

So That You May Know

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

Chapter 6- John's Moral Test of Salvation

48. Obedience- The Proof of Salvation- Part 5

WAOY Tuesday 07/03/07; WOSM Wednesday 12/07/22

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 beginning to look very carefully at John's examples of true Salvation given for us in verses 4 & 5- so let's read those two 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:

So, on the one hand- we have in verse 4- a man who is not truly saved- but who only "says" that he knows Jesus Christ. And John teaches us here that this man fails John's test of true Salvation. And John goes further and calls this man a liar- meaning what this man

says about being saved- is not true- and then he goes on to say that the Truth is not in this man.

Now two questions emerge from this verse that need to be asked and answered. First of all- if the man is not truly saved- *why* does he “say” that he is and secondly- what does it mean when John calls this man a “liar” and says that the Truth is not in him? Let’s tackle these questions one at a time.

First off, all why does this man *say* that he knows Jesus; why does he *claim* to be a Christian; why does this man *say* that he is saved- if in fact he is not?

Now I want you to notice that John is not saying that this man was actually saved and yet lost his Salvation. That is *not* what John teaches here. John says that this man *says* that he knows Jesus. This man *says* that he is saved; he *says* that he is a Christian and a believer- when in fact he is not. So, this man is simply not telling the Truth. So, the first question is why does this man *say* that he is saved when in fact he is yet in his sins? And this is a very good question and one that we need to ask many today. Why do people think that they are saved when in fact they do not love Jesus Christ? I know that many people will protest this statement and say- but they do have a love for Jesus. But we must remember, brothers and sisters, that Jesus didn’t measure our love for Him by our words or our cute slogans or what kind of bumper sticker we have on our cars. Jesus Himself measures our love for Him by the degree to which we are willing to deny our own desires and obey what He says. Read with me two familiar passages in **John 14:15**- where Jesus said:

If you love Me, you will keep my commandments.

And in **Luke 6:46**- when our Lord said:

And why do you call me, Lord, Lord, and do not do what I say?

So, we see that Jesus *always* linked love with action. If a person does not think enough of Jesus or does not value Jesus enough to actually follow after Him and obey Him- why would Jesus ever believe that that person actually loves Him? And I see this a really being a huge issue. Because as I have said many times- if Jesus is not worthy of your service or your obedience- then why would Jesus be worthy of

your love? And if Jesus *is* worthy of your love- then is He not by default also worthy of your obedience and service? So, make no mistake about this beloved- when we serve Jesus Christ- it is a conscious act on our part. Nobody serves Jesus by accident. Nobody trips and falls into obedience. Everybody who serves Jesus Christ and obeys Jesus Christ and follows after Jesus Christ does so precisely because they love and value Jesus Christ. And since that is true- then the opposite is also true. Those who do not serve Jesus; those who do what is right in their own eyes; those who rebel against the authority of God's Word and live as they choose to live- do so precisely because they do *not* love and value Jesus Christ. And keep in mind- these are not my words, beloved. I developed this logic from the red letter words of Jesus Himself.

But there is another reason why a lost person could actually think that they are saved. A person could genuinely believe that he is saved even though he is in fact lost because of poor or incorrect teaching. And this would mean that this person is simply deceived. And this is why God places such high accountability on the leaders of the Church. We who lead in the House of God are commanded to study to show ourselves approved unto God so that we may rightly divide the Word of Truth.

But even though we all have that solemn commandment- it is frightening today to see the glaring lack of time that leaders spend in prayer and in the study of God's Word. Many pastors today have completely abandoned the line upon line and precept upon precept teaching of Sound Biblical Doctrine for the expediency of simply taking a popular best seller by a famous writer and teaching God's people from that.

John Stott, the noted British Anglican theologian has said that the current group of men who occupy the pulpit of the American Church in our day are the most Biblically illiterate group of men in the history of the Church. And if the leaders do not know and teach the Truth – where does that leave the congregation?

We who lead are responsible to God for what we teach. We must realize that we stand between two great extremes as we preach. On the one side- we can hear the rejoicing of those who have been saved by Grace and who have entered into Heaven and on the other side we can hear the screams of those who rejected Christ and are suffering eternal torment in hell.

And as we stand between those two great extremes- we become intimately aware of the solemn obligation that we have to speak the Truth in love and not to be ashamed of the Gospel. And this awareness formulates a holy terror within us. And to the degree that this holy terror has been formulated within us- we persuade men.

This is why it is so important to know that the personality of the pastor and the style of the pastor is completely irrelevant to the ministry. We are never to be the issue- God's Word is to be the issue. So, we must hide behind the Cross, and we must decrease and we must let men hear Christ and not us; we must let men know Christ and not us; and we must let men see Christ and not us.

