



I have recently been doing a discussion/teaching on the Letter of 1John. We must look at 1John in the way that it was written. The Apostle John was writing this letter to the churches in Asia Minor, modern day Turkey. It was one of the last letters we have that was written by anyone who was actually with Jesus when He walked this earth. John also wrote 2John and 3John.

1John was written around 90 AD. That was almost 60 years after John first met and heard Jesus. We know that when John met Jesus he was about 14 or 15 years old. He was seeking after the true God. We know that he also went and visited the Essene camp at Qumran (the place where they found the Dead Sea scrolls). John was a young man who was seeking after the truth and who was seeking after God.

To get a little background on the Letter of 1John, we first must take a look at the Book of Acts. We see that on Paul's second Missionary journey, the Holy Spirit literally directed Paul, who was in that region to bring the Good News of Jesus to it, to go to the northern areas of Asia Minor first. Paul wanted to go to the coastline area but in Acts 16:6:7 we see that the Holy Spirit directed Paul to go to the northern area and then on to Macedonia (northern Greece).

We are not sure why the Holy Spirit did this but we are sure that when the Holy Spirit directs us to do something other than what we may want to do, it is best to listen to the Holy Spirit and simply do or go where He tells us to go Paul understood this. He, therefore, listened to the Holy Spirit and went the way the Holy Spirit told him.

Paul and those with him, as mentioned, went the way the Holy spirit directed and established many small churches throughout that region in the northern part of Asia Minor. He then proceeded on that second missionary journey to Macedonia and other areas that ultimately led him to Greece. The churches that he had established in Asia Minor continued to grow and expand into that region.

At around 85 AD we see that the Apostle John, who had been sentenced to die on the Isle of Patmos, was given the Book of Revelation. He then miraculously was released from Patmos

and went to Ephesus which was on the coastline of Asia Minor. The church at Ephesus had become the largest of all the churches that were in that region. John became the “chief elder” over all those churches.

When John wrote these last letters, 1John, 2John and 3John, it was for the main purpose of exhorting the believers in that region of Asia Minor and then ultimately, all believers everywhere, to beware of false teachers who were coming into the Body of Christ and bringing with them false teachings. These false teachings sounded so very, very “spiritual.” So much so, that they were actually starting to deceive and be accepted by the believers.

John believed that these false teachings were so very, very dangerous to the believers in Jesus. This was so true back in that time and it is so very, very true for us today. The same thing is taking place. So much so that there is a very dangerous movement among church leadership that we all should be aware of.

Many are teaching that we should remove all of John’s letters from our Bibles. That is the same movement that is telling us that we do not need the Old Testament; nor do we need the Gospels anymore; nor do we need many of Paul’s letters except those sections that speak of “salvation through grace.”

You may say or you may think that I am a little crazed when I write such things. However, unfortunately, this is happening within the Body of Christ. Many well known speakers and “church leaders” are starting to and have been changing their message. They have begun teaching, I believe based on the true Word of God, erroneous teachings to the Body of believers. This is so very, very dangerous and we must be very aware of what we are hearing.

Let me make one thing perfectly clear. I do, absolutely, believe that our salvation comes from God’s unearned favor, His grace, **and** His mercy. There is nothing that we can or could do to earn or work for true salvation. It only comes through acknowledging, believing and accepting all that Jesus did on the cross and His resurrection. However, salvation goes much, much further. Let me explain.

Salvation begins with God's unconditional love for all of his creation but more specifically for His most cherished creation – mankind, people, you and I. We see that in the very beginning when Adam and Eve sinned. They were destined to die in their sin of not believing God and by disobeying Him and eating from the tree. They were destined to be eternally removed from God and go directly to a place called hell. But God...

Yes!!! But God... Instead of sending His most prized creation to hell, He chose to give them and their offspring (you and I) an opportunity to be saved from that terrible eternal doom in hell. He spoke this in Genesis 3:22-24 when He declared that Adam and Eve became aware of and knew what was now right and wrong or as we said, what was good and evil.

It was not because now they would know this truth, but rather it was simply because eating from that fruit revealed an inner decision, an attitude of their heart, to do what they wanted to do and not what God wanted. This led them to rebel and disobey the Living God. It was now, unfortunately, to be a part of their lifestyle.

