

Loved and Loving Johns Epistles Lesson 6 3Q 2009

Walking in the Light: Rejecting Antichrists

SABBATH

Read memory text- thoughts? What does this mean? Does this mean only people who accept Jesus can be saved? If you met a person at work, say a Buddhist, who told you they heard about Jesus and rejected Him, can they be saved in that state?

Should we ask, “Tell me about the Jesus you reject?” This lesson is on “antichrists” those who oppose Christ or who would pretend to be Christ or take Christ’s place. What if the only “Christ” someone had ever heard of was a false christ then would their rejection mean they were separated from God?

Does this text mean someone has to come to a knowledge of Jesus in order to have salvation and know the Father? Or does the text mean that all knowledge of the Father comes through Jesus so if someone knows the Father they were only able to know the Father through what Jesus has done or revealed? Would this be true even if someone isn’t a Christian?

What Bible texts shed further light on this subject?

During Old Testament times did the saved worship a God called Jesus? Who were they worshipping?

For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. ² They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. ³ They all ate the same spiritual food ⁴ and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. 1 Cor 10:1-4

Is God primarily concerned by the name we use when we worship Him? What names does God go by in the Bible?

- YHWH
 - Latin - IHWH
 - German, French, Dutch – JHWH
 - Translated as “Yahweh” or “Jehovah”
 - Hebrew pronunciation “yovah”
 - Appears over 6800 times in the Bible
 - Typically translated LORD
 - Jewish tradition substitute Adonai when reading
- Adonai - Lord
- Hashem – means “The Name”
- Ehyeh-Asher-Ehyeh “I Am”
- El – “diety”
- Elohim “god” or “gods”
- Elyon “Supreme” or “Supreme Court” or “Most High”
- Shaddai or El Shaddai
- Yah – first two letters of YHWH found in Elijah and Joshua

What do you think about God, the true God, being worshipped by names of heathen gods? Buddha, Neptune, Thor, Zeus etc?

- Adonai is the name of the Greek god Adonis, Adonai was also used by the Phoenicians for their God Tammuz.
- El – “diety” is used for both the God of Israel and other gods
- Elohim – means God and is used for both the god of Israel and other gods, the many gods of the Greeks were called Elohim. In the commandment “Thou shall have no other gods before me” Exodus 20:3 – the Hebrew for gods is elohim.
- Elyon – also used by the Phoenicians for their god

- Shaddai – The name of God worshipped by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
 - God also said to Moses, “I am the LORD. ³I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty,^a but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them. (Exodus 6:2,3)
 - Shaddai thought to be attribute of a semetic goddess related to Hebrew *sad* (breast) “the one of the breast”
 - Others believe it is derived from *Shadu* – “mountain” *Shaddau* “mountain dweller” – one of the names of Amurru a semetic shepherd god son of the sky god Anu and sometimes called *bēlu šadī* or *bēl šadē* and is the origin of the fertility god Baal adopted by the Canaanites.
- Yah – origin of Rastafarian god Jah

Does God get offended at the “name” or “label” we use when we address Him? Is the label (name) we attach to God what is most important? Or is it the character we know Him by? Do you think that God and the heavenly beings really speak Hebrew or English?

Does this mean that rather than immediately condemning someone who worships a god with a different name than the one we worship that we should take the time to ask, “tell me about your god” and see if they are describing Jesus, the God of the Bible?

Below are common names used for God:

- Aleim — sometimes seen as an alternative transliteration of Elohim
- Avinu Malkeinu — "Our Father, our King"
- Boreh — "the Creator"
- Ehiyeh sh'Ehiyeh — "I Am That I Am": a modern Hebrew version of "Ehyeh asher Ehyeh"

^a Hebrew *El-Shaddai*

- Elohei Avraham, Elohei Yitzchak ve Elohei Ya`aqov — "God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob"
- Elohei Sara, Elohei Rivka, Elohei Leah ve Elohei Rakhel — "God of Sarah, God of Rebecca, God of Leah, God of Rachel"
- El ha-Gibbor — "God the hero" or "God the strong one"
- Emet — "Truth"
- E'in Sof — "endless, infinite", Kabbalistic name of God
- HaKadosh, Baruch Hu — "The Holy One, Blessed be He"
- Kadosh Israel — "Holy One of Israel"
- Melech HaMelachim — "The King of kings" or Melech Malchei HaMelachim "The King, King of kings", to express superiority to the earthly rulers title
- Makom or HaMakom — literally "the place", meaning "The Omnipresent"; see Tzimtzum
- Magen Avraham — "Shield of Abraham"
- Ribono shel `Olam — "Master of the World"
- Ro'eh Yisra'el — "Shepherd of Israel"
- YHWH-Yireh (Jehovah-jireh) — "The Lord will provide" (Genesis 22:13-14)
- YHWH-Rapha — "The Lord that healeth" (Exodus 15:26)
- YHWH-Niss'i (Yahweh-Nissi) — "The Lord our Banner" (Exodus 17:8-15)
- YHWH-Shalom — "The Lord our Peace" (Judges 6:24)
- YHWH-Ra-ah — "The Lord my Shepherd" (Psalm 23:1)
- YHWH-Tsidkenu — "The Lord our Righteousness" (Jeremiah 23:6)
- YHWH-Shammah (Jehovah-shammah) — "The Lord is present" (Ezekiel 48:35)
- Tzur Israel — "Rock of Israel"

