

# So That You May Know

## An Expositional Study of the Epistle of **1 John 5:18-20**

### Chapter 30- What We Know 281 What We Know- Part 7

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WAOY Tuesday 11/18/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today we are going to continue to look at the summary of all that we know- based upon this great Epistle of **1John**- so let's read **1John 5:18-20** again together:

**18** We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him.

**19** We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in *the power of* the evil one.

**20** And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

Now we are right in the middle of looking at the summary that the Apostle John is giving us in these three verses of all that he has taught throughout this great Epistle. And he begins each of these three verses with the phrase, "We know".

So in these three verses- John wants us to know three things:

1. That the person who has genuinely been born of God does not dwell continually in sin
2. That those who are saved are truly born of God
3. That the Son of God has come and has given us knowledge of the one true living God.

And on the last broadcast- we were looking at the second Truth that John says that we should know, and I want to continue that today- so let's read **1John 5:19** again together:

**We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in *the power of the evil one*.**

Now here John is once again reminding us that saved people have the assurance and the certainty of Salvation. People who have been genuinely born of the Spirit know it and they are not bewildered about their place with God.

And I have taught on this in great length earlier in our study- but I want to repeat something here that we must all understand. The only reason that Salvation is certain and permanent and eternal is because it is *not* the result of the free will choices of Man. Salvation is eternal only because Salvation is of God; because it is a Sovereign Work of God; and because Salvation is *not* something that we humans initiate or control. So all this talk about how we have to take the first step and then God will do all the rest- is simply contrary to the Holy Bible, dear friends.

Now I realize that it is popular today to teach that lost people must believe in order to be born again. But the Bible teaches that because lost people are spiritually “dead”- the Bible teaches that lost people must be born again before they can believe. So, the New Birth *precedes* or *comes before* Justification. Regeneration *precedes* Justification. God’s gift of the new nature through the New Birth- *quicken*s us or *makes us alive*- so we are able to believe.

And all of this is what makes Salvation to be permanent and not something that can be lost. The most contradictory theology that exists is that belief that says that we choose God and when we do- our choice is then eternal. That is absolute nonsense, beloved. *Nothing* that Man does is eternal while *everything* that God does is eternal. So why in the world would we not believe what the Bible actually says and go ahead and say that Salvation is a Sovereign Work of God alone and *not* the result of the free will choice of Man? Well, there are only two reasons: real bad teaching and real sloppy Bible study.

But now John also adds another component to the mix. In addition to reminding us that Salvation is both certain and assured- at the end of verse 19- John says that there is something else that we know:

**... the whole world lies in *the power of the evil one*.**

Now you would think that this statement by the Apostle John would be obvious. You would think that everybody would know that the entire world system lies in the power of the evil one. But you would be surprised at how fiercely this is fought today by many in the modern Church.

So what exactly is John saying here by telling us that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one? John is reminding us of what he taught earlier in **1John 2:15-17**- so let's read that passage again together:

**15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**

**16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.**

**17 The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.**

Now I would dare say that it has been a long time since you heard anyone preach about the horrible sin of "worldliness". In fact, I really believe that this sin has been so whitewashed in our day that very few people in the Church- who have been raised in the Church- who are 30 years old or younger- even know what "worldliness" is.

And yet John says here that this is so serious an issue that if anybody loves the world- the love of the Father is not in him. So why this sin of worldliness is not taught and not discussed and not learned today by those in the modern Church is one of the great mysteries of our time. In fact- you will go far and wide before you will even find anyone who is even disturbed about this issue in our day.

Dear friends- the Bible is very clear about this- covetousness; the love of money; and loving the world are all horrible offenses to God. They insult God's Holiness and Integrity and they exalt Man's own self-importance and pride. And yet many within the Health, Wealth, and Prosperity movement actually *advance* these very sins as being spiritual and things that Christians should aspire to.

And this love for the world that exists today along with a great increase in materialistic concepts is the result of pushing the Bible away to accept whatever the dog drags in through the front door. We have to understand, dear friends- that human beings are covetous by

nature- we all are enamored by what money can do for us and we are all thrilled about what more of this world's goods can bring to us. These earthly, temporary, and wicked devices feed our flesh and they rev up our sense of self- worth and self- fulfillment that is the very *antithesis* of Biblical Christianity- which is why the Church condemned these things as pagan- that is- until just recently.

