

So That You May Know

An Expositional Study of the Epistle of **1 John 4:13**

Chapter 21- The Gift of God's Spirit

194 The Gift of God's Spirit- Part 1

WAOY Tuesday 06/03/08

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 begin to look at what John taught about "The Gift of God's Spirit". So, let's read **1John 4:13** together:

By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

Now several people have called and written to ask me why I am going through **1John** verse by verse. What is the purpose of going into such detail every day on the radio? Well, there is a very simple answer to that question. I believe with all my heart that we are living in the last days. And I believe with all my heart that the return of Jesus is eminent. So because that is true there are several signs that the Bible talks about that distinguish this moment in history from all other moments. These signs are called, "the signs of the times" and these "signs" tell us just how close we are to seeing Jesus return to this earth.

Now most of the time when anyone talks about the "signs of the times"- they speak about things like The Temple being rebuilt in Jerusalem; the mark of the Beast; world events; the Antichrist and so forth. But I don't concentrate on those things for two very important reasons:

1. There is nothing that we can do to make those last time events come to pass and there is absolutely nothing we can do to stop them from happening. All these things may peak our interest and they may be fascinating to talk about- but the bottom line is that whatever God said is going to happen will, in fact, happen precisely because God is Sovereign- and not Man. For example, If God said that the Jewish Temple is going to be rebuilt on the exact site of that Muslim Mosque-

then no power in heaven or earth can stop that Temple from being rebuilt. So I don't spend a lot of time talking about things that I can't control.

2. There are other events that the Bible said was going to occur in the last days that we can control and we *can* do something about and very little attention is spent talking about these things- so I choose to talk about them rather than the world events.

For example- turn with me to read a passage in **2Timothy 4:1-5** that talks about end time signs. Here the Apostle Paul is on the last few weeks of his life and he is writing to his son in the faith, Timothy, a young pastor in the Church at Ephesus about what is going to happen in the last days and what Timothy can do about it:

1 I solemnly charge *you* in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:

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.

Here Paul said that Timothy was to “preach the Word” because something very wicked and evil and horrible was going to happen inside the Church among believers in the last days. And we have got to understand that Paul was not talking about politics or the super computer in Brussels Belgium here or whether Iran was going to get nuclear weapons.

No Paul said that something far more dangerous than nuclear weapons was going to happen to God's people *inside* the Church in the last days that should cause all of us to sit up and take notice. Well what was this horrible thing that Paul warned Timothy about that was going to come to pass in the last days? Read again with me verses 3 & 4:

- 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.**

Now the “**they**” that Paul is talking about here in these two verses is *not* the people who occupy the bar rooms or the dance halls- but those people who occupy the Church. And Paul said that the people who are inside the Church are going to get to place whereby they will no longer be able to “**endure sound doctrine**”. Now what does that mean? This passage means that in the last days- the people who sit on the pews of the Church will not be able to tolerate or stand or endure sound, biblical teaching and preaching from God’s Word.

Now the word that was translated here in English as “endure” comes from the Greek word, kakopatheoo (kay-koh-path-a-oh), which means: *to suffer through something that you dislike very much; to groan under the weight of something that troubles and offends you; and this word also means: to be afflicted or tormented by something.*

Well what in the world is so horrible and terrible that it is going to torment and afflict and trouble the people of the church in the last days? Sound Doctrine; Biblical Truth- in other words- the Word of God.

“Brother Blair, do you mean to suggest that the in the last days that the people in the Church are going to view the Word of God with such disdain and contempt that they are going to view teaching and preaching that inspired, inerrant, infallible Book will be something that is looked at as being a torment and an affliction?”

No, I am saying that God the Holy Spirit said this through the Apostle Paul- not me. I am saying that if the Bible is true at all- then *this* is going to happen. And if we are living in the last days- which so many people seem to say that we are- then this event whereby the people in the Church will not be able to endure Sound Doctrine is going on right now.

But it gets worse. Read with me the rest of verse 3:

... but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,

Now for many, many years I preached that this verse was saying

that people of the Church would simply hire preachers- Jesus called them “hirelings” in **John 10**- who would preach whatever the people *wanted* to hear instead of what they *needed* to hear- which is the Word of God. And this verse does mean that.

