

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 4:12**

Chapter 20- God Dwells in Us

193 God Dwells in Us- Part 4

WAOY Friday-Monday 05/23-26/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" of the Epistle of **1John**, and today I want to continue to look at what John taught about "God Dwelling in Us"- so let's read **1John 4:12** again together:

No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

Now on today's broadcast- I want to go into a little more depth of what John is actually teaching here when he says that no man hath seen God at any time.

There is a sense that the Old Testament gives us a clearer understanding of this issue than does the New. In the Old Testament, for example- we have what are called, *theophanies*. A theophany is an appearance of God which is given to certain people. For example- Abraham and Lot both had a theophany. There are many examples of this in the Bible.

These people saw- but they did not see God- and they talked and wrote about "the angel of the Lord". Now there is very little doubt that all of those incidents were manifestations of Jesus Christ before the Incarnation. Jesus appeared temporarily in human form for certain specific purposes. And even though these people saw these things- we can still agree with John and say that no man hath seen God at any time.

The greatest of these moments is what happened to Moses in **Exodus 33**. God said to Moses in verses **17-23**:

17 The Lord said to Moses, "I will also do this thing of which you have spoken; for you have found favor in My sight and I have known you by name."

18 Then Moses said, "I pray You, show me Your glory!"

19 And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion."

20 But He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!"

21 Then the Lord said, "Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand *there* on the rock;

22 and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by.

23 "Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen."

Moses did not see the Face of God here but there was an appearance- God passed by- and Moses was able to see the back parts of God. Now this is one of the most extraordinary events in the entire Bible and yet obviously it is something that we must carefully examine because it maintains this statement by John that **"no one has seen God at any time"**.

These are the very words that were used by our Lord when he spoke to Phillip in **John 14:8&9**- so let's read those verses together:

8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."

9 Jesus said to him, "**Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?**"

Here Philip was in effect saying-

"Give us a clear vision of the Father and we will be content to go on even though you are leaving us."

Jesus responded by telling Philip that,

"It is not that you have seen the Father directly- with your naked eye that is important, Philip- but look at Me and you will get your only conception of what the Father is like."

Is that the Father? No, it is the Son. But the Father is in the Son

and the Son is in the Father and the only way that we can see the Father is to see the Son because we are sinful. In other words, we must still hold to this basic idea that no man hath seen the Father at any time.

Now what is the sum of all that has been said thus far? It is that we must guard our hearts, beloved, and we must take heed to ourselves that we are faithful to turn our back on any teaching which would ever lead us to try to obtain a vision of God. We should never covet visions. We should never try to come up with an immediate vision of God. We already have been given the ultimate Promise by Jesus Himself in **Matthew 5:8**, when He said:

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

So our effort down here in this life should never be wasted in trying to see God- we already can see Jesus. But our effort now should be to become pure and then our audience with God is guaranteed. God told Moses very clearly in **Exodus 33:20**:

... no man can see Me and live!

So, when anyone strives to receive a vision of God- he is either saying that he himself is no longer sinful or that God is no longer holy and that there is no difference; no separation; no barrier between God and us.

This precisely why when we want to see God- we must look at Jesus- because Jesus is our Mediator; He is the Bridge between us and God and without that Bridge- God would never allow any of us to touch Him- we would die.

There is a teaching that is floating around in our day that has become relatively popular that says that we Christians need to seek to have a one on one relationship with God. Beloved that teaching is false. No human being can have a one on one relationship with God for the simple fact that we are all sinful and God is holy. John said that no man can see God.

We can, however, have a one on one relationship with Jesus Christ- and to the degree that we have *that* relationship- that is as close to God as we will ever get on this earth.

There is no such thing as us humans having intimacy directly with

God Himself. No one has that kind of relationship with God except Jesus Christ. We must go through the Mediator- Jesus Christ- and without that Mediator- we would not last one second in God's Presence because we are sinful.

Praise God- there is a time coming, however, when we will see God- but not now and not here. And we must so highly value what we *can* see- Jesus Christ- that we do not even seek to see God.

And we must also be careful, dear friends, not to desire to hear audible voices or to have such visions that bring comfort to our hearts. We already have Jesus and to seek something else like that which tickles our five senses is to say that what we do have in Jesus is not enough.

