

Study Guide



1 John 2:18-27

"Abide in Christ"

October 2, 2016

Welcome (40 Minutes)

Be intentional...

Worship (5 Minutes)

As the group transitions from of a time of fellowship to a time of intentional study of the word, it is important to facilitate that transition with a time of worship. This can look like praying together, singing songs together, or rejoicing in what the Lord has done throughout the week.

Word (45 Minutes)

As we study along in 1 John, it becomes evident that John loves the Lord Jesus, he loves individual Christians and he is passionate in his love for the truth of God's word.

John has been explaining what authentic faith is by providing the Church (children) with contrasts. John has used the contrast of light and dark as a clear picture of God's perfect righteousness and sin's complete sinfulness. Next he made clear the contrast, or differing actions, between true love and hatred, pointing out the motive of our love. Now he begins to contrast what is true and what is false.

For more in depth study check out the following pages...

Walk Prayer & Missions

October 12-22—South Sudan
December 18-28—South Sudan
For further information visit
norrisferrychurch.org

Calendar

September-November— [Women's Bible Study](#)
October 2nd— Kids 1st-3rd Worship with parents
October 2nd—Worship in the Annex

Reminder

During our 10:30am service: Kids 1st-3rd will worship with their parents at the beginning of service and will then be dismissed. We will also have another service available in the Annex with live music and video of the sermon.

Welcome (40 Minutes)

As you fellowship with one another, please be intentional about sharing what the Lord is doing in your lives. Get to know one another and encourage one another. Are your conversations pointing one another toward Jesus?

Worship (5 Minutes)

If you are looking for a song to sing this week, here are the lyrics to "[Come Thou Fount](#)":

Come, Thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it,
Mount of Thy redeeming love.

Here I raise my Ebenezer;
Here by Thy great help I've come;
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger,
Interposed His precious blood;

O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Let Thy goodness, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to Thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,
Seal it for Thy courts above.

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,
Seal it for Thy courts above.

Warnings Concerning Antichrists (2:18)

In verses 18-27, John begins his warning against false teachers with a term of endearment he has used previously - "children," John's use of the term "children" communicates two great truths. First, it reveals John's feeling of parental affection and care over the local fellowship he is writing to. Second, and more importantly, the term points to the assurance each believer has in their relationship to God our Father. (1 John 3:1)

"Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know it is the last hour."

In the postmodern, churchy-world (my word) we live in, there are plenty of discussions, seminars, television shows, even movies, both biblically and secularly based, about the end of time and the coming of "The Antichrist." Many of these ideas tend to be centered in on knowing the timing of world events and identifying signs that reveal the end of time and a man that will lead the world in rebellion against God.

The Bible teaches us that the world as we know it will come to an end with the return of Christ (2 Peter 3:7) and before That Day there will be a man who leads a great rebellion against God and will work to destroy the church. John, however, is not giving his readers a calendar for end time events. The term "last hour" or last days, is not some future period of time, although as mentioned there are future events that will bring about the end of time and the return of Jesus Christ. It is best to understand John's term, last hour, to be the time span from Christ resurrection until His return. Some writers nuance the beginning of the term "last hour," to include His incarnation and birth into the world as the Light of the world.

Generally speaking a good way to understand this term is to see the history of the Old Testament as preparing the way for the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. All history since that time, the New Testament age, is preparing for the end of time, when Jesus will return and establish His kingdom and eternal rule. God has sent His son as the last and sufficient word to humanity. (Heb. 1:2) The believers reading John's letter were living in the last hour, just as Christians today are living in the last hour. Nothing is left to accomplish for the salvation of sinners. John's words should be as urgent and sobering to us as they were to his first readers. We too must guard against false teachers and live in light of His soon return.

John's second term "antichrist," is used in the Bible only by John. John uses this term to describe a spiritual force that opposes or denies Jesus Christ. John also identifies those who embody this spirit as false teachers (antichrists) and does address the culmination of both the antichrist spirit and false teaching in a future person, "antichrist is coming." "Anti" carries the idea of against Christ instead of for Christ. The spirit of the antichrist is in the world today. Satan is leading the deception in a spiritual assault against Christ, His Church, and the Gospel. Eventually this will lead to the revealing of "the" Antichrist (capital 'A') that the Bible identifies as "the man of sin" or of lawlessness (2 Thess. 2:1-12).

John is plainly reminding believers that there are two forces at work in the world. Truth is working through the church by the Holy Spirit and evil is working by the craftiness of Satan. Time is running out - it is the last hour leading to the final hour. The ultimate outcome will be Christ ruling and reigning as our Eternal King and Satan cast into the lake of fire.

