

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 4:13**

Chapter 23- The Believer's Boldness in the Day of Judgment

213 The Believer's Confidence- Part 9

WAOY Thursday 07/03/08

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 Believer's Confidence in the Day of Judgment". So, let's open our Bibles and read **1John 4:17-21**- again together.

17 By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

19 We love, because He first loved us.

20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

21 And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

Now on the last broadcast- we were looking at just what John assaying in verses 17-19 and so I want to read those verses again:

17 By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

19 We love, because He first loved us.

Now the "fear" that John is talking about here is *not* fear of the dark or the fear that people have when they live alone. This fear is the fear that people have deep down within them about the Day of

Judgment. And the reason that people have fear about this Day is because we all know in our heart of hearts that even though we may be saved and even though we may be really trying to serve God- we all still sin. And our sin bothers and troubles us and that is good. Our sin *should* bother and trouble us and we *should* be broken over our sin and we should confess that sin and we should repent of that sin- but deep down- there lurks a real and constant fear that because we are *not* sinlessly perfect- that we are going to be in trouble on the day of Judgment.

And motivated by this fear- we have resorted to all kinds of things to try to give us comfort. Some people believe that because they pray a general prayer of repentance at night right before they go to bed and ask God to forgive them of all their sins – that *that* is the key that will allow them to get into Heaven by the skin of their teeth.

Others believe that since it is inevitable that we are going to die with sin in our lives- that we must pay for those sins in the afterlife. So people have developed an entire theology about how this all works that cannot be found anywhere in Scripture that teaches that saved people go to Purgatory to be purged of all their sins that they committed after they were saved and they have to stay in Purgatory until their living loved one pray enough prayers and until they pay for their sins enough to be worthy to be able to go to Heaven.

In fact, during the Reformation of the 16th century it was this very issue of Purgatory that brought about the split between Romans and Protestants. For example, in paragraph #1472 on page 370 of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* published by the Vatican it says,

“... every sin, even venial, entails an unhealthy attachment to creatures, which must be purified either here on earth, or after death in the state called Purgatory”

The catechism goes on to say in paragraph #1475 on page 371 that,

“... a perennial link of charity exists between the faithful who have already reached their heavenly home, those who are expiating their sins in purgatory and those who are still pilgrims on earth.”

Now there is a footnote attached to these two statements that

gives the reader the source or the authority by which these statements are supposedly true. And that footnote is number 84 which references The Council of Trent- and *not* the Scriptures.

In other words, the entire concept of Purgatory and the Rite of Penance and the teaching that says that saved people who die go to Purgatory to pay for their sins committed after Salvation- does *not* come from *anything* that God revealed to Man in infallible Scripture. Instead, the entire teaching about Purgatory came from the mind and heart and mouth of other human beings- who themselves were sinful.

Now look, I am not impugning the sincerity or the intentions of anyone who holds to this belief. But what I *am* doing is showing you the length that some people have gone- to try to ease the fear about the Day of Judgment that John says that we are all going to face.

In other words- what I am saying is that if you are not going to believe what the Holy Bible teaches about this and every other subject- then it really doesn't matter what else you believe. Go ahead and just take your pick- because all teaching that doesn't come from the Scriptures and from the Scriptures alone will let you down on the single most important day of your life- the Day you stand before God for Judgment.

So John teaches here that contrary to what many people say- saved people do *not* go to Heaven by the skin of their teeth. John says we enter with great confidence. So, nobody just "sneaks" into Heaven. Nobody who goes to Heaven just barely gets there. No, everybody who goes to Heaven goes there precisely because every single one of their sins has been totally and completely and eternally forgiven by the shed Blood of Jesus Christ and because the very same sinless Righteousness that Jesus earned by living perfect in this world has been imputed to them by the agency of faith alone. And so they stand in the Day of Judgment with the upmost of confidence that what Jesus did for them was sufficient to allow them to enter into Heaven with joy.

So the Truth about what God sovereignly did for us through Jesus Christ made possible by the gracious and merciful Love of God gives us the confidence that John talks about here in verse 17.

