

So That You May Know

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

Chapter 4- The True Test of Salvation- Part 2

33. The Belief in Confession and Forgiveness- Part 5

WAOY Tuesday 06/05/07; WOSM Wednesday 11/16/22

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing to go over our verse by verse “journey” through the Epistle of **1John**, and today I want to continue to examine what John taught about “A Biblical View of Confession and Forgiveness”. So let’s open our Bibles and read **1John 1:7&9** and **1John 2:1a** again together.

7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin...

Now notice that in verse 7- John gives us not only the *means* by which we are forgiven- but he also tells us what should be the *basis* of our Christian fellowship.

Today it is very popular to pass by important matters and go to relatively unimportant matters- to hit the high points and move on. We are a people who spend more attention on how we *feel* than what we *think*; what *looks* good rather than what is true; we care about symbolism instead of caring about substance. And it is this shallow-effeminate approach to things that has caused so much trouble in our nation and in the modern Church. I want to look very carefully at verse 7 and see just what John is telling us here:

but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

In the second half of this verse- John tells us that the commodity that

cleanses us from sin is the Blood of Jesus Christ. Now most everybody would agree with that part of this verse. But look at the first part of this verse again with me:

but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another ...

In this part of verse 7, John gives all of us the *foundation* for Christian fellowship. John starts this verse off by saying “**if**” we walk in the light. John is saying, “**if**” we walk in the light- meaning that some people walk in the light and other people do *not* walk in the light.

So by using the predicate, “**if**” in this verse- John is acknowledging that not everybody walks in the light. So here- John is reminding the Church of the first century and us today that not everybody who goes by the Name of Jesus is really saved. Not everybody who sits on the pew on Sunday morning is a born again believer; not everybody who sings in the choir is a true saint of God; not everybody who preaches is truly saved.

John says that there is a test; there is a way that we can determine whether we are saved or not. There is a means- a spiritual test if you will- that will show us that we are truly born again and going to heaven.

So what is that test? Is it walking down the aisle of the Church after the sermon and shaking the preacher’s hand? No- that is nowhere to found in the Bible. Well, then is it being baptized? No, to be sure- saved people will get baptized- but baptism in and of itself does not mean that we are saved at all. Some people just got wet when they were baptized. That’s all that happened to them. They got wet and their cigarettes got wet and their alcohol got wet and their pornography got wet- but nothing else happened to them.

So what is the true test of Salvation that John give us here in verse 7? Is it getting on your knees and crying at the altar? Well, I would certainly love to see more of that going on in our churches- but no, simply getting on your knees and crying won’t save you either.

Well what is the test? The test is very simple and yet it is probably one of the most offensive things in the whole Bible. John clearly teaches in verse 7 that unless a person actually walks in the Light of

God to the same extent that Jesus is the Light of God- then the Apostle John says that that that person is not truly saved.

Now before you get all upset about what I just said- hear this- John didn't establish this test just one time- no, John made this statement over and over again throughout this Epistle.

First of all, John says that the proof of our Salvation is in the fact that we walk with God and keep God's Commandments. Look at **1John 1:6:**

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and yet walk in darkness, we lie, and do not practice the truth:

1John 2:3&4

3 By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.

4 The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;

1John 2:6

the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

Then John goes even further to say that not only do we have to love God and follow Jesus and obey the Bible in order to prove that we are saved- but John then teaches that no one is saved if he hates his brother:

1John 2:9

The one who says he is in the Light and *yet* hates his brother is in the darkness until now.

1John 3:15

Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

So John taught that if our Salvation is real; if it is true; if we really have been born again and if we really have been regenerated- we will act and walk and think and believe and behave ourselves in the

prescribed manner that he and Paul and James and Jesus and the rest of the New Testament writers said that we should.

Now the only way that what I just said is not true is if the Bible is not the inspired inerrant, infallible Word of the living God. If the Bible is just a cruel hoax perpetrated upon unsuspecting and ignorant people for the purpose of subjugating their lives to the dictates of chauvinistic and imperial men- then we are free to do what is right in our own eyes and to live anyway that we want to and to define Salvation any way that we choose.

If the Bible is not true and if what John wrote is just his own personal opinion- and is not God breathed Words- then we could say, for example- that a person is saved if he just attends Church periodically like say at Christmas and Easter. We could also say that someone is right with God as long as he is sincere in what he believes- even if what he believes is not found anywhere in the Bible and he just made it up.