SUNDAY

The Last Hour – why do you think John used the language the last hour? What does “the last hour” mean?

The last days or the last hour refer to the time period after Christ’s first advent. In order to end sin and save mankind it was necessary for Christ to come and complete His mission.

Once He did that and ascended the rest is mopping up and thus the final phase or the application of what Christ has done – the last days, final days, last hour.

Read last paragraph “What’s important to notice...” thoughts? What do you think about all the emphasis on time setting, or event setting?

Read bottom green section – thoughts?

Have you heard of “Evolution Sunday”? It was started in 2006 and has spread to almost 700 Christian churches since then. Here is a 2006 news report describing the event:

Nearly 450 Christian churches in the United States yesterday celebrated the 197th birthday of Charles Darwin. The churches say Darwin's theory of biological evolution is compatible with faith and that Christians have no need to choose between religion and science. Some churches sang praises for "tall boiling test tubes" and "classrooms and labs." Many churches held adult education and Sunday school classes on evolution, and ministers preached that followers of Christ do not have to choose between biblical stories of creation and evolution... A variety of denominational and non-denominational churches, including Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Unitarian, Congregationalist, United Church of Christ, Baptist and a host of community churches, participated in the event... [M]ore than 10,000 Christian ministers... sign[ed] a letter urging school boards across the country to “preserve the integrity of the science curriculum by affirming the teaching of the theory of evolution as a core component of human knowledge.”¹

¹ http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/content/news_syndication/article_060213evolution.shtml

Thoughts? How deep can the lies go? Do we need to guard against attacks on God today? What are the implications if God were to have created by means of evolution?

For clarification we are not speaking of “adaptation” which is when a species changes over time in response to its environment. God created us with the ability to adapt. We are talking about the idea that one species, through evolutionary pressure, survival of the fittest, actually develops into another species. What is the problem with this idea – besides the fact that no scientific experiment has ever demonstrated it to be true, and science instead demonstrates just the opposite.

But what would it say about God if He were to have created in this way? What is the basic principle of evolution? Survival of the fittest – me first, kill or be killed. The idea that God created by evolution attributes to God the very character of Satan and makes Christians embrace the survival of the fittest method thus they will be able to practice those methods on others and will embrace Satan when he impersonates Christ!

MONDAY

Who is antichrist?

Satan of course is the ultimate antichrist. He opposed Christ in heaven and has done so on earth. Are there others who work for Satan doing the same thing?

John was fighting a particular kind of heresy in his day known as Gnosticism and there were two primary types – Docetism and Cerinthianism.

Gnosticism was the pursuit of knowledge, but these two religions taught falsehood regarding the nature of Christ.

Docetists denied Christ actually became a human and claimed Christ only appeared to have a human body, or to come in human form.

Cerinthus, a contemporary of John, claimed that Jesus was born naturally from the union of Joseph and Mary and at His baptism Christ (or Messiah, God the Son) entered His body and withdrew prior to the crucifixion.

John aggressively attacks these heresies and calls those who promote them antichrists.

What is the problem with the two Gnostic theories? Why, if true, would they fail to provide salvation?

If one has a legal model, a model that says a sinless God must die to pay my legal penalty, then is there any real problem with the Docetic model? If the only problem was a legal payment then such a model could work, but our problem wasn't legal.

When Christ came to visit with Abraham in the Old Testament in what form did He come? Human, why was it insufficient for Christ to come like this as our Savior?

- If Christ didn't become human did He condescend?
- If Christ didn't become human did He take our iniquities, our infirmities, our condition upon Himself?
- And if He didn't take our condition upon Himself then could He cure it?
- If Christ didn't become human did He overcome sin with a human brain?
- If Christ didn't become human did He demonstrate that there was nothing wrong with His design of humanity?
- If Christ didn't become human did He restore the law of love back into humanity?
- If the law of love is not restored in humanity what happens?

