

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 246 Our Triune God Part 18

WAOY Thursday 09/04/08

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

Now I have been going over the issue of just how vital it is that our confession of Who Jesus is be biblical for quite some time now- this is the eighteenth broadcast in this series on **1John 5:6-8**. And I am not belaboring the point here- but simply carrying out the mission that I believe any genuine Bible Study should have.

If you believe that the Bible is the inspired, infallible, and inerrant Word of the living God- then by default- you also must believe that this makes the Bible to be the single most unique Book on earth. And it is

the most important Book on earth- because it is a perfect record of Who God is and what God said and what God did.

There is no other reliable and trustworthy Source that exists on the face of the earth except the Bible where we can go to find out how to go to Heaven; or how to obtain Righteousness; and what the Church is supposed to look like.

Every other book; every other sermon; every other song; every other utterance by any man at any time other than the 66 Books of the Holy Bible are, at best, flawed; and they pale in comparison to the authoritative; eternal; and relevant Words of Scripture. No other statement by any man at any time for any reason other than what is contained in this one single Book can be trusted to guide our eternal souls.

So as sons and daughters of the Lord God- we should ask and answer three questions about every Word; every Sentence; every Paragraph; every Chapter of every Book of the Bible:

1. What did God actually say?
2. What did God *mean* by what He said?
3. How can I apply this Divine Truth to my life in the 21st Century?

And we have to come to terms with this one thing, dear friends- it matters what God has said. What God said is more important; and more valuable; and more lasting and more steadfast than anything that I have said or that you or anyone else have said.

And because it matters what God said- the Bible is filled with warnings against adding anything or taking anything away from what it says. And nowhere is this vital issue illustrated for us more clearly than right here in this passage in **1John 5**.

If you haven't heard anything else I have said on these broadcasts- I beg you to hear this- your understanding of Who Jesus is- is paramount to whether or not you will go to Heaven.

If it is true that Salvation is in His Name alone- then Who Jesus is matters. If Who Jesus is doesn't matter- then Salvation is not in His Name alone- and there might be half a dozen different ways to be saved.

Now anytime I begin to talk like this- I hear from those of you who say that this stuff doesn't matter. But I pray that I can persuade you differently on today's broadcast.

I want to describe for you a real person's belief in Jesus and see if you can tell me if this man is saved or not.

This man believes that Jesus was real. This man believes that Jesus was born of a virgin and that He fulfilled almost 400 Old Testament prophecies concerning the Jewish Messiah. This person believes that Jesus performed all the miracles that the Bible assigns to Him. This man believes that Jesus is the Christ of God; this man believes that Jesus was arrested; that He suffered horribly; and that He died on the Cross. This man believes that God raised Jesus from the dead. This man also believes that Jesus ascended into Heaven and is coming back.

This man honors Jesus more than most everybody I know. Every single time that this man says the name of Jesus- he uses a phrase just after His name like, "*Blessed be His Name*" or "*May He forever be praised*". If this guy says the name of Jesus fifteen times in a sentence- he says that phrase fifteen times.

This man also believes that Jesus was a great Teacher and he tries every day to obey what Jesus taught and he endeavors to live his life according to the Sermon on the Mount. This man loves his wife; he gives freely of his money; he obeys the laws of the land; he helps his neighbors.

But this man categorically rejects that Jesus was God. He thinks that it is ridiculous to believe that Jesus was God wrapped in human flesh. This man asks the questions, "*How do you nail God to the Cross?*" and "*How do men kill God?*" Since this man does not accept Christ's Divinity- he refuses to pray to Jesus; he will not bow to Jesus nor worship Jesus.

So, the \$64,000 question is, "*Is this man saved? Is this man going to Heaven? Is this man born again? Is this man a Christian?*"

And the answer is, "*No!*" This man is not a Christian; he is not saved; he is not born again; and according to the Bible- he is not going to Heaven. Now before you get angry with me and call me narrow minded and mean and hard- you can ask this man yourself if he is a Christian and he will not hesitate to tell you himself, that he is not a Christian precisely because he is a Muslim.

And everything that I described to you is what the Koran teaches about Jesus. Muslims believe that Jesus was a great man- but just a man. They honor Jesus more than most Christians do and they believe

almost everything that the Bible teaches about Jesus- almost everything. Everything except the fact that Jesus was God.