Identifying False Teachers (2:19, 22-23, 26)

John next gives three evidences of those who are false teachers.

First, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.”

John makes it clear that the false teachers had departed the fellowship as a result of their unbelief. In John’s day there were not multiple denominational churches in each city. While some groups did meet in individual homes the community of Christ was clearly identified and fellow believers gathered for worship, study and instruction.

One of the evidences of true Christian life is a desire to be with the people of God. (1 John 3:14, 2 Peter 1:4) Christians have spiritual realities in common and they want to be together. In today’s larger cultural Christian context, where many independent groups of believers gathering together, there may not be a physical departing from the institution of church, but a spiritual disconnect. (Matthew 25:31-46: *the parable of the sheep and goats*) Leaving a particular fellowship is not the evidence of unbelief. Not fellowshiping with any group of true believers is. Some on the other hand have left the true orthodoxy of the faith and joined cults and sectarian groups claiming spiritual authority under the name of God. This is most likely what John is pointing to. They actually left all Christian fellowship and took their converts when they left.

Second, “Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father.”

Clearly John states that some of these teachers deny the deity of Jesus. They were not simply questioning the organization of the church, or the way the church practiced some secondary non-essential to the faith. The key question in life is who is Jesus Christ? He is more than a good man, a good example or even a great teacher; He is fully God and has been manifested in a flesh body. (see note Docetism) To confess Jesus Christ is God come in the flesh is more than simply identifying Jesus Christ. It is not an intellectual exercise. To truly confess involves a personal faith in Christ, faith in who He is and what He has done. It involves a fruitful life of repentance from sin and a pursuit of holy living. John goes on to say you cannot have a saving relationship with God without personal faith in Jesus Christ, God’s only son. Jesus is not simply one of many mediators to the Father, He is the Mediator. (1 Tim.2:5)

Thirdly, “I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you.”

False teachers combined with the spirit of antichrist are proactive in their deception. I have witnessed this first hand. A past acquaintance, who we both served in ministry together, left a Baptist fellowship to joined the Mormon Church. He began to share his views with great zeal to many of the people we had engaged through evangelistic work. To my shock, he had been listening to false teaching for some time before he departed. He had become convinced that Jesus was not God. False teachers under the influence of the antichrist spirit are still very present in our world today. They try to deceive faithful believers with half-truths, which, by the way, are whole lies.

1 Timothy 4:1 helps us to understand John’s identity of False teachers and the fruit of their deception. “Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demon ...”

As time moves closer to the return of the Lord Jesus, false teaching and false teachers will abound. The best defense is a great offense. We need to be more than sincere. We must be sound in doctrine giving ourselves to the study of God's Word like the Bereans in Acts 17:11: "*They searched the Scriptures day after day to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth.*"

Remaining with God by the Spirit's power (2: 24,25,27)

In these verses John gives encouragement by telling the believers that they are secure in their salvation by the Spirit's work and help.

Vv 24,25 "*Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life.*"

John reminds the reader that the message they received "*from the beginning*" was the truth, the true Gospel, the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16) evidenced by their changed, new lives and their love for God and His people. This is why we today must be often reminded of the Gospel message of salvation by grace through faith. This reality is what we need to continue in our Christian life. Personally, I have had trials and temptations in life that forced me back to this place of assurance. "*Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him.*" (Colossians 2:6)

V. 27 "*But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in him.*"

The false teachers did not have the indwelling Holy Spirit and in turn could not realize or rely on the power that the Spirit gives. Their appeal was to the carnal mind and the flesh. The Holy Spirit provides for the believer to discern between truth and error. Of course there is a difference between deliberate deception and spiritual ignorance.

John's admonition, "*the anointing you received...no need that anyone teach you*" has been misused. It does not mean you don't need to be spiritually taught under community accountability. You might know someone who has used the verse to be a "Christian island" out of fellowship from a local Bible teaching church. This misuse of Scripture is like the false teaching that John is warning about. Keep in mind the *anointing* is not some subjective super mystical revealing. We don't need a new experience or put up some cosmic antenna to get in tune, rather God has ordained the means by which we are "taught all things." John's reference to "all things" is best understood to address and combat the narrowing in of false teaching that ignores or disputes the complete revelation of Scripture which can promote false doctrines. The idea of Paul's declaration, "*for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God*" in Acts 20:27 helps us understand what John is driving at. The Spirit helps us as we abide in the Spirit, and the Spirit dwells in individual believers (Eph. 1:14, 2 Cor. 1:22, Titus 3:5) but operates collectively in unity and in harmony with all of God's word. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth. Believers must yield to the Spirit of God and be dutiful in Scripture study, prayer and church fellowship. I have often referred to this as the three legged stool of Christian growth. If you are missing anyone of the legs the stool will not stand.