I tell you that it is precisely because we do not value Jesus as much as we should that we seek after things that are far *less* valuable than He is to comfort us. What could an angel possibly say to me that would be more important or more valuable than what Jesus has already spoken? What possible comfort could any vision afford me – even a vision of Heaven itself- that me seeing Jesus in His Glory would not give me more?

I tell you that angels are great- but they are nothing compared to Jesus. And Heaven itself with all the millions of people in it and the streets of gold and the pearly gates would be vacant and a complete waste of time unless Jesus was there and unless He was the center of attention and the focus of all that we do and say.

But we live in a day when people would rather be happy than holy and they trade the Promise of seeing God over there for earthly treasures over here. We live in a day when the mind set of far too many believers rests in the here and now and our prayers and our activities are all spent in what is going on now and what we want now and what we need now.

But the Promise that the pure in heart will one day see God should cascade through our hearts and minds and be the definitive force that shapes the kind of people we are. No man has seen God at any time is what we live under now- but blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God is what we live for; what we struggle for; what we strive for; and that future Promise is infinitely better and infinitely more important than any temporary reward down here.

“Ah, but Brother Blair- we can do both. We can strive to be pure so

that we shall see God over there while at the same time see God in visions down here now.” My response to that is nobody does that because nobody can. You cannot be divided about this; you cannot be double minded; you cannot follow two paths at the same time that are diametrically opposite, and which are going in two different directions and which make different demands on us; you cannot serve two masters.

It is impossible, beloved, to be worldly and be spiritual at the same time. You have to either be worldly or be spiritual but please know that you cannot be both. You cannot have your mind fixed on Heaven and you cannot live your life down here as a pilgrim and a stranger just passing through and at the same time have your mind and heart fixed on things of this life. Now I’m not the one who said you couldn’t do this- Jesus said you couldn’t do it.

Before we had Divine Revelation in Scripture there were mystery religions in the earth and men sought to see God and they saw visions and they had dreams and they went into trances and they had hallucinations and demons spoke to them and they wandered around without Truth and without a clear understanding of God or anything else. We still have fragments of those ancient religions today making a comeback like Scientology and Kabala and Universalism and Unity and all kinds of Gnostic cults.

But by their own testimony- they don’t see; they don’t know; they haven’t heard and they don’t understand because all that they have is in prison to their five senses. All they have is what their natural eyes can see. All they have is what their natural minds can comprehend. This is why their lives are an unmitigated disaster. This is why there is no genuine holiness brought forth by anything that they do. This is why they have absolutely no understanding of the majesty of God.

But Christianity says that we have seen; we have heard; we know; and we are- precisely because of Who Jesus is and because of what Jesus has already done and it is enough and we are satisfied with it because there is nothing higher; there is no Word more glorious; there is no vision more wonderful than Jesus and so we have been liberated from the prison of our five natural senses and we now walk by faith and not by sight.

How can a man know God? Not by connecting to our inner being. Not through transcendental meditation; not by wearing trinkets around

our necks or on our wrists. Not by having oil from Gethsemane or water from Jordan. Not by traveling to Medjugorje or by seeing statues of Mary cry blood; not by following healing evangelists around the country or by buying their prayer cloths; not by keeping communion or by being baptized or by speaking in tongues.

How can I know that I know God? Because now I love.

God's great Love was manifested toward me solely by this Man- Jesus Christ and God's Love was manifested solely by His death, burial, and Resurrection and because God so loved me to call and choose and to draw and to wash and to save me; because now God lives inside me and walks inside me and because in my eyes Jesus is so high; He is so lifted up; He is so grand; that I value what God has done in me so much so that I now love.

I love because He first loved me. I love because God changed my heart. I can love now because of Who Jesus is and what Jesus did and I know that I know God because God now dwells in me.

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.

© 2007- 2023 by Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America
Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. PO Box 147 Saucier, Mississippi 39574 www.covenantofpeace.net

Scripture quotations, except those noted otherwise, are from The New American Standard Bible © 1995 by The Lockmann Foundation. Used by permission.

This is a single transcript in a larger series of teachings taken from a verse by verse Journey through the Epistle of 1John. You are free to reproduce it and distribute it as the Lord leads you- without cost or reimbursement to us with the stipulation that you may not add anything or take anything away from this transcript without the express written permission of The Covenant of Peace Church and that this complete copyright statement be at the end of all copies.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.