

# So That You May Know

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

### Chapter 8- Fathers, Children, and Young Men

#### 60. Part 1

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WAOY Tuesday 07/31/07; WOSM Friday 12/23/22

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1 John**, and today I want to begin a new section of our study and look at what John taught about fathers, children, and young men. So, let's turn in our Bibles to **1 John 2:12-14** and read those verses together:

**12** I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake.

**13** I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father.

**14** I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

Now these three verses sit in between two very important points that John makes here in chapter 2. In verse 9-11- as we have just studied- John was giving us a clear definition of what it means to be saved- saved people love all of those who are saved. And so that no one would think that John was just giving us suggestions here- John clearly says that loving the brethren is part and parcel to what it means to be saved when he said in verse 11:

**But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.**

Now because John says in **1John1:15** that in Jesus Christ there is

no darkness at all- this serves to say that if we do not love our brethren to the degree that Scripture commands us- if we hate our brethren- or in other words- if we just love them less than Scripture commands us to do- then we are in darkness and if there is no darkness in Jesus Christ at all- then those who do not love the brethren are not truly saved.

So, we have just finished this test of Salvation and we are approaching another test which is found in verses 15 & 16 about how that saved people do not love the world- but in between these two tests- John writes the three verses that we are studying now.

So, verses 12-14 of **1John 2** serves as a sort of parenthesis; a break in his thinking; or an aside. So, it is very important that we find out just why John interjected this thought here and what John meant when he wrote down these inspired, infallible, and inerrant words.

Just as John has finished exhorting the early Church to make sure that they love each other fervently- John then says:

**I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake.**

In other words, John is saying-

“I have just given you a test of true salvation whereby you can measure yourselves to see if you really are in the Faith. I have reminded you of the demands which God makes upon those who carry His Name and the responsibility that we have as believers to love each other and to do whatever it takes; expend whatever energy is necessary to see to it that we do love each other.”

Now John takes a break away from his Doctrinal teaching here and puts on his pastor's hat and begins to remind the Church who he is and who they are and why he is writing all of this to them.

You see John's mission here in writing this Epistle was not to just give us Doctrinal Truth- but to practically minister to the people that he dearly loved. Doctrinal truth is vital if we are to have a Christian Church- because without Doctrine- no one knows what to believe or teach- but John also genuinely loved the people who were in this small church at Ephesus and he was their pastor and he wants them to know how much he loves them and he wants them to understand why he is writing all of these things to them- so that they can know and

understand Truth so that they will not be deceived and so that they will become strong in the Lord and in the power of His Might.

So, in a very tender and loving way, John interrupts his teaching about what it means to be saved here in verse 12 and wants to make sure that everyone is following what he is teaching.

So, John wants to do three things in verses 12-14. He wants to comfort these people to whom he is writing. Over almost two chapters- John has been teaching a very strong theology. The Christians Church is in danger of being swept away with the heresy of the Gnostic mystics and the Greek philosophers who are seeking to redefine what it means to be saved and what it means to be a Christian- so John has been confronting their false teaching with Sound Doctrine which comes from the Mouth of God Himself.

John has been teaching that to be saved requires that we also be holy and to be saved demands that we love all of those who are also saved.

So, John takes a break from his teaching here to address the people to whom he is teaching and makes sure that he not leaving them behind.

The second thing that John is trying to accomplish here in these three verses to encourage the people of this first century Church in particular and us by extension and he does this by telling them that these teachings that he is giving them are not new- John didn't invent them- but they are the very same requirements that Jesus taught him when Jesus walked the earth.

John wanted these people to understand that his exhortation of them to be holy and to love the brethren was not unrelated to everything else that he had taught them- but was part and parcel to the whole of Christian Theology.

You see if we were simply presented with all of the requirements of ethics and morality and holiness that Jesus expects out of us- but were not shown just how we are to do all of this in light of the supernatural miracle of Salvation- then the New Testament would be not be good news at all- it would be very bad news.

The last thing that people need after having escaped the tyranny of the law is more law. So, John is showing us and them that serving Christ after being saved is not just following rules and ordinances and

law- but it is surrendering to the Spirit Who now resides inside us and by being led by the Spirit of God- we will follow Jesus.