And because this is true- genuine shepherds for generation after generation have been faithful to warn the sheep of the great sin of worldliness and the great danger of loving money and being covetous- and they were faithful to cry out against the great harm that materialism does to our souls. And so real men of God would never in a thousand years promote these things as being of God. No, broken, humbled, bond-slaves- those who tremble at God's Word- these men faithfully teach that these things are wicked sins of the highest order and genuinely saved people study the Bible themselves to see for themselves what John and Jesus said about this.

It is true that we have a far greater danger in this country to be blessed into apostasy than we do in being driven there by evil men. And that is why I tell you that if the devil can't get you to "backslide"- he will get you to "front slide" and he will dull the edge of the Sword by blessing us into slavery.

We must know that financial prosperity without sound teaching about the danger that money brings to the soul of believers is like putting gasoline on a fire. Of course we all want more money and more stuff. But that's because we are pagans by nature. Of course, any teaching that promotes covetousness is popular. That's because human beings love sin more than we love holiness. Of course books written by people who make merchandise of God's people are best sellers. That's because a lie is much easier to believe and teach than the Truth.

And it is because what I am saying is true that men of God must cry out against the evil of our ways so that we may repent and be found faithful. Because if the leaders of the Church capitulate on this issue and if those whose duty is to guard the souls of the sheep- if they dull the edge of the sword so that they can be well thought of or so that they can grow the Church- who will cry out against worldliness?

And if you think that I am making a mountain out of a mole hill- read what men of God wrote about this issue years ago- before we became so fat and prosperous. Read what Augustine wrote about the

danger of money 1700 years ago. Read what Jonathan Edwards wrote 400 years ago about worldliness. Read what the Puritans wrote about covetousness or what Charles Spurgeon wrote about the danger of blessings and then see if I am so out in left field.

I tell you that crying out against these things is in perfect alignment with what the Christian Church taught right up until the United States of America became drunk with pleasure; money; safety and peace.

Now I have received more phone calls and mail about this issue of worldliness than any other issue in **1John**. And while the majority of the letters have been very encouraging and very kind- many write or call to ask me if I am promoting poverty or if being poor is what I think holiness is. I am not doing that at all- but the fact that these are the kinds of questions that I get as I simply preach what John said- only proves my point that we no longer even know what worldliness is anymore. And we need to fix that, beloved.

Please hear me- the Apostle John- not Blair Bradley- said that if we love the world- we cannot possibly be saved. And while many today would say that this view is extreme and is not even practical- we have to agree that God thought enough of it to put it into the Bible because here it is right here in black and white.

So can we at least agree, dear friends, that this warning against worldliness means *something*? And can we begin to at least have an honest discussion about just what John was talking about here- lest we find ourselves to be on the outside looking in? Can we agree that God the Holy Spirit didn't move on John and have him pen these words down simply because he had some room left on the page but that this is a real serious issue that we have a duty to know and obey?

And we also have to know that John is not making up some new or strange teaching here. He is simply saying the exact same thing as Jesus did when He said in **Luke 16:13**:

**No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."**

So Jesus is saying here and John is saying in 1John that if we love money- we are not God's children. That is how serious this is.

And why is this such a huge issue with God? Well, John tells us in **1John 2:16**:

**For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.**

John says that these three things are not from the Father. And the way that the Greek reads here shows us that John actually said that these three things cannot *ever* be from the Father; they cannot ever be sanctified. They are the *opposite* of the Will of the Father. They fight *against* the Father; they *dishonor* the Father.

So God is against worldliness because worldliness is the opposite of what He is. Worldliness promotes Man's importance and builds up the "self" of Man. You see, the more "worldly" people get- the less humble and the less spiritual; and the less dependent on God they become. And this is automatic. That is why Jesus said that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to get to Heaven.

And worldliness is passing away but God is eternal. And those who latch on to what is passing away will pass away with it and those who latch on to what is eternal will live forever.

And the Apostle John says that this is not some mystery- but is something that he says in **1John 5:19** that "we know".

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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