But over the last several years I have come to understand through researching the Middle East during the first century that the term, “**ears tickled**” was a very common term that was used all throughout the Middle East to describe things that were light, happy, frivolous, shallow, and things that made people relax and laugh. And we would call things like that today, “entertainment”.

So what Paul was actually referring to here is that in the last days- the people of the Church are going to get very weary of deep, important, serious discussions about matters that are vital and eternal and they are going to get themselves teachers and leaders who will entertain them with silly, shallow, unimportant, temporary, carnal and frivolous things- rather than the deep things of God.

And this is going to go on to such an extent, Paul says, that eventually- the people of the church will no longer be able to even “endure” any teaching or preaching that has anything at all to do with Sound, Biblical Truth.

But it gets worse still. Read again verse 4:

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

Now verse 4 begins with the word, “and” which shows us that in addition to *not* being able to even endure Sound Biblical teaching and preaching- the people of the Church in the last days are going to do something that is almost unbelievable. Paul says here that the people of the Church are going to *willingly* and *knowingly* turn their ears away from the Truth.

Now the phrase, “the truth” is a singular phrase- meaning that what Paul is talking about here is the single source of inspired, inerrant, and infallible Divine Revelation- or in other words, the Scriptures. So God’s people are going to get to a place where not only are they not able to sit through any sound teaching- but they are going to knowingly and willfully turn their ears away from Biblical Truth. But now look at the last part of verse 4:

.. and will turn aside to myths.

So while the people are going to willfully do the first part of verse 4- this second part is *not* willful. But because the people of the Church will knowingly and willfully turn their ears *away* from the Word of God- their ears will automatically “be turned” toward things that aren’t even true.

And we live in a time when today- the single biggest seller in Christian Book stores is what is called, “Christian Fiction” which is romance books and love stories and action stories that aren’t even true. In fact, the biggest selling series of books in the history of the world is the “Left Behind” series which is complete fiction.

So we are living in a time when Church after Church is cancelling prayer meetings and Bible Studies due to lack of interest and some of the largest mega- churches in this country no longer even hold a mid-week service because nobody would show up to pray in a church of thousands. And we can call this a lot of things- but what we can’t call it- is “revival”. So truly- we are living in the time of the great falling away.

So what are we supposed to do about this last day “sign of the times”? Paul gave young Timothy the answer in verses 2& 5:

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

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

Preach the Word; preach the Bible. Preach the Word of God. And preach it loud; and preach it true; and preach it completely; and preach it authoritatively; and preach it properly; and preach it without apology; and preach it without being ashamed of it.

We are to use sound Biblical Truth to reprove those who are not convinced that God’s Word is true. And we are to rebuke those who say they believe God’s Word is true and yet don’t live in submission to it. And we are to exhort those who are confused about what Gods’ Word says and means. And Paul said to do all three of these things on an *ongoing* basis- day in and day out- without hesitation or apology-

making sure that what we believe and teach is perfectly in accord with Scripture.

And then in verse 5- Paul told Timothy to be sober in all things- or in other words to stay alert and don't fall asleep at the wheel and don't become entangled with the cares of this life so that he is not blinded by the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life and so that he is not guilty of loving this present evil world.

Then Paul reminds Timothy that in doing this- he will be persecuted and called an extremist and called unloving, unkind, mean spirited; legalistic and even unchristian- but he is to endure those afflictions as good soldier of Jesus Christ.

And then Paul instructs Timothy to **“do the work of an evangelist”**. Now this terms does not mean to stand on the street corner and preach salvation to everybody- but rather for him to preach and teach the “Evangel”- which is the transliteration of the Greek word that means “Good News”- which is the Gospel. So Paul is telling Timothy here to be sure to preach the Biblical Gospel and in so doing faithfully- Timothy will be obeying the Commands of God.

So since I believe with all my heart that we are in fact living in the last days- I also believe that we are living in this time when Sound Doctrine is the last thing of anybody's mind and so I then have drawn the conclusion that the answer to this horrible situation in our day is the very same answer that Paul gave to Timothy- and that is to preach the Word without fear or fail; to teach Sound Doctrine and to do everything in my power to convince you of the great need that we have today of making sure that what we believe and what we teach is from the Scriptures and from the Scriptures alone. And *that* is why I am doing what I am doing on these radio broadcasts- and I pray that this is a great blessing to you all. May God help us all.

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