

So That You May Know

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

Chapter 27- The Divine Witness

254 The Divine Witness- Part 8

WAOY Friday- Monday 09/19-22/08

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 were going over just what the third witness that John wrote here in verse 10 really is. The first witness about Who Jesus is- is Man- the 40 writers who wrote 66 authoritative and inspired Books that make up what we call The Holy Bible. Everything that is true about Jesus is found somewhere in those Books and our understanding of Who Jesus is and What Jesus does and does not do and what Jesus loves and hates should come from that record.

The second witness is that of God the father Who spoke from Heaven twice concerning Jesus and Who raised Jesus from the dead. And John tells us in verse 9 that the witness of God is ever greater than the first witness of Man. Both the witness of God and the witness of Man are external objective witnesses.

But then in verse 10- John says that there is a third witness about Who Jesus is that is also true and this third witness in an internal

witness that believers have in themselves. This third witness is more subjective than the other two but is true, nonetheless.

Now last time- we were going over why it is wrong to teach that people are filled with God's Spirit at some point after Salvation because of the fact that if the Spirit of God does not do a Sovereign supernatural Work in inside the lost man first- no one would ever be saved.

And I want to dwell on this issue more on today's broadcast. You see, dear friends, as we discovered last time- lost people are not just separated from God by their lostness- they are also blind, deaf, and have a heart of stone- precisely because as far as God is concerned- they are dead. And this deadness of lost people is a very important point in our discussion- so listen up. First- let's read **Ephesians 2:1**:

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,

Now look at verse 5:

Ephesians 2:5

even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

Now the Bible says here that something supernatural and miraculous happened to those of us who have been saved. The Apostle Paul writes here that we were "made alive". And we were made alive *first- before* we heard the Gospel; *before* we became convicted of our sins; and *before* we repented and trusted in Jesus. In fact- dead people cannot do any of that. So this new spiritual life has to enter into us *first- while* we are yet dead. And it is this sovereign Act of being made alive- or being "born again" that happens to lost people first- that causes all of the other things that we did in response to that new spiritual life.

So Paul is saying that God has Sovereignly made us alive. But now why did God have to make us alive? Because the Bible teaches that in our lost condition- we were not just sinful- but we were in fact- dead.

Now like I said- please pay close attention to what this means and what it does *not* mean. The Bible says clearly here in **Ephesians 2:1** that we were dead in our trespasses and sins. Now notice that this word means dead- not sick; dead- not unconscious; dead not without opportunity or unhappy- but stone cold dead.

So what was the first thing that this verse says that God has to do to those who were dead before they could be saved? God had to give us life; God had to make us alive.

Now notice that it isn't that God had to give us medicine and a spiritual exercise program whereby we could then *cooperate* with God in our own spiritual development. No. The Bible doesn't say that does it? No, the Bible says that God had to Sovereignly give us life- all by Himself- precisely because we had no spiritual life in us at all.

Now you may not realize this- but this is huge theological point that the Bible is making here and one that will affect how you look at everything else- so please pay close attention to this.

Now I pray that the fact that lost people are spiritually dead has been firmly planted in your mind. Lost people are dead- they are not sick and they are certainly not okay. The Bible says that all lost people are dead.

Now what two things do all dead people lack? Dead people lack the *ability* to do anything and dead people lack the *will* or the *desire* to do anything.

Now there may be some who are listening who may doubt what I just said. And if you doubt that all dead people have absolutely no will and no power to do anything- there is a sure way you can test this out to see if it is true. Go to the nearest grave yard and stand at the foot of the grave of someone you once knew. As you stand at the foot of his grave tell him you would like to give him your house- free of charge. Tell him that you want to give him your salary for the next fifty years. Tell him that you want to give him something that is very valuable to you.

No what is his response to the fantastic offer you just made? Nothing, right? Well, why didn't he take you up on your free offer of financial prosperity? Why in the world wouldn't this person see the value of what you were offering him and choose to accept your free gift? Because that person is dead. And because he is dead- he cannot appreciate the free gift; he cannot comprehend the value of your offer; and he cannot respond to your gracious gift precisely because this dead man does not possess either the will or the power to take you up on your gift. That is the deadness of death.

But if you were to miraculously resurrect that person from the dead first- and then offer him that gift- in his now alive condition- he would have the power to see and hear; and he would have the will to make

that free choice and in that alive condition- he could make that choice and he could respond to your free gift.

So by being made alive first- those who do not have either the will or the power- now have both. So now I ask you which one comes first- God making us alive or our desire to repent and trust in Jesus?

You see, unless and until the Spirit of God Sovereignly goes inside the body of that dead lost person *first* and supernaturally gives him life- that lost person does not have the will and he does not have the power to love or serve God. Because both the will to love God and the power to love God were lost to man when Adam fell.

