

## Our World

**TEXT/INTRO:** Yesterday morning, Saturday, 6/20/20, the first day of Summer, Beverly and I were sitting on our patio enjoying a cup of coffee and a Krispy Kreme doughnut, and the beautiful morning. We were watching dozens of birds and a dozen or so squirrels eating the sunflower seeds we had put out for them in the bird feeders and on our parking area. It was really nice. It was very relaxing and peaceful. Not so much for the animals.

We get a lot of Cardinals on our feeders, but they can't seem to stand one another. They're constantly chasing each other off. Sometimes they get engaged in aerial combat. The same goes for the squirrels, except for the aerial combat, of course. They fight all the time. So much for tranquility. I know folks who think when they see squirrels chasing each other, they're playing. Right. It's like when we see National Geographic videos of lions chasing down gazelles, they just want to play.

Take your Bible and turn to First John, chapter 5, first John 5 and v.19. First John is near the end of the New Testament and shortly before the book of the Revelation. *<sup>19</sup> We know that we are of God, and we know, that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. (1 Jn. 5:19 NAU)*

John points out two things the body of Christ is supposed to know. Number one, "that we are of God." Number two, "that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one," that would be the devil. Can you imagine the chaos the church would be in if it didn't know these two truths? Many of the people who attend local churches already live under the delusion that people are basically good, which so isn't true. It doesn't take much to disprove that. Just watch the news. And if you should ask those who never go to church or practice some kind of religion about the goodness or badness of human beings, surveys show that they would more than likely so man is basically good. But lets take a look at those two truths we're supposed to be convinced of.

**First, "We are of God."**

I don't know how your mind works but mine has a question about that phrase. The question is this, "Who is 'we'?" "We are of God." And we find the answer to that question in the context.

The pronoun "we" occurs 81 times in this letter alone. For such a short book, that's a lot o' we's. Does that remind you of anything? It reminds me of the insurance commercial on tv where the little pig is riding home with a human family and he cries "we, we, we all the way home." But we can see by examining just the first chapter that we is we and we is us and we is you. <sup>5</sup> *This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.* That we is John the apostle who includes all the apostles in his thoughts, the one who would often sit with his head resting on his Lord's bosom, reminding his readers of his first-hand experience with the Lord Jesus. And the "you" in that verse is we. Doesn't it sound better to say "us" and not "we?" "And the you in that verse is us." But we is correct. "You is we."

<sup>6</sup> *If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;*

<sup>7</sup> *but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 Jn. 1:5-7 NAU)*

Obviously there are two "we's" in those verses, those who are in Christ and those who are not. Those who walk in light and those who do not, as of yet. Those who are in fellowship with God and those who are not. And the reason John uses we here is simply because he's covering all his bases. It may be that there are those among his readers who have not yet come to faith in Jesus. All the apostles included the possibility that unbelievers would hear their letters read in front of the assembled church. That's why I never assume that everyone sitting in the pews in front of me is saved just because they are sitting in a pew in front of me.

**Second, "We know that we are of God."**

John certainly sounds convinced about the majority of those who will hear his letter, doesn't he? He's had contact with these folks at some point in his past and he knows that they know the Lord Jesus as their Savior and Lord. If you will look at his second letter you will see how much he loved these folks, especially the "elect lady" who seemed to be the pillar of that local assembly. **2 John 1:1** *The elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth; and not only I, but also all who know the truth,*

<sup>2</sup> *for the sake of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever: (2 Jn. 1:1-2 NAU)*

If you want to discuss eternal security, that's a great place to start.

Notice this, the word "know." The verb occurs 39 times in this letter. It means something like "a working knowledge." It means to have heard the doctrine of Jesus and become utterly persuaded. It isn't like saying "I know what I'm going to do today." Or "I think I know this song," it's saying, "**I know that I know that I know.**" And how did they know? The same way we all know that we are of God, the only way anyone can know that we know that we know, **the indwelling of the life-giving, light-giving, faith-giving Spirit and our embrace of the gospel.**

It's called "the anointing." <sup>20</sup> *But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know. (1 Jn. 2:20 NAU)*

<sup>27</sup> *As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him. (1 Jn. 2:27 NAU)*

I did not "make a decision" one day while I was dead in my trespasses and sins to try Jesus or to make Him my Lord and Savior. Dead people can't make those decisions. It's called "the heresy of decisional regeneration." Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost because that which is lost **is also dead** and incapable of seeking Him. The spiritually lost are the walking dead. Ephesians 2:1-4, remember this? "But God!"

And this gets under my skin, no one can “Make Jesus their Lord and Savior.” God did that. And only God did it. You and I by the grace of God upon hearing the gospel under the convicting power of the Spirit came to see that as the greatest truth we had ever seen. It was only after the Spirit gave us life and light and faith that we freely called on the name of the Lord and were saved. Listen to this, <sup>44</sup> *"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.*

<sup>45</sup> *"It is written in the prophets, 'AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.*

*(Jn. 6:44-45 NAU)*

<sup>63</sup> *"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.*

<sup>64</sup> *"But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him.*

<sup>65</sup> *And He was saying, "For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father."*

*(Jn. 6:63-65 NAU)*

Do you know that you know that you know?

**Third, “The whole world, without exception, lies in the power of the evil one.”**

<sup>19</sup> *We know that we are of God, and we know that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. (1 Jn. 5:19 NAU)*

Again, there are those two truths we know.

If you're keeping up with current events it's pretty easy to see why John would say such a negative thing, “the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.” And as the world turns things have gotten much

worse than they were in John's day. I'm not saying that every protester is wicked and evil and unregenerate because I don't know that. But thousands of them are manifesting who their father is.

But it is not just the protesters and rioters and the moronic criminal element that always raises its ugly head during times like these, it is also our media. They won't get off God's hook.

Do you remember the other name for the evil one given him by the apostle Paul? It's found in 2 Cor. 4:4, he's "the god of this world." The devil's chief task is to blind people's minds to keep them from seeing and embracing Jesus as Lord and Savior. <sup>3</sup> *And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,*

<sup>4</sup> *in whose case **the god of this world** has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (2 Cor. 4:3-4 NAU)*

Racism and police brutality against unarmed black men is one of many distractions the devil is using to blind this world and to make them believe that Jesus is irrelevant.

**Fourth and finally, "The good news is this, 'greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world.'"**

<sup>4</sup> *You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.*

<sup>5</sup> *They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them.*

<sup>6</sup> *We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.*

<sup>7</sup> *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.*

<sup>8</sup> *The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. (1 Jn. 4:4-8 NAU) Church, do you want to know how to think of the protesters and the whole shebang? Love 'em. In Jesus' name. Amen.*