

So That You May Know

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

Chapter 6- John's Moral Test of Salvation

51. Obedience- The Proof of Salvation- Part 8

WAOY Friday/Monday 07/06-09/07; WOSM Monday 12/12/22

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1 John**, and today I want to continue to look at what John taught about "The Moral Test of Salvation". So, let's open our Bibles and read **1 John 2:3-6** again together:

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;

5 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:

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

Now on the last broadcast, we were looking very closely at John's example of what true Salvation really is by examining verses 4 & 5- so let's read those verses again together:

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;

5 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:

Now last time- I was going over what John meant when he said here in verse 4 that these particular people who claim to know God and yet do not obey Him are liars. And on the broadcast today, I want to show you the contrast between the kind of lying deceiver depicted in verse 4 with another man that is mentioned in verse 5:

but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:

We can easily see that unlike verse 4- verse 5 describes the “real McCoy”- the *genuine* believer who has been truly saved and who loves Jesus Christ and who *follows after* Jesus Christ by striving to *obey* the Words of Jesus Christ.

But notice the great contrast between the two men. In verse 4- this man only “says” that he is saved; while here in verse 5- this man actually *obeys* the Jesus- showing that he has received within himself the new divine nature which gives all true believers both the will and the power to love and serve God.

Notice also how John contrasts these two men in their standing with God. In verse 4 the deceiver who makes claim to being saved and yet walks in direct rebellion to God is called “a liar” by the Apostle; while here in verse 5- the man who obeys God is said by John to have the Love of God perfected in Him.

So, we can draw several conclusions from these two verses. It is easy to say that you are saved. Anyone can make that claim. In fact, I would say that today making the claim that you are saved is one of the most common statements that is made.

And yet- according to all the polls- we are in a moral free fall in this country. So, we can see that we have a huge disconnect between what we say being a Christian is and how John described a truly born from above person.

In this passage of verses that we are studying now- John makes it clear that there is no true Salvation apart from obedience. And this is the Apostle John’s test- not mine. I am tempted to simply believe a person when they tell me that they are saved. I want everyone to go to heaven- so I suppose that I am fairly easy to fool. But John was not like me. John was an Apostle and was specially chosen by God to pen down Words that came directly out of the Mouth of God Himself. John was one of those special men who were chosen to formulate all Christian Doctrine and establish just what Christianity really is and is not.

So, you are free to disagree with me all day long and still be in right sanding with God. But what you are not free to do is to be in disagreement with John about what constitutes Salvation and who is

and who is not a true believer and still be in right standing with God- because John was one of those men who actually had the authority to define Salvation.

And John is clearly linking obedience to believing here. So, since that is true- I would say that it would be a wise thing for all of us to honestly examine our own lives and see if we are being obedient to that which God has said. And while we are at it- we should also examine *what* we believe and examine *why* we believe it and to check it out against Scripture to make sure that we are in the “once and for all given to the saints” Faith and not into something of our own invention.

Notice that in describing the second man in verse 5- John is not making any reference at all to how much this man “knows” God as did the Gnostics in verse 4. He begins verse 5 with simply a statement of fact- this man keeps God’s Word- or in other words- this man walks in humble obedience to the Scriptures as a normal function of his daily life.

Now I want to clarify again here what I am saying and what I am not saying. John is *not* talking about sinless perfection here. John is saying that as a default mode; as a normal way of his daily life- the person in verse 5 is earnestly endeavoring to “keep” or obey the Words of God. Of course, he can and will come short of that lofty and noble goal of perfect obedience- but he doesn’t ever *want* to sin; he is not *trying* to sin; he is fervently putting forth consistent effort to love God and to worship God and he is doing this- by *obeying* God’s Word.

Here is another way of looking at this. There is a world of difference between someone who is living to himself and doing what is right in his own eyes and a man who is earnestly endeavoring to obey Jesus Christ. So, while both of these people may sin- and they may well commit the very *same* sin- but the first person is sinning as he is falling *down* the mountain *away from* God while the second person is sinning as he is struggling to climb *up* the mountain toward God.

Now sin is sin, and I am not making any excuses for it. But if you are going to fall short- then fall short as you are trying *not* to fall short.

And as I have told you before- lost people sin and saved people sin- but saved people don’t *want* to ever sin; it crushes them to realize that they have failed God. Their new nature doesn’t belong out in the sinful world and so while they have the *ability* to sin- they no longer possess the *desire* to sin.

So, when John is describing this second man- he is *not* describing sinless perfection- but rather John is describing a man whose normal daily walk with God is humble submission to the Word of God and who periodically falls short of that goal because of the frailty of his flesh.

