

# So That You May Know

## An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 5:9-12**

### Chapter 27- The Divine Witness

### 249 The Divine Witness- Part 3

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WAOY Wednesday 09/10/08

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 look at what the Apostle John taught about "the Divine Witness"- so, let's read **1John 5:9-12** again together:

**9** If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; for the testimony of God is this, that He has testified concerning His Son.

**10** The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning His Son.

**11** And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

**12** He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

Now on the last broadcast- we saw how important our witness is and how ancient Jewish law determined the credibility of a witness and we were looking very closely at verse 9- so let's read that verse again together:

**If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; for the testimony of God is this, that He has testified concerning His Son.**

Now of course the witness of men that John is talking about here in verse 9 is the witness or the testimony or the account or the record of the 40 writers who penned down the Words of God in the 66 Books of the Holy Bible. And John is telling us here that this witness is true. But then John says that there is another witness that is even greater than the witness of men- and that *greater* witness is the witness of God.

But when did God witness about Jesus Christ? Well, several times. Let's look first at **Matthew 3:13-17** together:

**13** Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan *coming* to John, to be baptized by him.

**14** But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?"

**15** But Jesus answering said to him, "**Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.**" Then he permitted Him.

**16** After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove *and* lighting on Him,

**17** and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

Now I want you to notice some very interesting things about Jesus' baptism. First of all notice that John understood perfectly that Jesus was God and that He was sinless and didn't need to be baptized because he said in verse 14:

**"I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?"**

Secondly, I want you to notice that when Jesus was baptized- He was immersed completely into the water. Read again the first part of verse 16:

**After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water;**

Now Jesus went up straightway out of the water precisely because He was under the water to be baptized. There is no such thing anywhere in the New Testament where anyone is baptized by sprinkling. Now comes another very interesting question. In what Name or by what Authority was Jesus Baptized? Surely we can see that Jesus was not baptized in the Name of Jesus. So the whole point of baptism is not that it saves us at all- that is not Scriptural. Baptism doesn't save anyone any more than anything else that we do saves us. We are saved, dear friends, by Grace through Faith in the finished

Work of Christ alone- not by speaking in tongues; not by keeping Church Sacraments and not by and through being baptized.

Jesus didn't need to be saved and yet He was Baptized. Jesus didn't need to be forgiven for any sin and yet He was baptized. But if that is true- then why was Jesus Baptized? Read again verse 15:

... **"Permit *it* at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness."**

Jesus said here that Baptism allows us to fulfill all righteousness or in other words it is part of our humble obedience to Christ after we are saved in following after God. Baptism does not and cannot save anyone. Nobody finds regeneration in the waters of baptism- nobody. And yet<sup>5</sup> after we have been saved by Grace through faith alone- we need to be baptized. We are rebelling against the Righteousness of God if we refuse to be baptized.

But what is the purpose of Baptism? Baptism, dear friends, is the public profession of faith that every sinner should make to signify that he has turned his back on his old way of life and is now a child of God and is going to walk before the Lord. And for the first 1800 or 1900 years of the Christian Church- nobody taught and nobody believed that walking down an aisle in the Church or even going to the altar was the public profession of faith that was needed- it was baptism.

It wasn't until Charles Finney began to teach about sinners walking down the aisle in the mid 1800's did this change. And with that change came the attitude that is prevalent in the modern Church that baptism after Salvation is somehow optional. Finney- who did not believe in the Sovereignty of God; Original Sin; the Blood of Jesus or the Imputation of Righteousness- is the man who coined the term, "altar call" that is so popular today. Before Finney made altar calls popular in the mid 1800's no preacher used altar calls and no Church taught it. And the reason that they didn't is because you can't find altar calls anywhere in the Bible.

Now before you get upset with me- please hear me out. Of course, I want people to be saved. But I want them to be really saved and only God can do that. I want people to be saved by the miracle of regeneration by God's Spirit and by the miracle of the Blood of Jesus washing their black heart and making it whiter than snow and I want it

to be according to the miracle of the Election of Almighty God- not because some Man manipulates people into walking down an aisle because the music put them in the mood.

It is precisely because we have lowered the bar about what it means to be saved, dear friends, that we say that someone is born again just because they shook the preacher's hand or walked down the aisle or repeated a prayer and this is why we have the legions of backslid people who think they are saved and yet do not serve God today.

Paul didn't use the methods that we use today to win souls and I believe that Paul was probably the greatest Evangelist in the History of the World. Paul taught that the public profession of faith was made in the waters of Baptism- not raising our hands or walking down the aisle. Peter didn't promote people to walk down the aisle of the Church either and neither did John and all that I am saying dear friends, is that we need to base what we do in the modern Church on the inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of the living God rather than just copy what other people do.

Listen, there is nothing wrong with going to the altar and praying with a lost soul. There is nothing wrong with witnessing to people and sharing the Gospel with people and trying to talk to them about Jesus. In fact it is wrong not to do those things. We are commanded to sow the seeds of the Gospel to every creature. But we have to understand that Salvation is not a matter of human persuasion. Salvation is not a matter of emotionally pulling someone. Salvation is not the result of human manipulation. Salvation is a supernatural miracle. Salvation is a Sovereign work of God alone and until and unless the Holy Spirit convicts that black heart- the dead sinner cannot see; he cannot hear; he cannot believe and he doesn't want to. Now a person may go through the motions- but true Salvation always produces godly fruit and if there has not been a radical transformation in the life of that individual- if there is no fruit as a result what he did- then it doesn't matter how many times he has prayed- he still isn't saved.

Charles Finney taught that preachers have the ability to manipulate people into getting saved by using special music and by using clever phrases and slogans rather than allow the Holy Spirit to convict and regenerate the lost soul- and that is not right. And like I said- the result of adding to what the Bible teaches about genuine Salvation resulted in taking away the Glory and Power and purpose of

Baptism.

Before John the Baptist began to immerse people into the River Jordan- there was no baptism- there was only circumcision. You see, under the Old Covenant- only the males were able have the sign or the symbol of the Covenant because only the males could be circumcised in their flesh. But God spoke through the prophet Jeremiah and said that there was coming a day when the First Covenant was going to be replaced with a superior Second Covenant. Let's look at **Jeremiah 31:31-34**:

**31** "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

**32** not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the Lord.

**33** "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

**34** "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the Lord, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Now read with me **Romans 2:28-29**:

**28** For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.

**29** But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

Okay- we need to be spiritual Jews and we need to have our hearts circumcised. But just how do we do that? Read with me **Colossians 2:8-15**:

**8** See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

**9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,**  
**10 and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;**  
**11 and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;**  
**12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.**  
**13 When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,**  
**14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.**  
**15 When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.**

Both men and women- who have already been justified before God by Grace alone through Faith alone in the finished Work of Christ enter into the Baptismal waters and as soon as they go under the water- God performs open heart surgery on them and their heart are forever circumcised and the public witness of their transformed life proves beyond any doubt that all that John taught about Jesus is true.

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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