

So That You May Know

An Expositional Study of the Epistle of **1 John 5:6-8**

Chapter 26- Understanding and Valuing the Doctrine of the Trinity

231 Our Triune God Part 3

WAOY Friday-Monday 08/08-11/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today we're going to continue to look at what John taught about "The Doctrine of the Trinity". So let's open our Bibles and read **1John 5:6-8** again together:

6 This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

7 For there are three that testify:

8 the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.

Now as we have journeyed through **1John** together we have seen that there are four themes that run all the way through this Book and four things that John constantly repeats all throughout this Epistle:

1. Love of God and for God
2. Keeping God's Commandments
3. Loving the Brethren
4. A Correct Understanding of Who Jesus is

And John taught that all four of these things were true about all of those who have been born again. And here in **1John 5:6-8** the Apostle is once again teaching that part and parcel to being a Christian is having a correct and full and Biblical understanding about Who Jesus is. And I can't stress this enough, dear friends, that what you believe about Jesus Christ determines whether you are saved or not. And we also need to know that John was not the only one who taught this.

For example- as we saw last time, the Apostle Paul taught that Salvation was partly about confessing Jesus as Lord- and not merely “accepting Jesus” as your Savior- as so many teach today. So let’s turn to **Romans 10:9** and read that passage again together:

that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

Now we saw last time that when Paul taught here that we must confess with our mouths- Jesus as Lord- he wasn’t saying that we can merely repeat that phrase- but he was teaching two things:

1. That we confess that Jesus is God Almighty in human flesh
2. That Jesus is the Owner and Ruler of our lives

Now I have spoken at great length about the Deity of Jesus on these broadcasts- but I want to concentrate for just a minute on the second meaning of Lord- that Jesus is the Owner and Ruler of our lives. You see, dear friends, many people acknowledge today that Jesus is their Savior. That is a common statement. But very few today want to discuss the fact that Jesus is not only Savior- but Jesus is also, Lord.

Now the word, “Lord” comes from the Greek word (*kurios*) which means *he to whom a person or thing legally belongs, about which he has the power of deciding; controlling; and governing.*

So, a Lord has not only the *power and ability* to decide; control; and govern someone else- but he also has the *right* and the authority to do so. In other words- it is *proper and* correct for a Lord to control someone else. In fact- for a Lord *not* to control or govern another would cause him to cease to be a Lord.

So just how does a Lord control someone else? A Lord controls and governs another by restricting their behavior. He sets limits on what those under him can and cannot do. And that is exactly what God does to all who belong to Him. God sets boundaries and limitations on what we can and cannot do. And when we cross over those established boundaries- we have sinned, or we have rebelled against God’s Authority over our lives, and we have transgressed against Him.

Now I find it fascinating that all these militant atheists run around the country blaspheming God and yet have the audacity to

speaking about morality. Because true morality; genuine morality; eternal morality- absolute morality comes from God. Real morality cannot and does not originate inside Man's heart or mind. Genuine morality is *imposed* upon Man by a Sovereign God- Who alone establishes the limits and boundaries of acceptable behavior.

Any morality that humans create changes over time and morphs into being the opposite of what it once was. And that is why Christianity is much more than a human philosophy or a humanly engineered morality.

Mormons and Seventh day Adventists and Muslims and others who try to earn Heaven by living moral lives- always and in all cases fail in that endeavor- precisely because being saved is not about being moral. You don't save yourself because you quit smoking. You don't become acceptable in God's sight because you quit taking drugs or because you laid the bottle down or because you no longer beat your wife. Those things are good and fine but that didn't save you.

We must understand that human beings cannot earn Heaven by what they do for themselves. We cannot rub the two sticks of our own will power and our own human strength together to produce righteousness. I am righteous for only one reason. Going to Church did not make me righteous. Taking Communion did not make me righteous. Trying to love and serve God doesn't make me righteous. Endeavoring to obey God does not make me righteous. I was made righteous because Jesus Christ lived a perfectly sinless life and His Righteousness has been imputed to me by the agency of faith alone.

You see, Jesus never sinned a single time. Jesus was confronted with all the temptations of every human being on earth- male and female; young or old- and yet He never sinned. Jesus never had a bad attitude about anything for even one millisecond. Jesus never lusted; Jesus never coveted; Jesus never lied. Jesus obeyed His Father- *perfectly*. Jesus was led by God the Holy Spirit- *perfectly*. Jesus confronted Satan to his face and completely defeated Him.

So Jesus lived a perfectly sinless life- in thought, word, and deed- 24 hours every day and 7 days every week- for 33-1/2 years and by doing that- Jesus fulfilled the requirement that God established in the Law. And so by doing that- Jesus literally earned His Own Righteousness.