What is the problem with the Cerinthian model? God bails out before the crucifixion saving Himself and leaving His creature to suffer and die. What kind of a god would do this? Not Jesus,

that's for sure! Do you see how these two distortions attack the plan of salvation?

Do we have to hold to one of these two lies to be worshipping a false god? How might we worship a false god today?

- Thousands have a false conception of God and His attributes. They are as verily serving a false god as were the servants of Baal. Are we worshiping the true God as He is revealed in His Word, in Christ, in nature, or are we adoring some philosophical idol enshrined in His place? God is a God of truth. Justice and mercy are the attributes of His throne. He is a God of love, of pity and tender compassion. Thus He is represented in His Son, our Saviour. He is a God of patience and long-suffering. If such is the being whom we adore and to whose character we are seeking to assimilate, we are worshiping the true God. {FLB 59.8}

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph – thoughts?

What false teachings have you found that threaten to divide us?

- God executed His Son on the cross
- Jesus died to pay our legal debt
- God requires appeasement, propitiation
- Atonement is Jesus shedding His blood to take away the wrath of God
- Jesus is in heaven pleading to His Father to be merciful
- God's judgment determines our destiny
- God will inflict punishment upon the unrepentant
- God erases the records of sins confessed
- God keeps records in order to judge and punish
- Jesus had a nature just like Adam's
- Jesus had a nature just like ours
- The Sabbath is an arbitrary test of obedience

- The mark of the beast is worshipping on the wrong day

Others? What is the root to all of these lies? A false picture of God that He is something other than Love!

But for clarity, so no one draws the wrong conclusion let me state it plainly:

- We could not be saved without the death of Christ – it just wasn't for the reasons often given
- The unrepentant will die a most horrible death in the end, but not at the hands of an angry god
- The Sabbath is sacred and holy, but is not an arbitrary test
- Jesus' ministry after His ascension is just as important to us as His victory here on earth. It's just for different reasons than often presented.

WEDNESDAY

Read 1John 2:20, 21:

- But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth.

Thoughts? What is the anointing?

Read second paragraph “What the true...”

Thoughts? How are the Holy Spirit and Scripture connected? Who inspired the Scripture? Jesus is called the Word, why? Is there a connection between the living and written Word?

- John 15:26 - “When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.”

- Even the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is to be tested by the Word of God. The Spirit which inspired the Scriptures, always leads to the Scriptures.--General Conference Daily Bulletin, April 13, 1891. {1SM 43.2}

What would the anointing be? Would it be the anointing of truth, which dispels lies, wins us to trust and when we open the heart we receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit?

Where are the righteous sealed? In their foreheads, where we do our thinking. Does sealing have anything to do with experiencing the truth about God as revealed in Jesus, does it have anything to do with changing the way we think?

- Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. "All our righteousness are as filthy rags." Isa. 64:6. Everything that we of ourselves can do is defiled by sin. But the Son of God "was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin." Sin is defined to be "the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:5, 4. But Christ was obedient to every requirement of the law. He said of Himself, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart." Ps. 40:8. When on earth, He said to His disciples, "I have kept My Father's commandments." John 15:10. By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. **When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.** Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. {COL 311.4}

Read the third paragraph "The antidote to..." Thoughts? What about the moment believers stop thinking and take concretely

everything in the Bible, “God said it, I believe it, that settles it” are they in danger of all sorts of delusions and errors?

It requires both, that we trust God’s Word as the divinely inspired rule of faith, but the Bible must be rightly understood. This can only happen from the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit and it requires our cooperation with Him. He invites us in Isaiah to come and reason with Him. It is only when we actually reason out the truth for ourselves that it transforms our lives.

THURSDAY

What does it mean to “abide” in Jesus?

John 17:20-23:

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one:²³ I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Thoughts? What does it mean to be “in” Jesus? In unity? Of one accord? Sharing a common love, interest, motive, purpose, desire, vision, value? Could this common unity be our unity in our knowledge, love and appreciation for God?

What was Christ’s mission – to reveal the Father and restore the Father’s love in mankind!

Read middle dark section “One of the promises...” Thoughts?

Now it is absolutely wonderful that we are promised eternal life, but what about the question, “What would our faith offer us if we didn’t have that promise?”

- A relationship with God
- Happiness
- Joy
- Love
- Peace
- True knowledge
- Wisdom
- Healthier life

Do you spend time with your spouse because of a promise of some reward? Do you look forward to spending time with your children because they are going to bring your presents or gifts?

FRIDAY

Questions 1-4 read and discuss