They had sinned and now sin would become a part of their lifestyle. They lost their covenant relationship of holiness with their God because of that sin. Yes, it was sin but it came forth as a rebelliousness against God and His Word. It was simply because they chose to listen to the voice of separation from God, the devil, and they ate of that tree of good and evil,

However, instead of sending them to hell, God chose to send them out from the Garden. God then placed an angel with a flaming sword at the entrance. Yes, God gave them, and therefore, all of us, an opportunity to be saved from eternal death and instead have the possibility of getting back that eternal life that was lost. Thank you, God!!!

We fast forward in time to God, the Father sending His Son, Jesus, to this earth to teach us again about the true love of our God. Jesus taught His disciples who in turn wrote all those things down so now we, over 2000 years later, could be saved from hell and have eternal life.

Jesus died on that cross and took the punishment for our sin – all of it. He then rose from the grave and ascended onto the Father in heaven. Because He did that, anyone who believes in Him will now be given that wonderful gift of eternal life. Again we say, thank you God!!!

Yes, Jesus came in the flesh of the virgin Mary. But...He was also the Son of God!!! Jesus was both 100% God and 100% Man. That is the essence of our faith whether we realize it or not. Unfortunately, the opposite was and still is being taught and coming into the church.

This opposing teaching to the truth of who Jesus is was the very thing that was coming against the Body of Christ back in the day of the early church. That was why the Apostle John wrote his Gospel the way he did. That was why he wrote his letters to the church – to declare that Jesus was truly, both 100% God and 100% man.

We must believe the entire truth of God and His Word. Back in those days there was a doctrine that was coming up very strong within the church. This teaching was known as Gnosticism. It actually began much earlier, for it was a part of Greek thinking.

At the time of Jesus, it became a very strong deception that tried to come and pervert the early church. If you read Paul's letters, he writes of this teaching that was coming into the church. The Corinthian church was almost destroyed by it. That is why we have 2Corinthians.

Paul actually wrote a letter between 1 and 2 Corinthians in which he delves into this untruth and tried to sternly tell the Corinthian Church how very dangerous and how very wrong that teaching was. The Corinthian church heeded Paul's warning and moved away from that teaching. That teaching was and still is - the teaching of Gnosticism.

Basically, Gnosticism, is a Greek philosophy that teaches that "anything of the spirit real is inherently good" and "anything of the physical realm is inherently evil." With that being said, this teaching declares that Jesus therefore, could not be both God and man. He had to be either all God or all man. Therefore, these Gnostics declared that Jesus, if He truly was the Son of God, had to have been a "spiritual apparition" and that He was in no way, a man.

We must realize that this is a total lie!!! Jesus was both, 100% God and 100% man. He came into Mary as the seed deposited within her through the Word of God spoken to her by the angel, Gabriel. Jesus was God. He was to be the spotless sacrifice that would be offered for the sins of all mankind. No animal could ever be totally spotless nor could there be anything or anyone on this earth that was sinless – anyone that is except Jesus.

However, Jesus was also 100% man because He came from being born of a woman, Mary. Therefore, He died on the cross as a man. He died in place of you and I who should have been placed on that cross. He died in place of Adam and Eve who should have died and went to hell. But God...!!!

That is the essence of our faith. That was what John was writing to the people in the churches in that region and then ultimately to all of us, today. We must know that it was God's love that sent mankind His grace. He has given to us and we have received, His unearned and unmerited favor. But... there needed to be more!!!

This is where the full understanding of what God did for us is vital. This was what John was writing of in His Gospel and in his letters. Yes, God showed us His grace. However, He did something to get us out of that place of spiritual death. Grace, we know is God's favor. However, favor is one thing. There needed to be something else.

This is where the Father expressed His **mercy** to us. He sent His Son, Jesus, to die in our place. He took the punishment that Adam and Eve should have received. He took the punishment of hell that we all should have received for all our sin. We must know that God is love. His love expresses His grace to all. However, there needed to be more than grace. The Father had to express and give all mankind His mercy. He did that by sending Jesus.

God's love + God's grace + God's mercy = our salvation (peace with God)

That was what John was declaring when he opens his letter of 1John. In verses 1-4 John declares, *"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."*

John was telling everyone who would read his letter that he, and others, heard and saw the Son of God, the Savior of the world, the Lord of all, the Word that gives new life to all who believe. John is giving us his personal "witness statement" that He heard and is now declaring

to us all, that we can now have true fellowship with the Father through the Son, Jesus Christ. He again tells us, as He did in his Gospel account, the Jesus is the Son of God who came in the flesh.

