the Bible if you have never read it?

People will answer me and say, "*Well, I believe every word in the Bible because it is God's Word!*" And again- I know that they mean well when they say that- but if it is God's Word then doesn't it deserve our attention? I mean why did God give it to us so we won't read it and so we won't know what it says and so we will remain unfamiliar and ignorant of the only Book that God gave to Man?

And what do we tell all of those people who were tortured and murdered so that the Bible could be translated into English and would be easier for us to read- that we were just too busy watching the NBA finals or planting our petunias?

So, I look at this issue as a matter of value. And if the Bible is not really that big a deal- then go ahead and feel good about ignoring it. But if the Bible is precious to you; and if reading and studying and knowing inspired, inerrant, and infallible Words is important to you- then I promise you- you will find time to spend with it.

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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