

So That You May Know

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

Chapter 8- Children, Fathers, and Young Men

65. Part 6

WAOY Wednesday 08/08/07; WOSM Friday 12/30/22

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, 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 **1John 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.

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.

I want to look at a snapshot of the early Church and of what important role Sound Doctrine played by looking at several verses:

The Acts 2:42

They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

The Acts 5:28

saying, "We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

Romans 6:17

But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,

Romans 16:17

Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.

1Timothy 4:13

Until I come, give attention to the *public reading of Scripture*, to exhortation and teaching.

1Timothy 4:16

Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.

2Timothy 4:2-5

2 preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,

4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Galatians 1:8&9

8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!

9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!

You see, being an Apostle was not about having people admire you or getting discounts at the car lot- no, being an Apostle meant that God was using these men to establish the Christian Church on the earth. As I have taught you earlier- Apostles are not self appointed pompous people who are accountable to no one- but these were special men were specially chosen and specially equipped by God to do a very special thing- to define and establish Christianity.

Now just how is the Church established on the earth? Just how is Christianity defined and brought about? Did these men build great buildings? No. Did they set up statues of themselves? No. Did they get letters from Caesar attesting to their calling? No, in fact most of these men were the scourge of the earth during their lives.

To follow these men usually meant beatings, imprisonment and death. They were persecuted unmercifully by the Jews and by the Government and hunted down like animals by the Gentiles.

So how did these men set up the Christian Church? God the Holy Ghost moved upon these men to write down inspired, infallible, inerrant, authoritative and relevant Words that along with the other unique Words of the Old Testament make up the full, complete and finished revelation of God to Man.

These men are the ones who fulfilled what Jesus promised in **John 16:13**, when he said,

But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

What God the Holy Spirit revealed to the Apostles was the culmination of 1500 years of revelation and completed all that God desired to share with man. What they wrote in their letters or Epistles correctly interpret all of the Old Testament and correctly expound on what the Gospels teach. Without the Epistles, you will get off base real quick when you read and study both the Old Testament and the Gospels

- but by reading and studying both the Old Testament and the Gospels through the lens of the Epistles- you will see all that God desires for Mankind.

That is how the Apostles set up the Church. That is how they established Christianity- by and through what the Holy Spirit revealed to them. It was their words- their inspired and inerrant and infallible Words that set up the Church and defined Christianity and established the New Covenant.

That is why these fathers of the Faith were so particular about Truth and so careful about Doctrine and why they defended it with such zeal. The Apostles- the fathers of the Church- were so aware that if you lose Truth- you lose Christianity- you lose what it means to be the Church of Jesus Christ.

For example- the Apostles were keenly cognizant that if you compromise even the least bit with how a man is saved or with the Deity of Christ or with the Trinity or with other vital issues like that- that very quickly the Church will lose its way. They knew that it is very easy to just turn your head and compromise a little here and a little there until you wake up and you've lost it all.

These men that God used to raise up Christianity from nothing were so aware of this that they guarded this Divine Truth with their lives.

Like the founding fathers of this nation- they knew that unless they were willing to pay the ultimate price- that Christianity would fail before it began. So, they did- they paid the ultimate price. James was beheaded; Timothy was beaten to death. Bartholomew was flayed alive; Paul's head was cut off; and Peter was crucified upside down.

But as strict about Biblical Truth as the first generation was, the second generation to lead the Church was lax, and saw no benefit in keeping up the pace. They had watched the fathers pay so much attention to little minute details that they frankly didn't see any reason for. In the natural, these children say, *"Why do we need to learn about history and American culture? Aren't all cultures equally good? Why do we need to learn how to speak English? Why do we need to learn about how this nation was formed? Why can't we be diverse? Why can't we celebrate other gods and why do we have to put up with Christianity"*

These children didn't build and plant and fight and see God move and they don't appreciate the sacrifice that it takes to keep things from being destroyed. You hear these children say things like, *"What*

difference did it make whether Jesus was sinless? What difference does it make whether Truth is taught. All we need to do is love Jesus. All we need to do is believe.” And in the words of one of their leaders, “We don’t need doctrine, people aren’t interested in that, we need love and peace and relationships.”

What happens is that on the children’s watch, things get out of hand. Because they lose interest in the very things that will keep them, so heresy, apostasy, false teaching, and ungodliness rushes into the church and the nation to pervert the right way of the Lord.

This gives rise to the need for God to raise up the third group, or the third generation or the third people. This royal priest hood, this holy nation, this chosen generation will return to the God of their fathers and they will build the old wastes and they will restore the paths to dwell in. They will rebuke the false teachers and correct the bad doctrine. They will build the walls again around the Truth that protects the Truth, and they will uphold the ways of God.

These young men are strong. The word of God abides within them, and they have overcome the wicked one.

I tell you that what the fathers established and what the children let go to waste must be restored by the strong young men. God is raising up this third generation today and they will preach the Word and they will live the life and they will abide in Jesus and God will use them to restore the Biblical Truth to a backslid church.

It will be an uphill battle. It will cost you-maybe cost you everything. They will reject you; you will be cast out- but Jesus will stand by your side. Will you go with me in this journey? Will you take up your cross and follow Jesus? Will you bend on your knee and lap water like a dog? Are you willing to be a part of the Lord’s despised few? Will you allow God to prune you and burn you and fashion you and mold you into His very Image and very likeness?

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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