

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 4:9&10**

Chapter 18- The Manifest Love of God

182- The Manifest Love of God- Part 6

WAOY Wednesday 04/30/08

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 look at what John taught about "The Manifest Love of God". So, let's open our Bibles and read **1John 4:9&10** again together:

9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Now we have seen many things about the manifest Love of God so far in our study and on today's broadcast- I want to go further into what John was telling us here.

Notice that John says in verse 9 that God *sent* Jesus into the world. This is a reference to what is called the eternality of Jesus Christ. You see, dear friends, if God sent Jesus into the world- then that means that Jesus existed prior to God sending Him.

You and I are *born* into the world- but John says here that Jesus was *sent* into the world. And it also tells us that God the Father is the One Who sent Jesus into the world. Now this is not just a play on words here. No, John was being moved upon by the Holy Spirit to pen down inspired, infallible, and inerrant Words in this verse- so this phrase is important for us to grasp.

Jesus was able to be sent to this earth by the Father precisely because Jesus was already with the Father prior to Him being sent. Look what John taught about this in His Gospel account. Let's read **John 1:1&2**:

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 He was in the beginning with God.

And then let us combine these verses with verse 14 of the same chapter which says:

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

So in these three verses- we can see that the Bible clearly and boldly teaches three things about Jesus Christ:

1. Jesus is the Word
2. Jesus was with God in the very beginning
3. Jesus is God

Now this statement by John is in perfect alignment with many other statements made about Jesus from Moses, David, Isaiah, Paul, Peter, James and the rest of the writers of the Holy Bible. You see, John wasn't saying anything new here when he is saying that Jesus is God- but he was saying that Jesus was God in a very forceful and bold way and there was a reason for this.

When John wrote his five Books- the Christian Church was under severe attack by Gnostic mystics, legalistic Judaizers, and lawless Antinomians. So John gave us the coup de gras concerning the Deity of Jesus Christ. John left us no doubt at all that Jesus was much more than a prophet; he was much more than a good moral man; He was much more than a teacher or an example or an angel.

No, John makes it crystal clear to us that the very same Word that was with God in the very beginning when God made the Heavens and the earth and the very same Word that was, in fact, God; is the very same Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us.

Now that may cause some of you to shake your head- but please permit me to explain. In our modern American culture- we look at many words and terms far differently than those who lived in the first century looked at them. So when the Bible says that Jesus was the Son of God- the Bible is not saying that God had an offspring- and now we have two gods- no, the Bible is telling us that Jesus is of the very same

substance with the Father or in other words- the Bible is saying that Jesus is God. Now let me go even further with you about this. When the Apostle Peter confronted Ananias and Sapphira about their financial deception in **The Acts 5**- he made this statement in verse 3:

... why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back *some* of the price of the land?

Then in verse 4- Peter said this:

...you have not lied to men but to God.

By these two statements- Peter was equating the Holy Spirit to also being God. So now we have a dilemma. Now to tie everything up about this mystery- we need to read what God gave to Moses in **Deuteronomy 6:4**

Hear, O Israel! The LORD IS our God; the Lord is one!

So here is what is called a Biblical dilemma; a mystery; a paradox. On the surface- it *appears* that we have a contradiction. It appears that either Moses or John or Peter was saying something that was not true. And ever since the Bible has been written, evil men with devious motives in mind have taken this grand mystery and exploited it to deceive God's people and to teach things contrary to Sound Doctrine.

For example- late in the second century and early in the third- a group of heretics taught wrongly about this very subject. They were called Modalists and they taught that God operated in "modes" during human history and so God was Father in the Old Testament; He was Son in the Gospels; and today He is Spirit. Modalists teach that God can only be manifested in one mode at a time. The heresy of Modalism is the foundational teaching of Oneness Pentecostalism that we have today. The greatest problem with Modalism is that it cannot be proven by Scripture because in several verses- all three Persons of the Godhead are present at the same time.

Later in the third century- another attack against the Deity of Jesus arose from a heretic by the name of Arius. Arius taught that Jesus was not of the *same* substance with the Father but was of a *similar* but *different* substance- thus making Jesus sort of an angel or a

demi god. Arius taught that Jesus was more than a man to be sure- but that he was certainly less than God and the reason that this matters is that the net effect of Arius' teaching was that Jesus could not have been God.