And that one area of rejection is so huge and so important and makes so much difference in the two religions that at the end of the day- Christianity and Islam have nothing of any substance in common with each other.

And what is tragic is that today most Muslims fully realize what the dividing line is between the two religions while most Christians today don't know. The area of disagreement between Islam and Christianity centers around Who Jesus is.

And by the way- that one issue of Who Jesus is – is also what divides us from Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, Shintoism, Judaism, and every other false religion and human philosophy on the face of the earth.

Christianity alone and singularly has for over 2,000 years confessed without doubt or hesitation that Jesus Christ was God Almighty wrapped in human flesh and that one single confession has been the source of almost all the conflict and all the persecution and all the trouble that has come against the Church during that time from around the world.

People don't persecute Christians because they love their wives or because they work hard or because they pray or because they do good deeds and or because they perform acts of mercy in the community. That is not why Christians were fed to the lions; that is not why Christians were burned alive and stoned to death and sawed in half and thrown in jail.

According to history- the Church that was in Ephesus, right after the Apostle John died, routinely had to get new pastors and elders to preach and teach because whoever shepherded the flock of God in that town was regularly arrested and killed. Why? Because they preached that we are to love our enemies? No. Because they taught that we are to give? No. Because they taught that Jesus died on the Cross? No, everybody knew that it was an historical fact that Jesus has been crucified. Back in the second century- there was no debate in Ephesus about that point. So why were all the ministers martyred in that city? Because they taught that Jesus was God.

So, when somebody says today that it doesn't matter Who Jesus is- go tell them to tell all the martyrs who gave their lives over that one issue that they all died in vain.

Now as we have studied over the centuries- there have been several attacks that rose up from inside the Church to try to distort or change or add to what the Bible says about Who Jesus is.

And we have gone over the Arian Controversy of the fourth century in great detail. But you need to know that there was a huge battle that was waged several years *before* Arius did what he did.

A Roman named Sabellius rose up in the third century and began to teach that God operated in what he called, “modes” throughout history- which in effect denied The Doctrine of the Trinity. Sabellius taught that God was Jesus alright- but that Jesus was all that there is. Sabellius taught that in the Old Testament- Jesus was God the Father; and during the Gospel years- Jesus was God the Son; and now Jesus is God the Holy Spirit.

So Sabellius agreed that Jesus was God- but he disagreed that God was eternally manifested in all three Persons of the Trinity continuously. This heresy was exposed as also being as unbiblical as was Arianism and Sabellius and his followers were also excommunicated from the Church and utterly discredited.

For almost 1700 years, Sabellianism or Modalism as it also was known was scorned by anyone who understood the Bible correctly until the early years of the 20th century when Modalism made a huge comeback. In 1916, a Pentecostal group broke away from the Assemblies of God organization over the issue of Modalism. And since that time, several groups have risen up which have adopted the very same ancient heresy that Sabellius taught in the third century. Today these groups go by various names, like Oneness; or Jesus Name Churches- and most of them are very nice and friendly people. But their theology about Who Jesus is- is without doubt the very same theology as was the heretic Sabellius and it is wrong and those who want a Biblical confession about Jesus should not fellowship with these people.

And you need to know that some of the most popular television preachers today are followers of the ancient heresy of Modalism and they categorically deny The Doctrine of the Trinity. And most people today like the people of the third and fourth century honestly don't care that that is true. They see these preachers doing good things and they see them encouraging poor people and they reason to themselves that that is more important than what they teach about Jesus. They say,

“Well, they must be right because their churches are packed out and they have international television ministries and millions of book sales and they have private jets and body guards- so that must mean that what they preach is okay- right?”

Well, as a matter of fact it doesn't mean that at all. And the real question that needs to be asked is why don't these people teach what the Bible says about Jesus? Who told them that they can teach something about Jesus that is contrary to the Scriptures? God didn't. The Spirit didn't. So, who did? I'll tell you who gave them their doctrine about Jesus- Arius and Sabellius and others who were labeled to be heretics and who were excommunicated from the Church because they would not repent for their false teaching.

But John said that what we believe and confess about Jesus matters and that is isn't okay to believe wrongly and to teach wrongly about Who Jesus is and I believe that it ought to matter to us too.

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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