So we have to understand that it is through the shed Blood of Jesus from His Death that I receive Forgiveness for my sins. But it is through His sinless Life that I receive His Righteousness. So the Forgiveness that I receive is not my own. It is Christ's Forgiveness that He purchased for me by dying in my place on the Cross. And that is why I do not spend eternity in Hell. But in order to go to Heaven- I must be perfectly righteous. And the Righteousness that allows me to go to heaven is not mine either. It is Christ's Righteousness that I obtain that allows me to go to Heaven

But just how do I get that Righteousness? Some religious groups say that you must earn righteousness by obeying Church rules or by wearing dresses below your knees or by speaking in tongues or by keeping the Sacraments or through Mary interceding on your behalf. Others say that you have to perform works of mercy and acts of kindness to earn that righteousness.

But about 500 years ago an Augustinian monk named Martin Luther rediscovered the Bible teaches about this. And that is- that the mechanism or the vehicle by which unworthy sinners are made righteous is by and through the agency of faith alone.

Luther discovered that the visible church of that day had gone into error about how we are Justified and they had it wrong about how we obtain Righteousness. And God used that spark to ignite the fire of the greatest revival in the history of the world- the Protestant Reformation- where the Grace of God and Biblical Christianity was re-discovered. And part of that re-discovery was to understand that sinners are not made righteous by partaking of Sacraments or by going through the "Rite of Penance" but we are made righteous by faith in the finished work of Christ's Life, Death, and Resurrection and by faith in that alone.

And Luther had reason to teach this because this is exactly what Paul taught in **Romans 4:3-5**, when he said:

3 For what does the Scripture say? "*ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.*"

4 Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due.

5 But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,

Now 500 years ago- the leaders of the existing church used Latin when discussing serious doctrinal issues. And so, a Latin phrase was developed which summarized what these “Protestants” believed who were protesting what Rome was wrongly teaching about Salvation. And that phrase was “Sola Fide” or “By Faith Alone”.

And this one single concept that says that sinners are *not* made righteous by what *we* do but we are made fit for Heaven by fully trusting in what Christ has done for us quickly spread around the world and ignited the greatest revival in the history of the world. So Sola Fide teaches that at the very second when that holy Red Blood washes our sins away- God Almighty takes the Righteousness of Jesus Christ that He developed by living a sinless life and God “imputes” or He credits that Righteousness to us by faith alone. And at that very moment- we are *declared* to be righteous in God’s Eyes and made fit for Heaven!

Now that one single issue is what Sola Fide means and that one single issue is what divided the Church between Protestants and Catholics 500 years ago. And it is that one single issue that separates us today. And the prayer that the Protestants prayed then is the same prayer that we should pray today- that everyone will bow their knees to the authority of what God said in Scripture about how we are justified and that everyone will accept Justification by Faith alone. So we are to categorically reject Church tradition and papal bulls, writs and edicts and the decisions of Church councils when those statements contradict the clear meaning of Scripture.

Now people tell me all the time that this stuff doesn’t matter and that we are all one now and that all that business that went on 500 years ago is in the past. Really? Then why doesn’t everyone throw out their man- made teachings about Salvation and humbly accept and believe and teach what the Bible says about Justification by faith alone? I wish they would- but they don’t. And since they don’t- we must stand up and tell the truth.

And here is how important this is. According to Paul and John and James and Peter- Sola Fide or Justification by Faith alone is the very heart of the Gospel that Jesus taught in Scripture. And so without Sola Fide- we have no Gospel and without the Gospel we have no Salvation and without Salvation we have no Church and without the Church- we have no hope.

So Sola Fide or Justification by Faith Alone is not merely an academic discussion between intellectuals. Either sinners are justified by Grace through faith alone excluding any and all human works- even good religious works or we are justified by Grace through Faith *combined* with human works. It is one or the other- but it cannot be both. And so I would suggest that we find out what the Bible actually teaches and believe and trust in that. And if we find out that what we have been taught is at odds with what the Bible says- then we should discard it immediately- because it isn't true.

The Righteousness that allows me to go to Heaven is not my own righteousness. The Bible says that *my* righteousness is as filthy rags- it isn't good enough; it isn't holy enough. That is because I am human. But Jesus was *more* than human- Jesus was God wrapped in human flesh. So, the Righteousness that allows me to go to Heaven is what is called an "alien" or a "foreign" or an external Righteousness or a Righteousness that is *outside* of me- that does not come from me and that is not mine and is never mine and cannot ever be mine. IT is Jesus' Righteousness.

And that is why I must know Who Jesus is – because I need Righteousness. I don't need morality or a lesson or tips for better living- I am sinner and I need to be made righteous. And if Jesus was simply an example- then He cannot impute Righteousness to me. If all that Jesus was- was a good man- then He cannot impute Righteousness to me. If all that Jesus was was a prophet or a spirit then He cannot impute Righteousness to me. Only if Jesus was fully God and fully Man and only if this Jesus was perfectly sinless; and only if Jesus perfectly obeyed His Father's Law; and only if Jesus confronted satan to his face and utterly defeated him forever; only if this Jesus died on the Cross with all my sins imputed to Him can God then turn around and impute His righteousness to me by faith alone.

So knowing Who Jesus is – is paramount to being saved and this is why John spends so much time throughout this Epistle telling us Who Jesus is – so that we may know and believe and be saved.

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.

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.