In summary, these verses from John encouraged these believers to remain with God and to do so by recalling how they had come to faith and what they had heard at the beginning of their life in Christ. John reminded the Christians that had remained that what was happening was all a part of God's plan, God was not going to let His covenant people falter. John also gave practical guidelines to identify false teachers and their work. We too can be encouraged and assured by these timeless words from John.

Sermon Questions

What Does it Say?

1. How does the author say that we know it is the last hour?
2. What verse in last week's text is most logically tied to verse 18?
3. Verse 19 references those who've gone out. What does the author say is the proof that they were not "of us"?
4. Verses 20-24 discusses two groups: those who know the truth and those who are liars. Who is the object of the lie that is dividing these two groups of people?
5. In verse 22, we learn that those who deny Christ deny someone else as well. Who is that?
6. Who are the antichrists referenced in this text?
7. What is John's admonition to the true Church?
8. What is the result of letting the message from the beginning abide in you?

Sermon Questions

What Does it Mean?

1. Why does John highlight the temporality of the world in verses 17 and 18?
2. Does verse 19 cast doubt on the eternal security of the believer? Did those who've gone out lose their salvation? Read John 10:25-30.
3. How do people in our culture (Shreveport, LA in 2016) deny that Jesus is the Christ?
4. If disobedience can be seen as a denial of Christ, should that change the way we think about our personal holiness and sanctification?
5. How can we abide in the message that is "from the beginning"?

1. What should our posture be to those who've left the Church? Can we simultaneously reject belief systems that are contrary to God's Word while we lovingly and humbly present the Gospel to those who don't trust in Christ?
2. Think about a time when you've had success abiding in God's Word. What were daily routines during that time? How did that abiding change your disposition in your job and/or at home?

Walk (30 minutes)

After enjoying fellowship, worship, and time in God's word together, it is now time to pray together as a group and encourage one another in the faith. It is very easy for this portion of the group time to be consumed by the other portions. However, this segment of the group time is crucially important. It answers the question, how do we apply what we are learning in 1 John to our lives today?

Many groups have found that it is helpful to sometimes break up into a men's group and a women's group for the purpose of being able to be more transparent and honest as we encourage one another and keep one another accountable. I encourage you to try this in your groups.

In addition to praying for, and encouraging, one another, this portion of the group time should also be used for planning how your group can participate in God's work outside the walls of our church – "neighbors and nations." Discuss with your group some ideas on how you can be intentional with building relationships with your neighbors and co-workers. What can your Community Group do to impact the area around you?

May the Lord bless and encourage you as you lead your groups! Know that we are praying for you on a weekly basis and that we are here to help you in any way that we can!

Model Answers

What does it say?

1. Because many anti-Christ's have appeared.
2. Verse 17 which states: The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.
3. The tell is that they did not remain with them. Had they been of the Church, they would've remained in the Church.
4. Jesus is the object of the lie. The liars are those who deny that he is the Christ.
5. Those that deny the Son deny the Father.
6. The antichrists are those who deny that Jesus is the Christ. They are the liars that John refers to.
7. Let that which you heard from the beginning abide in you.
8. You will abide in the Son and in the Father.

What does it mean?

1. Answers may vary. It is reasonable to assume that there was pressure being put on the Church to adopt extra-biblical teachings. This pressure could've been applied in a number of ways that would limit their ability to participate in commerce or the synagogue. As John encourages them to hold to the faith, he reminds them that their present sufferings will not last forever.
2. This passage does not call into question the eternal security of the believer. The passage states quite plainly that those who have left were never believers at all. Their departure was proof of that.
3. With 98% of people in our area claiming to be Christians, their denial is rarely overt like you might experience in a less churched portion of our country. Denial of Jesus as the Christ in our culture most typically is revealed when someone refuses to order their life according to what Christ has called us to.
4. Clearly, John is making the point that how we live our lives is incredibly important. Grace is not cheap and shouldn't be treated as such. He is also clear that Christ is our means of righteousness and sanctification. The bar is high, but the Father's provision is great.
5. Answers may vary. The clearest way to abide in the message is to be immersed daily in the Word.