

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John**

Chapter 10- The Test of Truth **1John 2: 18-27**

80. Part 5

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Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1 John**, and today I want to continue to look at what John taught about "The Test of Truth". So, let's turn in our Bibles and let's read **1John 2: 18-27** again together:

18 Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.

19 They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but *they went out*, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.

20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.

21 I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth.

22 Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.

23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.

24 As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.

25 This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life.

26 These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you.

27 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.

Now for the sake of clarity, let me suggest to you that this passage of 10 verses should be divided up into three main sections. There are three great points that the Apostle John is making in this passage that we need to understand.

The first point that John is making here is the importance of us realizing the nature or the character of the spiritual conflict in which we find ourselves. This is the theme of verses 18, 19, and part of verses 22 & 23. This is where John describes what it means to live in the last days; and the rise of the antichrists; and the real threat of false doctrine; false prophets and apostasy.

The second point that John makes in this passage is the way or the means by which we realize this danger. This is what John is teaching in verses 20, 21, & 27 where you can read statements like this:

20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.

21 I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth.

27 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.

Now this is the great doctrine of the anointing and unction of the Holy Spirit- which occurs to every genuine believer precisely because the Holy Spirit now resides inside every genuine believer.

And the third theme that John brings forth in this passage is the way to avoid the danger that comes from this mighty spiritual conflict in which we find ourselves.

So, these are the three themes that John brings forth in this passage of ten verses:

1. Realizing the Danger
2. The Ability and Power that is given to us so that we may realize the Danger
3. The Way to Fight Against the Danger

So, Lord willing, I want to go over each of these points one at a time so that we may fully understand just what John was talking about.

1. Realizing the Danger

Now to begin with- many today see no problem with the Christian Church having various doctrines about very important matters- which all contradict each other. The average Church member today has no idea what he believes or why he believes it and as long as something is popular- as long as a bunch of people ascribe to it- or it is contained in the latest best seller- it must be of God- right?

And the real problem is that the pastor or the elders or the deacons- who have a solemn duty to guard the souls of the sheep- many times don't know any more about Sound Doctrine than the average member does.

The British theologian, John Stott said that the current occupants of America's pulpits are the most Theologically illiterate generation of preachers that the Christian Church has ever known and nothing that he can see is rising up to change that problem.

Most pastors today are simply following the lead of the more famous pastors who are on television or who write books- regardless of the soundness and integrity of their teaching.

But to John and Peter and Paul- what a man believed and what a man taught was everything- especially if he was a leader in the House of God. So, these Apostles worked tirelessly to formulate what is called "The Apostle's Doctrine" which carefully articulated what the Character and nature of God is; Who is the Person of Jesus Christ; and what is the Gospel. So, these men wrote a series of 21 Books or letters or Epistles which constitute the entire body of the teaching books in the New Testament. It is from these 21 Epistles that we get all Christian theology and Doctrine. These 21 New Testament Books are what are called, the "Didactic Books" or the "Teaching Books" of the Bible.

These 21 Books are the lens or the filter through which all the other 45 Books of the Bible should be read because these 21 Epistles are the fulfillment of the promise that Jesus made to the disciples in **John 16** when He told them that after the Holy Spirit came upon them- He – the Holy Spirit would lead them into all truth.

These 21 Epistles are the final and completed Revelation of God to Man and in them contain all Truth and all wisdom that the other 45 Books only confirm or allude to.

For example- the reason that you have all of these little so-called “messianic” cults springing up all over the Gulf Coast in the last ten years is precisely because if you read the Old Testament- especially the first five books of the Bible without at least a working knowledge of the 21 New Testament Epistles- you will get off base real quick. Actually, these little groups are not Jews coming to Christ- which would be great- but most of these people that I am familiar with are Christians who are abandoning New Testament Christianity and going back to the bondage of the Law. That isn’t going up the mountain, beloved- that is going back down the mountain.

The entire Book of Hebrews- one of the 21 teaching Epistles that I am talking about- was written to deal with this very issue when the writer teaches in Chapter 6 that from the very moment that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the Glory of the Father- every Jew on earth is now commanded to completely abandon or leave the first or primary principles of the Doctrine of Christ that the Law of Moses taught them and they are to go on or fully embrace the “perfect” or the mature Revelation of God that is only found in and through Jesus Christ.

But because most modern believers are not taught this anymore- these “messianic” cults are taking people out of the Christian Church and deceiving them with things that could so easily be explained if somebody knew what these 21 books taught.

This is the same thing that was happening on John’s watch late in the first century. Greek philosophers and Gnostic mystics were deceiving souls in the Church and stealing souls out of the Church with doctrines which were enormously popular in the first century- teachings that appealed to fallen flesh- but which were wrong and ungodly and so John and Paul and Peter and Jude and James stepped up to the plate in their capacity as Apostles and wrote this series of letters or Epistles for the exact purpose of educating or teaching believers the specifics of the Christian faith so that heresy and false teaching and apostate doctrines would not have any effect upon them.

As I have told you many times. Ever since the Garden- the devil has challenged the Word of God and tried to twist it and deceive people. That has always been true, and it will always be true until Jesus comes. So you cannot prevent false teaching from coming forth- the answer is not stopping that which is false- but the answer is in educating

believers with Divine Truth so that when they hear false teaching- they will immediately recognize it for what it is and reject it and reject those who are teaching it- regardless of how popular they may be.

So, John and the other drew a clear line in the sand which divided between Truth and error; between that which came from the Mouth of God and that which comes from the mouth of Man; from that which is holy from that which is profane. From that which will tickle the ears of carnal people and that which will deeply and profoundly transform the human soul; from that which will build up Man to that which will exalt Jesus Christ; from that which will validate Man to that which will glorify God; and from that which will puff up the “self” of Man to that which will break the staff of his pride.

So, if we are to comprehend what John is saying in these ten verses- we first must acknowledge that we are in a gigantic spiritual struggle- a war- if you will over what is and what is not Divine Truth. Because if we do not even believe that Divine Truth is under assault today- we cannot even begin to know why John wrote verses 18 & 19. So, let’s look at these verses again:

18 Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.

19 They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but *they went out*, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.

John says here in verse 18 that the reason that we can know that it is the last time or the reason that we know that we are living in the last days is because of the rise of many antichrists. So when you see a proliferation of many teachers who twist the Scriptures to appeal to human flesh rather than God; when you see a huge amount of books and tapes available which pervert the right way of the Lord; which mock holiness; which deny the Character and Nature of God such as His Sovereignty and providence; when you see a proliferation of teachings which deny one or more aspects of the Person Jesus Christ- by either denying His humanity or His Divinity; when you see a proliferation of teachings which try to change the Gospel- the way of Salvation- then you know that it is the last time.

And Jude called these people “**certain persons**” who crept into the Church while the leadership was asleep in **Jude 4** and in **Jude 8**, he said they “defile the flesh by dreaming” in **Jude 10**, he called them “**unreasoning animals**”; and in **Jude 12 & 13**- Jude said this about people who came into the Church to bring in false doctrine to deceive the simple as:

12 These are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted;

13 wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.

So here in **1John 2:18**, the Apostle John calls these same people- “antichrists” and says that there are *many* of them – even in his day- and that they are the ones who “fight against” or who “stand against” Christ- those who teach contrary to that which Jesus taught.

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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