

# So That You May Know

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

### Chapter 8- Children, Fathers, and Young Men

#### 64. Part 5

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WAOY Tuesday 08/07/07; WOSM Thursday 12/29/22

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1 John**, and today I want to *continue* to explore what John taught about fathers, children, and young men. So, let's turn in our Bibles to **1 John 2:12-14** and read those verses again together:

**12** I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake.

**13** I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father.

**14** I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

Now the Apostle John was born in Bethsaida, a fishing village on the Sea of Galilee, not far from Capernaum. He had been one of a family of four. John's father was a wealthy fisherman, who owned a fleet of ships and had employees. John's mother was Salome, who was the sister of the virgin who had birthed the Christ. John's natural brother was James, who has the distinction of being the very first Apostle to be martyred.

At the time that John wrote this epistle, late in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century- he was an old man. He had left his beloved city of Jerusalem during the Roman war which had engulfed his homeland and had brought about the destruction of the temple and a virtual end of Jewish national life, and he had settled in the pagan Asiatic city of Ephesus, which lay on the very edge of the European world. There, in the Christian Church which Paul had founded, John became its bishop and elder statesman,

who taught young pastors and church leaders about what it was like to actually walk and talk with Jesus.

If she were still alive at the time, it is very possible that John had brought the Lord's mother to Ephesus with him so that he could continue to care for her as the Lord had commanded while He was on the Cross.

Of all the Apostles, John seems to have been closest to the Lord. Not only was he the Lord's cousin, according to the flesh, he was one of the first two disciples who were called. Along with his brother, James, and his fishing partners, Peter and Andrew, John had held a seemingly privileged position in the Apostolic circle. Of all the others, John had a title that was far greater than all the others. His title was not pope, or chief, or boss, or owner, but in the Bible, John was known as "the disciple whom Jesus loved."

John is mentioned three times in the Book of the Acts in connection with the very early days of the Church and its formulation, persecution, and fantastic growth, and John along with only a handful of others was used by the Holy Ghost to write down inspired, God breathed Scripture that we call today, The New Testament.

After the Jerusalem council in **The Acts 15**, John disappears from the Bible, for over forty years. History, not Scripture, tells us that John was very busy leading the church at Ephesus and establishing a place where young men could be taught the Word of God.

He reappears here, in this, the first of his three Epistles and along with his Gospel account and the Book of the Revelation, John's writings finished and completed the glorious dispensation of when the Holy Ghost moved upon men to write down God breathed and inspired words which make up the special revelation from God that we call the Holy Bible.

John's style of writing is unique from all the other Apostles. In his Gospel, John deals almost exclusively with the Deity of Christ and most of the teaching about the Doctrine of the Trinity and the Doctrines which pertain to the Person of Jesus Christ are obtained from his writings.

Because he knew that his writings, along with those of Paul, Peter, Matthew, Mark, Luke, the writer of Hebrews, James, and Jude were special; because John knew that these Words came from the very Heart and Mouth of God Himself; because John knew that God had

breathed these words into the heart and mind and pen of the writers; because John understood clearly that they were inspired; that they, along with the Old Testament made up the Holy Scriptures, the rule and measure of the Faith; because John understood this very clearly, he was very particular how men handled revealed Truth.

The apostates of John's day tried to confuse people about who Jesus was and thus hide the Truth from them. Some of these clouds without water said that Jesus was God but not man. Others of these wandering stars said that Jesus was a man but was not God. Some of these snakes who had crept into the Church said that Jesus was neither God nor man but was simply a mental concept, while others said that Truth was not something stable and concrete and sure and certain but was flexible and which changed over time, and which really never could be understood by man.

John would have none of that foolishness and he drew clear lines between Truth and error; between right and wrong and between that which God said and what man says.

Like John's day, we too are faced with apostates who have crept into the Church and who are trying real hard to change the Truth of God's Word and make it to be something that it is not.

These modern "snake oil salesmen" peddle their goods in the Church today and tell you that God wants you to have your best life right now- here in this life on this earth. They have forgotten that it is God's Will to prepare us for *that* life; that our job now is to get ready for eternity- that every man, woman, and child on earth will have to stand before the tribunal of God and look into the eyes of Jesus that burn like flames of fire and be judged concerning the things that we have done in this life whether it is good or bad. They conveniently forget to tell their followers that only what is washed in the Blood of Jesus will be able to stand on that day; that you can go to Heaven poor, but you can't go to Heaven sinful.