John continues by telling us that Jesus cleanses us from all sin. By cleansing us from all our sin, we can now walk in the “light” - the light of fellowship and relationship with the Living God. That fellowship, that relationship only comes through knowing, believing and accepting Jesus as your personal Savior and Lord.

If you do, then we can say along with John as he writes in 1John 1:7, “*But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.*” Yes, through Jesus we can now walk in the “light” the same “Light” that God declared back in Genesis 1:3 when He declared, “... *Let there be light...*”

God was instituting His Kingdom. He showed us the separation between the Kingdom of God (Light) and the kingdom of darkness. Lucifer (sin) was forever separated from the Light. When Adam was created, God made him in His own image and likeness. That means that He was bathed in the light of God’s glory. But...then sin came into the world through the fall of Adam.

However, now through Jesus, all those who believe and accept Jesus as their Savior and Lord have been brought back into that “light.” That is why John writes this letter. To encourage the true believer to never forget that truth of God’s Word and never forget who Jesus is – the Son of God and the Son of Man. Jesus was and is God who came in the flesh.

John continues this in his letter. He discusses the “spirit of anti-christ.” John is not referring to that man, the “son of perdition” as Paul refers to him as. No, John is telling us that in this hour and in all the hours that we live upon this earth, that there will always be those who will speak against and teach wrong teachings concerning who Jesus really was when He came to this earth. That is the true “spirit of anti-christ.”

They will declare that Jesus was not both, God and man. They will also falsely teach that because of Jesus, we can now do away with the Old Testament, the Gospels and many other parts of the New Testament. That, my friends, is an out and out lie!!!

They will teach untruths in this hour that will try to lead many astray and take them away from the truth of God and His Word. They will deny who and what Jesus is and what He did. They will deny the true work of the Holy Spirit at this time upon the earth.

John tells us in 1John 4:1, ***“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”*** This simply means that we are not to believe everything people tell us. The only truth is found within the Word of God – the Bible. We must read the scriptures, the Bible, for ourselves. We must read it under the power, the guidance and the understanding of the Holy Spirit.

The bottom line that John writes to all believers is that the most important thing to truly being a child of God is believing in Jesus Christ. He is the Son of God (came 100% spirit) and He came in the flesh as the Son of Man (100% man). Yes, Jesus took the cross to die for **all of man’s sin**. He took the punishment of spiritual death for **all** mankind as the Son of Man.

But... three days later, Jesus rose from the dead as the Son of God and is now seated at the right hand of the Father. He is waiting to return and take all His believers, all those who are now “children” of the most High God, all those who have been brought back into the true Light of the Father through Jesus, back to this earth to rule and reign with Him for 1000 years. After that, all those who truly believe in Jesus will spend eternity in the “New Jerusalem.”

In 1John 5:20 we read, *“And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. **This is the true God, and eternal life.**”* John declares that Jesus is the Son of God and that in Him is eternal life for all those that choose to believe and accept Him as their personal Savior and Lord.

John ends his letter with a statement that may seem strange. John writes a simple phrase that may seem out of place. But it truly is not!!! John gives a warning, an admonition, to every true believer in Jesus. He writes in 1John 5:21, *“Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen”* Yes, keep free from all the wiles of the enemy that will try to steal you and deceive you away from the true and living God.

An idol is anything, I repeat, anything, that will take you away from any aspect of the true and **entire** Word of God. This is so prevalent today. The Word of God is being attacked. We are being told that we do not need to read the entire Bible any more. That is so very dangerous.

Those that teach, or tell us that, are enemies of the most High God. They are trying to get us to worship “idols.” Those idols will become not just those we are listening to. No, those “idols” will ultimately become **ourselves**. Yes, we will be doing what we want to do because we think it is right and because it makes us feel good but it is totally opposite of the true Word of God. Beware of this!!!

I would encourage all true believers to continue reading and studying the Word of God – from Genesis to Revelation. Heed the words from the Apostle John who over 2000 years ago wrote a letter to those he was responsible to oversee and keep on the right path of salvation.

Always remember that the Truth, the Word of God, Jesus “...*is the **same yesterday, today and forever.***” (Hebrews 13:8) The Gospel of John reiterates that truth, as actually the entire Bible does, as it says, “... *If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.*” (John 8:31-32) Yes, God’s Word, His entire Word, is the truth and it **makes us free in Him!!!**

Thank you, Lord!!!