

# So That You May Know

## An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 5:6-8** Chapter 26- Understanding and Valuing the Doctrine of the Trinity 244 Our Triune God Part 16

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WAQY Tuesday 09/02/08

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 continue to look at what John taught about "The Doctrine of the Trinity". So, let's open our Bibles and read **1John 5:6-8**- again together:

**6 This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.**

**7 For there are three that testify:**

**8 the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.**

Now on the last broadcast- we were going over just how important it is for the Church to know and to rightly preach Who Jesus is. For almost five chapters- the Apostle John has been teaching us that there are four things that are essential to being a Christian:

1. Love of God and for God
2. Keeping God's Commandments
3. Loving the Brethren
4. A Correct Understanding of Who Jesus is

And on the last broadcast- we were going over a time in Church History when the Christian Faith almost lost its understanding of Who Jesus is. This time is called the Arian Controversy of the fourth century and it involves a battle within the Church over the Deity of Jesus Christ.

And I have been trying to show you over the last several broadcasts how that putting Sound Doctrine on the back burner got the Church in real hot water in the fourth century. The effort by the Church to try to

escape their responsibility to guard the Truth resulted in the Arian heresy becoming so big that it nearly destroyed the Church.

Now the lesson here, if we will learn this lesson, is that when heresy enters into the Church- and periodically it will- we must deal with it Scripturally and head on or else it will grow to become a huge issue.

Now we must be very careful that we do not do great damage to the revealed Truth of God, dear friends, by either minimizing or marginalizing the exactness of Scripture when it comes to Doctrine- especially about the Doctrines of Grace and of Jesus Christ and of the Sovereignty of God.

So the Council of Nicaea met in the city of Nicaea in what is modern day Turkey on June 19, 325. And 300 bishops from around the world gathered to hear and see and comprehend exactly what the Bible taught about the Deity of Christ.

Arius, the heretic was teaching that Christ was a created being and not God wrapped in human flesh. Arius said that Christ was neither Divine, nor was he truly human, but was a “mediator” between God and humans- something in between God and humans- a kind of demi-god, if you will. In fact, this is exactly how Arius spoke of Christ.

According to Arius, Christ was the firstborn of all creation- higher than any other angelic creature- God- like- but a creature made by the Creator nonetheless.

And as I said before- much that Arius said about Christ’s humanity was true- he just didn’t bother to include the Scriptures that dealt with Christ’s Divinity in his argument. So even though Arius was speaking partial truth- he was grossly incomplete and that incompleteness gave people a false impression of Christ- and Arius knew that.

So the sum of this matter is that we are left today with having one of three options about Jesus.

Option one is that Jesus was not God and He knew that He was not God. And yet He insisted on saying that He was God. And that makes Jesus to be a liar- because He was purposely trying to deceive people into thinking that He was God when He knew good and well He wasn’t. But if that is true- then Jesus was not noble or good at all- but was actually evil.

Option two is that Jesus was not God but He thought that He was. And that would make Jesus to be a lunatic- who was mentally unstable and similar to those people who think they are Napoleon or Julius Caesar. And if that was true- then Jesus needed to be on medication and institutionalized- but was certainly not somebody that we needed to love and follow after.

But that leaves option three and that is- Jesus was exactly Who He said that He was. That He was God Almighty wrapped in human flesh and therefore- He deserved to be worshipped because He was God- just like the Bible teaches.

Now the Church in the fourth century didn't have any formal written doctrine beside the Bible. And the Church didn't have access back then to the tools that we have today like Commentaries and Concordances and Dictionaries and historical books. No, just buying one book would take about a year's wage- so most people- even in the Church didn't even own a Bible. There were no libraries; no Christian book stores; no internet; no computers; no Bible software; and no way for the average Christian to know and understand deep theological issues.

So I can understand why the Church was fought so hard in the fourth century. But what is much harder to grasp is why we are so confused about these things in our day. Because we do have all those tools available to us and yet most people today don't know as much about Doctrine as people did in the fourth century- and we really need to fix that problem, beloved.

Now you would think that the development of a Creed and the formal excommunication of Arius from the Church in 325 A.D, along with 300 bishops would have settled the matter of the false teaching of Arianism. But like all false teachings- heresy never really dies- it never goes away completely. It is either successfully defended against in each successive generation or it eventually overtakes the weak and simple minded.

So while Arianism was cast out of the Church in the Council of Nicaea- it was not eliminated. Neither was it defeated by the excommunication of Arius and all those who agreed with him. Neither was Arianism defeated by the development of a Creed.

And this illustrates a very important point as it pertains to the preservation of Biblical Truth and the removal of false teaching.