Thank God that the New Testament never appeals to us to do anything at all until it has first told us what Christ has already done in us.

You see, all of the Old Testament commands are given to lost people as a means by which they can try to be saved. And so, in the Old Testament- we have lost people trying in their own power and through their own human flesh to obey God's Law. And the inevitable result is that they fail. Remember if you ever break one commandment one time- in either thought word or deed- you have become a transgressor of the law. So, they get up and try harder- and they fail again. So, they get up earlier and they stay up later, and they put forth more effort to try to be holy enough to be saved and they fail; they fail; and they fail again.

Over time- this brings each person to the inevitable conclusion that they cannot keep God's law precisely because they are human. And all of their effort combined has not brought them one inch closer to God- but has only magnified their sins.

The conclusion of the law therefore is that human beings *cannot* perfectly obey God's Law, so they are then forced by the obvious fact of their own sinfulness to look for Savior. You see, the misconception about the Old Testament Law is that many believe that some people obeyed the law while others did not obey the law. But Scripture is clear- no one perfectly obeys God's Law. Not Moses; not David; not Aaron; not Isaiah; not Joshua- not you ; and not me- no human being has ever perfectly obeyed God's Law.

So, every single human being on earth by virtue of the unarguable fact that we are all violators of the law are sinners in the Eyes of God and as sinner are unfit to enter into Heaven.

So, in their desperation- these people who worked so hard to become holy enough to earn God's favor- leave the law and seek after a Savior who can rescue them from their sins. This is what the Bible means when it says in **Galatians 3:24&25:**

**24** Therefore the Law has become our tutor *to lead us* to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.

**25** But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

Because no human being can keep the law- the law becomes not a way to Salvation –but only a mirror- which reflects our own sinfulness back to us. So, as it begins to dawn on us that our sinfulness keeps us away from God- we then look to Jesus to take away our sins so that we can draw near to God.

Now many believe today that the Old Testament demanded obedience to the Law and the New Testament gives no requirement to keep the Law- but that is not true. Many think that if any requirement of behavior at all are given that that is legalism and is not Christianity- but of course that is not true. Trying to earn Salvation through human effort is what legalism is.

The difference between the Old and the New Covenants is that the under the Old Covenant- keeping the law was what qualified you as being saved. So, to the Jew- God *owed* Salvation to those who were even trying to be holy through their own human effort at keeping the law.

But God cannot be obligated to any man for any reason. And Salvation is not payment for labor. Salvation is not a reward for what we do. The Bible says that Salvation is a free gift of Grace and Mercy that by definition cannot be earned and is not deserved.

The Bible clearly teaches that Salvation is a Sovereign act of a loving and merciful God to sinful man that is brought about according to Gods Own good pleasure without regard to anything that Man has or has not done. God saves us because it pleases Him to do so- period. We do not and cannot cooperate in our own Salvation in any way, shape, or form. Salvation is all of Grace so that it can all be by Faith- so that God can receive all the Glory.

The Bible says that we are saved by something and through something else unto a third thing. Let's read **Ephesians 2:8&9:**

**8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;**

**9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.**

Now if Paul would have stopped here- we would get an incomplete understanding about Salvation. But Paul did not stop here, and he wrote verse 10 to complete this thought about Salvation:

**For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.**

So, the Bible says that we are saved *by Grace through Faith unto Good Works*.

So, what makes the New Covenant so much different than the Old is that under the Old Covenant men tried to keep the law so that they could become holy enough to be saved while under the New Covenant- we obey God out of our love for Him as a natural outflow of being saved.

So, what John has been teaching so far is that because Salvation is a supernatural miracle of Grace and Faith without human effort or cooperation- therefore Salvation is definable; it is measurable; it is tangible and it is eternal.

Not to earn Salvation but as a result of being saved John says that we are to do the works and obey God and love the brethren and to rebel against this or to not do this only proves that we have not been to Calvary yet.

So, John is comforting the people of this first century Church here in verses 12-14 and reminding them that what he is teaching here is not new- but is in perfect harmony with all of the other Apostles and with Jesus Christ Himself.

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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