If the Bible is not true and John was simply trying to control people's lives – then we could say for example that as long as someone believes that God exists – that that alone means that he is saved- which of course would include Buddhist and Muslims and Mormons and Jews.

If the Bible is not true – then we are free to define who is and who is not a Christian based upon our own ideas or our own thoughts or human reasoning or we could base our Christian fellowship on music and personal relationships or any other criteria that suites our fancy.

If the Bible is not the Word of God- we could open our arms and we could embrace everyone as a brother and sister in Christ regardless of what they believed or did not believe and we could all hug each other and hold hands and sway back and forth and sing Kumbaya in a great love feast that resembled a spiritual Woodstock festival.

But the problem with this utopian pipe dream that I just described to you is that the Bible is the Word of God. It is infallible; it is inerrant; it is true and reliable and trustworthy and the 66 books of the Holy Bible is the only written revelation of God to Man that exists on the face of the earth.

Every Word of the Scriptures was breathed out of God's Mouth and every word of Scripture is true and the Bible is authoritative and it is relevant to 21st century life.

And in the Holy Bible; in the New Testament; in the 1st Epistle of the Apostle John in Chapter 1 verse 7- God the Holy Spirit inspired John to

say that the basis of our Christian fellowship is that we walk in the Light even as Jesus Christ is the light. Or in Alabama English- the way to prove that a person is saved- is not to argue about some personal experience that they may have had several years ago- but is in the fact that that person walks with God and the fact that he loves Jesus and the fact that he struggles to obey the Bible. And that means that the fact that other people do *not* walk with God and the fact that they do *not* love Jesus and the fact that they do *not* struggle to obey the Bible proves that they are *not* saved and are yet in their sins.

Now why is John so determined to give the Christian Church a test to determine who is saved and who is not saved? Isn't Salvation a private matter that is between that soul and God? Well, no it is not. Contrary to what many believe today it is the *responsibility* of the those in leadership in the House of God to make sure that every soul that they have influence over is exposed to Biblical Truth and that every single soul is presented the Full Gospel and that every soul is presented the knowledge that if they do not serve Jesus Christ- then they are not saved. That is part and parcel to what being in Church leadership is all about.

You see, brothers and sisters, John really and truly believed that no one who is lost can go to heaven. John really believed that hell is real and that every single human being on the face of the hearth who is not genuinely born again by a Sovereign act of a holy God is going to burn in that hell forever.

And the terror of that reality guided John's statements as well as it should guide our statements. Read with me **2Corinthians 5:11**:

Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men ...

Because John and all the other writers of the New Testament understood all too well the truth about hell and because they understood the miracle of Salvation- they wrote the way that they wrote and they spoke the way that they spoke and for us to write or to speak any way other than the way that these men did proves beyond any doubt that we do not fully know or we do not fully believe the terror of the reality of hell and that we do not really value the miracle of Salvation.

John didn't want anyone to go to hell and neither should we. We should not want our worst enemy to go to hell. But today we have millions of people who sit on Church pews and who go through the motions and whose life proves beyond any doubt that they are no more saved than a man in the moon and yet because they give a lot of money to the Church or because we don't want to offend them or because we are afraid that they might leave- we do not warn them that their life proves that they are lost.

And this is true because we value human relationships a whole lot more than we value what the Bible says; and we value friendships more than we value being faithful to what the Scripture teaches; and we are more concerned that somebody might think we are too harsh or too strict or too mean or too straight and narrow or not cool than we are about these people standing in the Presence of King Jesus unwashed, unbent, and unbroken. .

So we turn our heads and pretend that we do not see. We allow people to be deceived into thinking that they are saved when the Scripture says that they could not possibly be saved and live the way that they live and we would rather have them love us and think much about us than to tell them the Truth.

Thank God that John was not ashamed to say what needed to be said 1900 years ago. Thank God that when the Gnostics invaded the Church and brought with them ungodly teachings that John stood at the door of the Church and denounced what they were teaching and called them to repent.

And thank God that God has preserved His holy Word that today you and I can read about this and that you and I can stand against sin and deception and false teaching in these last days so that we may be found faithful to our precious Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

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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