This is why John links the phrase “the Love of God” to this second man and not to the first. The man that John describes in verse 4 does not love God- he loves himself. This man does what is right in his own eyes. He may go to church- but only when it suits him to go. He may give to the Church- but only when he feels like it. He may even sing praises to God- but only if it benefits himself to do so.

This first man of verse 4 does not worship God in the true biblical sense of the word. No, the “god” that this man worships is himself. And this is why these kind of people get so easily offended and leave the Church and are not faithful to God. People like this are only faithful to God as long as they perceive that God is doing something beneficial for them. But the minute that God demands something *from* them- the very instant that these people realize that being a Christian means that they must submit to Christ’s Lordship Authority over their lives and die to self- these people will run for the high ground.

And that is why the Love *of* God or the Love *for* God- is not tangible or is not developed in their lives. They love God alright- but only to the degree that God does something for them. As long as they are healed; or as long as they are filled; or as long as they perceive that God is blessing them- then Jesus is the sweetest Name they know.

But when God makes demands upon them as He often does as their rightful Lord- then all of a sudden, this Christianity thing gets boring real quick.

The kind of people that John is describing in verse 4 are like the ten lepers. They all wanted to be healed and Jesus healed them all- but only one of them came back to say “thank you” and was saved. They are like the crowds that wanted Jesus to feed them and heal them and bless them. They called out His Name when they had a need, and they thronged the streets – reaching out to touch Him as He walked by - but when it came time to sit and be taught and become a disciple and actually obey Jesus; when the persecution came, and the novelty of loving Jesus wore off- they were all back home watching TBN.

To be a follower of Jesus; to be a true disciple of Jesus; to be a genuinely born from above man- requires- it demands that all of us set

aside our own desires and our own ambition and our own dreams and plans and that we die to ourselves and that we crucify this unconverted flesh; and that we mortify the deeds of the body and that we decrease and that we love God with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our mind and with all our strength and to the degree that every other kind of love that we have for everybody else and everything else is hate by comparison.

Friends- to be a true follower of Jesus Christ requires and it demands that we take up our cross daily and follow Jesus- *regardless* of the cost to us personally and *regardless* of whether or not we get anything out of it or not.

Other than that- we are simply spectators. We are simply faces in the crowd that have been blessed by the Lord and touched by the Lord and healed by the Lord and fed by the Lord- but our souls and our hearts and our mind and our time and our talents and our ambitions and our desires we selfishly keep for ourselves. Please don't ever think that that is what a Christian is.

When Jesus was born- the Bible says that the shepherds saw a great sight and they heard the Heavenly host rejoice and they came to the baby Jesus, and they worshipped him, and they turned around and went their way rejoicing. But we have no record to say that they ever came back. And notice that they never actually gave Jesus anything. So, their worship cost them nothing. They got their happiness and they left. They saw the great sight; they heard the great sound; their physical senses were stimulated, and they came and worshipped, and they left and never came back. They never even gave Jesus' parents a calf.

Remember that Mary and Joseph were so poor that when they took the baby Jesus to the temple to dedicate Him to God- they had to offer two turtle doves as sacrifice because they didn't even have a calf to offer God. The shepherds could have at least given them that.

The shepherd's failure at this point to give to the Lord that which God required is a type of the modern form of worship that is so popular in our day. It is a *false* worship that doesn't cost anything; a pretend worship that doesn't require anything; a counterfeit worship that doesn't make any demands from anyone.

But we must know that true Love makes demands on us. True Love causes action. True love is not just a feeling- but it is an act

of our will. Love for the unborn child causes a woman to deny herself so that the baby is taken care of. Love makes a man hold his child in his arms and walk the floor all night long until the fever stops. Love causes a man to get up sick and go to the job that he hates to work with people who don't appreciate him so that he can put food on the table for his family. And as I have told you before- the opposite of love is not hate- the opposite of love is self. And those who do not love Jesus- love themselves.

A wrong sense of "self" or "self-love" will cause a woman to do what pleases herself- regardless of what it does to her unborn child. The teaching of godless self -love and self-esteem has not caused women to love properly- it only allows them to feel justified when they kill their babies and throw them into a garbage can. Self- love causes a man to sleep on while his child burns up with fever. Self-love causes a no good lazy man to lay around the house and then blame the Government when he doesn't have any money.

But genuine *Love of God* and *love for God* will cause a man to deny his own flesh and obey Jesus- even to the point of death. True Love will cause a woman to keep herself pure until God brings the right man into her life. Because Love causes humble obedience. A true and genuine love for God and love to God will always produce humble submission to that which God has said.

Rebellion is the essence of self- centeredness and self- righteousness brought about by an ungodly sense of self- worth and self- esteem. But obedience is the essence of laying self aside and loving Jesus more than self and John says that those who obey Jesus are the only ones who truly love Him.

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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