And so there is a Sovereign Work that must be done to every single lost person *first* to restore to him the will or the desire to love God that was lost in the Fall and to restore the power or the ability to serve God that was lost in the Fall before anyone could ever be saved.

Now to prove this point- let's read **Philippians 2:13**:

for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.

Now Paul teaches here that it is God that does something inside us. So what does this verse say that God does inside us? This verse says that God is at work in us to give to us two things. Now the tense of the verb "work" here is a type of tense that actually means "alone". So God works alone- here- all by Himself. So when we read this verse- we should keep in mind that Paul is saying here that God works in us alone- without any help or cooperation from us. God works in us alone.

Now when God works alone- we call that God working *sovereignly*. For example- God made all of Creation- alone- all by Himself. Jesus paid for all of our sins- alone- all by Himself. And when God makes a decision- He doesn't counsel with any Man- He makes that decision alone or all by Himself- or sovereignly.

So Paul says here that God works inside of us- all by Himself- without any cooperation from us at all- to give to us two things that we do not already have. So what are those two things that God works in us Sovereignly to give to us that we do not already have unless God actually does work in us?

1. The will to do of God's good pleasure

2. The power to do of God's good pleasure

So we can see that the Bible says in **Philippians 2:13** that God- all by Himself- or God Sovereignly- has to work inside of us to give to us both the will and the ability to do of God's good pleasure- without any cooperation from us at all.

Now why does God have to give us both of these things if we already have them? Well, He wouldn't. The only reason why God has to give us these two things- all by Himself- is precisely because we do not already have them. But why don't we already have the will and the power to do of God's good pleasure? Because we are fallen, and we are dead.

So we can see then that part of what it means to be made alive is that God works inside of us to give us both the will and the power to do of God's good pleasure.

Now where is this work done? Inside us. Who does it- God- all by Himself. And when does God do this sovereign Work inside us? *Before* we are saved. Why does God do this before we repent and trust in Jesus? Because if He didn't- nobody would have either the will or the power to be saved. Why is that? Because we are dead. Why are we dead? Because of Adam's sin in the Garden.

Now listen, what this means is that unless and until God does this Sovereign work inside of us *first*- nobody can ever get saved because the Bible says that nobody has the will to love God in his fallen condition and nobody has the power to obey God in his fallen condition. And that is what I mean when I say that Salvation is a Sovereign work of God alone.

Now here's the kicker. If what the Bible says about this is true- which it is- then what many of us were taught about how all this works is wrong because if God is the One Who has to Sovereignly give us the will to do God's good pleasure- all by Himself- first- then that means that lost people don't already have that will doesn't it?

So until God Sovereignly works inside that lost person to give him that will – that lost person will never in a thousand years desire to be saved. And he can't desire it- because he's dead. And that also means that until God does that Sovereign work inside that lost person first- that lost soul doesn't have the ability or the power to serve God and therefore he won't.

So what John is teaching is that because Salvation is a Sovereign work of God and not the result of mere human choice- therefore those who are saved have this living testimony of Who Jesus is inside of them. The very fact that we- who at one time were just as sinful as they are because we were just as dead as they are- the fact that we are now saved and joyfully serving God is irrefutable proof of Who Jesus is because we would be just like them except God did that Sovereign Work in us before we could ever be saved. So the fact that we are saved proves that God has done that Sovereign work in us.

And this Sovereign Work of God's Spirit going inside the body of lost unworthy sinners to give them the desire and the power to do of God's good pleasure is what is called "Regeneration" or being "born again". And it is likened in the Bible to being Resurrected. So even though most of us were taught that we have to believe in order to be born again- the Bible actually teaches just the opposite. Because of our lost dead condition- we have neither the desire nor the ability to believe. So the Holy Spirit must go inside our bodies first- before we are saved- in order to make us alive. And in that new resurrected state- God Sovereignly and graciously works in us so that we will have both the desire and the power to believe and repent and trust in Jesus. So the Bible teaches that in order for us to believe- we must first be Sovereignly born again.

So not only does the Holy Spirit seal us after we are saved- God the Holy Spirit Sovereignly works in us way *before* we are saved. In fact – it is only because the Holy Spirit works inside our bodies first that causes us to ever be saved in the first place.

So the net effect of all that the Bible teaches about this- is that God gets all the Glory for our Salvation because He has Graciously and Sovereignly and wondrously saved us with no help or assistance from Man in any way.

And that is what John meant when he told us about this third testimony that those who were dead are now alive; those who were blind can now see; those who were deaf can now hear and those who had stony heart now have been given a heart of flesh and those who had no desire and who looked at the things of God as being foolish now have a passionate desire for God and the things of God and those who had no power have now been endued with power from on high and those who were separated from God as enemies of the Cross have now been

adopted into the family of God by the magnificence of God's Grace and by that Grace alone apart from any human works.

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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