The Christian Church wrestled over this issue for 42 years because Arius was a strikingly handsome and charismatic figure who could speak eloquently for hours without notes. At one point- every single bishop of the Christian Church except one was deceived by the heresy of Arius. A man by the name of Athanasius almost single handedly rescued the Church from the heresy of Arius and brought the Church back in line with the Scriptures. At the Council of Nicea in 325 AD. the Church formally declared Arianism to be a heresy and excommunicated Arius and his followers. Now the reason that this is important for us to know today is because the foundational teaching of the heretic Arius that Jesus is not God is the foundational teaching of the Jehovah's Witnesses of our day.

So there have been many attempts throughout history at distorting what the Bible clearly teaches about this One and Only of the Father- Jesus Christ. And so we must be vigilant in our day and stand firm on what God says in His Word lest we fall in a trap set for us by evil and wicked men. We have to understand, dear friends, that we are not just commanded to love God with all our hearts- but we are also commanded to love God with all our minds and so it is just as much a sin to believe wrongly as it is sin to do wrongly. So this stuff matters and we need to get this right.

Now I realize that some of this may be complicated to some of you- but we have to understand dear friends that we are talking about a very complicated subject. You see, before Jesus- God has never become a Man. Before Jesus- God was distant and strange to us. Before Jesus God was not with us- He was not Immanuel. So even new words, like "incarnate" had to be invented to describe what it was like when God became a man.

So either God is one and Moses is true or He isn't and Moses lied. But if Moses is true and God is one- then how is Jesus God? And if Moses is true and God is one then did Peter lie when he said that the Holy Spirit was God? If God is one- then how is the Holy Spirit God. If both Jesus and the father and the Holy Spirit is God- then How is Moses correct to say that God is one? The answer to this seeming

contradiction is the Doctrine of the Trinity that teaches that God is one in Essence but is eternally manifested in three Persons of God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Spirit.

And as difficult as it may be for us to grasp the Doctrine of the Trinity- for us to reject one or more parts of this Doctrine would be for us to deny what the Scripture clearly teaches about God or Jesus or the Holy Spirit. So we are left with a Doctrine that is absolutely essential to our Salvation and yet is difficult to grasp. The solution lies in us resting in the Truth of God's Word. If you are in any way unsure that God's Word is inspired- then you will wrestle with this issue. But if you have become persuaded that Gods' Word is true and reliable and is infallible and inerrant- then as difficult as it may be to grasp some elements of it- you can rest secure in knowing that God is true.

God is Father; Son and Holy Spirit and therefore we are correct to worship Father; Son and Holy Ghost and we are correct to bow before them and to praise and honor them. If Jesus was not God- then we would be committing idolatry to bow before Him and worship Him. And if Jesus was sent by God and Jesus knew that He wasn't God- then He would be guilty of perpetrating fraud upon us by allowing us and commanding us to obey and serve Him. So after all is said and done- we are left with only one of three things to say about Jesus.

1. Jesus was a liar. If Jesus knew that He was not God and yet He said over and over that He was- then He lied to us, plain and simple. And if Jesus lied about His Deity- then why should I trust Him when He speaks about eternal matters? If I cannot trust Jesus about Who He is- why would I trust Him about what is right and wrong or how to get to Heaven? Many people today say that Jesus was a very wise and noble and good man- but yet many of these same people deny that Jesus was God. But that's not good enough because if Jesus was not God- then He was a liar because He said that He was God. and if Jesus was a liar then by definition He was not wise or noble or good- He was just a liar who cannot be trusted about anything.

2. Jesus was a lunatic. Perhaps Jesus was just mentally sick and *thought* that He was God. We have people today who think that they are Jesus or Napoleon or somebody else and we are to have mercy on these people and pray for them and be kind to them- but we certainly

should not be following them and these people should not be in charge of our souls and these people need to be on medication- not teaching us about Heaven.

3. Jesus was Lord. Jesus was and is exactly Who He said that He was. Jesus was God. Jesus was the Word made flesh. Jesus was Immanuel. Jesus was God incarnate. Jesus was 100% God and 100% man at the same time in the same body without conflict or contradiction. Jesus was the One and Only of the Father. Jesus was Yahweh draped in human flesh. And as God – Jesus is to be worshipped and loved and adored and obeyed and He is to have the preeminence in all things and He is the Head of the Church and He is the Savior of the Body and there is no other way to Heaven except through Him and we are right to serve Him and we are wrong not to serve Him and the day is coming when every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Lord and John was right when he said that the manifest Love of God is that God **sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through 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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