Paul said in **2Corinthians 4:7**- that we have this glorious treasure of God's Word in "earthen vessels"- to the end that the excellency of the Power may be of God and not the preacher. And the term that Paul used here, "**earthen vessels**" has been defined as "clay pots"- but that description doesn't really give us an adequate understanding. It isn't just any old clay pot – but a special clay pot. The way that Paul used this phrase here makes it clear that Paul was speaking of those *particular* clay pots that people used the bathroom in. Charles Spurgeon called them "privy pots."

And this is not a very glamorous thought beloved- but a thought that should cause us all to decrease in our own importance. Paul was saying here that the minister is about as glamorous as a clay pot that a person uses the bathroom in- but yet it is from this undistinguished clay pot that the unsearchable riches of Christ is preached- to the end that the Power may be of God and not on the pastor.

Compare that holy thought with the modern concept that we have today of prima donna ministers who wear silk suites and their own leer jets and who have bodyguards. Our generation is the first generation in the history of the word that has so called men of God who have personally become millionaires off the Gospel- which is a reproach to true Gospel ministry.

And as we expend ourselves in the faithful preaching and teaching of God's Word and we discover that we have taught God's Word wrongly- then we have the duty and the obligation to stand before our congregation and repent and then make things right.

But the excuse that we are taught wrong or that the pastor didn't teach us correctly can only last so long. Because as believers- we all are

commanded by inspired Scripture to study and learn Truth from God's Word ourselves. So being taught or led wrong can only go so far because as we ourselves become more knowledgeable about God's Word- false teaching and false preaching will not have any affect upon us.

And this is precisely why I am so concerned about God's people sitting for hours and being entertained both in and out of the Church and yet saying that they never have any time to study their Bible. We have to understand, beloved, that deception is real- the devil isn't kidding- he is angry because he knows that he has but a short time and he is going about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

Cults which preach damnable heresy are growing in the United States by double digits. Mormonism is looked upon by many today as being no different than any other denomination. Ancient heresies which have been confronted and fought and defeated centuries ago by faithful men of the Church are making a huge comeback in our day precisely because what Jeremiah prophesied would happen in **Jeremiah 5:31a**- when he said:

The prophets prophesy falsely, And the priests rule on their *own* authority; And My people love it so! ...

We must remember that Spiritual discernment doesn't drop down out of heaven upon you- beloved. It isn't something that someone can lay hands on you and impart to you. Spiritual discernment- the knowledge of the difference between what is holy and what is profane is developed through the discipline of a lifetime of prayerful and systematic line upon line and precept upon precept study of God's Word.

Another reason why a man will *say* that he is saved- even though he is lost is that this man might know in his heart that he is lost- and yet *says* that he is saved because he wants to get his wife off his back or make himself feel better about himself or impress other people.

So many times, in our eagerness to see our loved ones saved- we skip over what the Bible actually says in order to believe that our children or our spouse has been saved- only to find out later that they have no more desire to serve the Lord now than they did before.

But there is one more possible answer to this question. Many today believe that they are saved simply because they want God to

sanction them and what they are doing. We have to be very careful about this today.

For example- there is a type of human “morality” that exists in the South which is a counterfeit of true Biblical Salvation. I have met several people who believe that since they are “good ole boys” and they watch Fox News, and they wave the American Flag- that that means that they are saved.

Now look- there is certainly nothing wrong with being nice to people- all true believers should strive daily to be generous and kind and loving. But we have to understand that lost people can be nice and be good neighbors and be kind and thoughtful too.

And there is absolutely nothing wrong with being patriotic. I am not a conscientious objector. The Bible does not forbid us to love our country and there is no Scriptural prohibition whatsoever on serving in the military or even fighting and killing in a “just” war.

But we must be careful not to equate patriotism with Salvation. God is not an American and He does not agree with everything that this country is doing. 63 years ago, President Franklin Roosevelt prayed that when a soldier in World War 2 fell in combat that God would receive him into Heaven – and I appreciate the fact that the President of the United States would publicly pray like that- but God will not receive a fallen soldier or anyone else into Heaven- unless that soldier is born again- no matter how brave he acted in combat.

We must remember, beloved that God is not a Republican and that political party is not a holy and godly entity- it is a political machine that will compromise and finagle its way through the legislative process just as much as the Democrats.

So, God is not on America’s side and George Washington and Abraham Lincoln knew that. That’s why those Presidents called the nation to repent and to fast so that God would forgive our wickedness. No, God is not on America’s side and therefore we all need to work real hard to make sure that America is on God’s side.

Well, I’m out of time- 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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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.