The Bible says that we are but pilgrims and strangers just passing through this life and that this world is not our home. These contemporary false prophets don't tell you that this earth is not our home- that Heaven is a better place; that over there is better than down here; You'll never hear them tell you that according to the Bible- it is God's Will for some people to suffer in this life; that every man that God used in the Bible was falsely accused and treated unfairly; and that

most of the time, riches, wealth, and prosperity corrupt people and destroy them.

They promise undiscerning church members that if you just send them more money; if you just buy their books; if you just learn their secret, if you just support their carnival act; that what they have to sell you will cure all diseases; and will remove all poverty; all suffering; all pain; all afflictions; all persecutions; nagging mother in laws; and will even make your clothes whiter and brighter.

These false teachers promise you secrets of how to manipulate God to get what you want from Him; how to get a better job; how to think yourself rich; how to have a high self-esteem, all while still living in sin.

John's writings cry out against these lies and tell us that the real war that is waging is not with those things at all, but is between those who are saved and those who are lost; between the children of light and the children of darkness; between those who walk in Truth and those who live in lies; between those walking in life and those walking in death; between those who are born again and those who are depraved; between those who have received the divine nature and those who still have their own carnal natures; between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the devil; between the children of God and the children of the devil; between the judgment of righteousness and the judgment of the wicked; between the resurrection of life and the resurrection of damnation; between those whose names are in the Book of Life and those whose names are in the books of the damned; between receiving Christ versus rejecting Christ; between fruit and fruitlessness; between obedience and disobedience; between love and hate.

John tells about goats versus sheep; between fish on the right hand and fish on the left; between tares and wheat; between fleshly Jews and spiritual Jews; between those who lay claim to Abraham and those who are the seed of Abraham; between those who follow Christ and those who argue with Christ.

John tells us that we are either walking in the light or we are walking in darkness; It is John who says that if we are born again that we do not sin- indeed- that we *cannot* sin. John says that people are either "of" God or "of" the world; John says that if we love the world and all that the world has in it; that the love of the Father is not in us. John says that we cannot love God whom we have not seen and not love our

brother whom we have seen. John says that we prove our love for God by our obedience to God; John says that if we walk after our own lusts that we are not saved; John says that whosoever abides in God does not sin, but whosoever sins has neither seen Christ nor knows Christ.

In his second Epistle, John calls for complete and total separation from all that is false, and in **2John 9-11**, John tells us,

**9 Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.**

**10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into *your* house, and do not give him a greeting;**

**11 for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.**

John is just that black and white and we should be that clear about God's Truth too.

In verses, 12- 14 of **1John 2**, the Apostle shows us three groups of people who are in the Church:

- Fathers
- Children
- Young Men

That there were three groups of people in the Church at Ephesus like there are in almost any Church should go without saying. Nearly every church has these three groups in it, so for John to tell us that he was writing to these three groups would hardly have been anything that he would have needed the Holy Ghost to inspire him about.

No, this is something much more profound and much more important than simply addressing Fathers, Children and Young Men. John was writing to three generations, which also represent three different spirits or stages or dispensations. In any organization, country, or church, you have three generations of people who make the greatest impact on that organization.

First of all- you have the fathers. These are the people who start the Church or who found it or those whom God used to begin something. These are the people who are willing to die for the Church. These are

those patriots who birth a nation; those patriarchs who founded a civilization, and those Apostles who began the Christian Church. These people are powerful, mighty people, who God raises up to do great exploits in the earth. They see clearly what God is doing and they will not be swayed by any obstacle that comes into their way. They fight any battle, carry any burden; oppose any foe and embrace any friend.

For example- those who began this nation pledged their lives; their fortunes; and their sacred honor to defeat the most powerful standing army on earth and carve out a nation that was dedicated to the proposition of the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world. And they were all given the opportunity to do so, as most of them did indeed lose all that they had; were scorned and ridiculed, and most of them died to give us this nation. The testimony of what these fathers did still rings loud and true as last year the United States of America spent more money and sent more missionaries to preach the Gospel to the world than the rest of the world combined. The fact that we still spent more money on dog food than preaching the Gospel shows that we still have work to do.

The Apostles who actually walked and talked with Jesus, along with Paul, who was called as a man out of due season, were all used by God to carve out the Church from the most unbelievable circumstances. None of them except Paul were educated; none, except Paul was trained to be a minister; all were persecuted. All except John was martyred. They were unqualified to do what they did. They should have failed, but they did not fail. They succeeded; and they did succeed in part because they would not budge from the Truth that Jesus gave to them no matter what. They were like bulldogs who warned over and over again that if we lose the Truth, we lose everything.

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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