And when fear about our lack of sinless perfection begins to creep back into our minds and hearts because of the reality of our sin- John says in verse 18 that we are to look to that perfect Love hanging on the Cross and revive the Truth about Salvation being a Sovereign work of

God alone and not something that we did for ourselves. And John says that perfect Love will cast out all fear.

And then John teaches in verse 19 that the only reason that any of us loves God in any way at all- is because God first loved us. John taught that God gifted this love to us precisely because in our natural state of human depravity- no lost person loves God or the things of God.

So our love *for* God; our desire to serve God; our sincere heart that is toward God is a gift *from* God that God graciously and wondrously and supernaturally and miraculously gives to 100% of all those that He chose to save from before the foundation of the world.

So Purgatory or any other man-made system of punishment for sins is completely unnecessary- not because we do not sin- because we do still sin. But the reason that Purgatory and things like Purgatory that people have invented is not needed- is because all of our sins are already paid for. And so there is nothing that we can do that is better or more acceptable to God about our sins than what Jesus has already done.

Now let's say for just a minute for the sake of discussion that what I just said is not true. And let's just say that we *do* need to pay for our sins that we committed after we are saved. Just how would you suggest we do that? How should we pay for our sins? Because the Bible says that there is only one payment for sin- eternal death. So if John is not teaching the Truth here and these wayward religious groups are right and we all have to pay for our own sins- then we are all doomed and we are all going to hell- because only eternal damnation in hell is the rightful payment for any sin- not suffering a few years in Purgatory.

So if the Life, Death, and Resurrection of the sinless Lamb of God is not enough to pay for our sins- why would any of us ever think that something that we do would be enough?

So you see, dear friends, this very complex subject is really very simple. Either Jesus paid it all or He didn't. And if He did- then put all your trust in the finished Work of Jesus Christ to be sufficient to give you confidence in the Day of Judgment. And if Jesus didn't pay it all- then don't worry about that either because we are all doomed and there is nothing we can do that would add anything to what Jesus did.

Now I want to clarify something – lest you get the wrong idea. I am not saying that we are not supposed to repent when we do something wrong. We are supposed to both confess our sins and turn

from them. But we must understand *why* we are supposed to do these two things.

We are to confess our sins because we are to verbally and from the heart come into agreement with God about our sins. In other words- by confessing our sins we are acknowledging that God is right when He said that what we did was wrong. So we are agreeing with God about two separate things:

1. God is right in saying that what we did was sinful
2. We are guilty of transgressing against God

Now this is very interesting because order for us to do this- we have got to have several other things also be true. For example- a sin is not a sin simply because it hurts us or because it makes us sick or because it costs us money or because it hurts other people. Those things may or may not be immediately manifested about what we did- but none of those things are what causes something to be sinful. Something is sinful because it offends God and because God said it was wrong- period.

So even though we may temporarily prosper by sinning; even though we may get temporary pleasure or a temporary boost; or become temporarily successful doesn't mean that it is okay. Right and wrong do not originate from the human mind or heart. True genuine morality does not come from Man. True morality; right and wrong is *imposed* upon Man by God. So Right is what God has determined to be right and wrong is what God has determined is wrong.

Now the lost unsaved world couldn't care one whit about what God thinks. But a truly saved person does. And so, when a saved person realizes that he has done despite the spirit of Grace- he is grieved and he confesses or he comes into agreement, first of all, that God indeed has the Authority to define sin and then that person also acknowledges that he is guilty of committing that sin. And that is Biblical confession.

So if you don't think God has the right to impose His morality on you in the first place- then you cannot confess- it is impossible. Also if you refuse to acknowledge that you are guilty of committing that sin- you are also not confessing. Both things must be true in order for you to confess sin- biblically.

Then that person must turn away from that sin. And that turning away from that sin is what biblical repentance is all about- not simply saying, "I'm sorry". So if there is no turning away- then there has been no genuine repentance.

So we are safe in Jesus as long as we are in Jesus. Not everyone who says unto me, "Lord, Lord" will enter in- Jesus said and so we must make our calling and our election sure and that is done by trusting fully in the finished work of Jesus Christ and not in anything that you have or have not done.

And once you have done that- you can trust that what Jesus did for you is sufficient and all fear is gone and you can have confidence in the Day of Judgment.

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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