Church Councils do not preserve Biblical Truth. Developing a Creed does not preserve Biblical Truth. The only way; the sole way; the single way for Sound, Biblical Truth to be preserved in the Church is for each succeeding generation to study the Bible all over again and learn it and love it and live it and teach it to faithful men who in turn will hand it down to others. Look at what Paul said about this to the pastor of the Church at Ephesus in **2Timothy 2:1&2:**

**1 You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**

**2 The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.**

So here- Paul told Timothy to take the things that Timothy had heard from Paul and many other witnesses who had also seen the Lord and for Timothy to write these things down and commit them to men who would be faithful; who in turn would teach others also. So Paul told Timothy to learn Sound Doctrine himself; and then raise up godly and faithful men in his Church who he could pass Biblical Truth to; and then they in turn would give it to others. In other words, Sound, Biblical, inspired, orthodox, Truth from the very Heart and Mouth of God Almighty must be taught; and it must be learned; and it must be loved; and it must be valued; and it must be protected; and it must be defended; and it must be obeyed; and then that Truth must be passed on to the next generation- who will pass it on to still others. And this is the only way for heresy to be identified and defeated.

You see, dear friends, we Americans put a very high premium on individuality. We like it when people have a fresh approach to the things of life. We buy products because they say, "New and Improved" on the label. We want things to be better and smarter and easier and simpler and bigger and more luxurious than that which came before it- and to some degree that is a good thing.

But not when it comes to the things of God. Individualism is not the goal in Christianity- conformity is the goal. We are never told in Scripture to be individuals in Christ- we are told to be conformed to the Image of Jesus Christ. So unlike our American culture- individuality in the Church is not good- it is rebellion. Christ never invited people to come to the Cross so that they could fulfill their dreams. No, we are

told to come to the Cross to die- so that we might have the honor and the privilege of seeing God fulfill His Plan in the earth.

Being a Christian does not allow some giant or power that lives inside of us to rise up and be free. That is paganism. No, coming to Christ slays the giant of self that lives inside of us and frees the bought and paid for slave to follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

We are never told in Scripture to spread our wings and fly in Christ. We are told to come and die to ourselves and to live for Him. We are not told anywhere in Scripture to seek a new take on the Gospel that will fit better into modern society. We are told to repeat the very same words that God breathed and to not be ashamed of those words.

So we should not praise or value or uphold individuality in the Church. We should not admire people who do what is right in their own eyes. No, we should only value how much we are being molded and shaped and formed to the image and likeness of Jesus Christ and uphold those who are faithful to Scripture.

And this is what Jude meant when he talked about the “common salvation”. We are not to remake Christianity- we are to conform to it. We are not to seek after new revelations- we are to study and learn and love and live the existing Revelation of Holy Scripture. We are not to re-invent the wheel when it comes to the Church we are to follow in the footsteps of those who have gone before us and who followed the Words of God. We are not to operate “outside the box” or function within a new paradigm. We are to be a part of the very *same* Church that Jesus Christ set up and which His Apostles founded and the very same Church over which He is the Head.

No one; no church; no preacher; no evangelist; no author has any authority from God to stick a “New and Improved” label on the Gospel. The Gospel is sufficient just like it is. It doesn’t need to be updated; it doesn’t need to be improved; it doesn’t need to be fixed- it isn’t broke-; it doesn’t need to be changed; altered; corrected; or repackaged. No, the Gospel needs to be preached; and proclaimed and heralded. And the Gospel needs to be preached rightly and fully and it needs to be preached fearlessly with power and authority and conviction and anointing from the lips of saved, born again, regenerated, dedicated and consecrated men of God who actually live what the Gospel says.

The only thing that is wrong with Church today is that we have far too many people who think they are saved-yet who haven’t been

born again. People who are in the Church and who are hindering the saved people who actually want to serve God.

You see, true, Gospel Preaching is not about flash or style or entertainment or pizzaz or being cool or clever or hip or “with it” or acceptable or pleasing to the ears of lukewarm or unsaved souls. And preaching is not about using a new take or a different angle or receiving some new revelation or chasing some new thing or running after some new wave of God’s glory. We don’t need a “new thing”, we need the “first thing” that God gave and that God sanctioned.

Preaching is not about how many people think you’re great or how much money you have coming in or how many seed partners you’ve got or how big your church building is or what kind of car you drive or how many body guards you’ve got or how big your house is or what kind of rings are on your fingers or how many people hoop and holler when you preach. Preaching is worship. Preaching is about being faithful. Preaching is about being faithful to God; faithful to the essence of Scripture; faithful to the text of the Bible and faithful to the propositional and grammatical interpretation of that which came from the very Mouth and Mind and Heart of Almighty 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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