

1 John 2:18-29 • Abiding in the Truth

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1 John chapter 2. 1 John, chapter 2. We're going to be picking it up in verse 18, and we're going to read down through to the end of the chapter.

All right, let me go ahead and read through those verses, we'll pray, and then unpack them here as best we can. It goes like this:

“¹⁸ Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ 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. ²⁰ But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. ²¹ I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth. ²² 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. ²³ No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also. ²⁴ 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. ²⁵ And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life. ²⁶ I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you. 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. ²⁸ And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming. ²⁹ If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.” (ESV)

Stop there. Let's pray. Father, as we get into these verses tonight here in 1 John chapter 2, as we finish out this chapter, Lord, we need your Holy Spirit. We need understanding. We need insight. These are challenging things, and we pray that you'd help us. We pray that you'd make sense of it. And we ask you to guide us and direct us in this study for you, Lord, are the teacher in Jesus' name. Amen.

You know even as I was praying, I was telling Sue today, I kind of warned her as I was studying today, I said, listen, I'm probably going to be studying right up until we leave. So just letting you know I said, 1 John is challenging. It's

challenging to read and it's challenging to teach. And she reminded me that was one of the first studies that she wrote for the women.

And so she knew and she's like, oh, I know it is. But one of the things that helps us to understand what John is saying and how to go about understanding what he is telling us in this letter is to always figure out what is his stated purpose in writing. And fortunately, he gives that to us in very clear terms in this section.

And if you'll look down in verse 26, because here's where he states it. He says, “²⁶ *I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you.*” And there it is. I mean, we're not left with any question here related to John's purpose in writing this section. He's here to prepare us.

He's here to prepare us about those who would otherwise try to confuse and deceive us. And there was a lot of that going on in the first century, and there's a lot of it going on today. It has not abated. And so these verses are given to us here verses 18 through 29 of 1 John 2 to help us to stay on track and if necessary to correct us to get us back on track because these things can be very subtle.

Oh man, so subtle, so, so very subtle. And people who are walking in the way and walking in righteousness can, and in the truth can easily get derailed. There are so many false teachers and with things like, the internet today, these false teachings are propagated very easily, and people can get sucked into them if they don't, if they don't have the kind of discern necessarily to begin to think through some of these things and so forth they can just get, pulled into it. So, I like the fact that John tells us right here in verse 26, this is why I'm writing to you. I'm writing to you for, because of those who would otherwise try to deceive you.

So he begins in verse 18 by saying, “¹⁸ *Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now (he says, in fact) many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour.*” And that's the first thing he mentions to us, is that we are living in the last hour. And that is another term for the last days.

And the last days you know people talk about, they'll say, well, I happen to believe we're living in the last days. Well, that's a given. The last days have been going. Ever since the church was inaugurated, we entered into the last days essentially when the Holy Spirit fell upon the church, and the church began.

We have been in the last days, and so this is part of where we are. It's parting where we've been for a long time, but John, even back in the first century had an expectancy concerning the return of Jesus Christ, and that is the way that all believers have been meant to live since Jesus once again ascended to the Father and the angels said to the disciples, this same Jesus who you have seen taken from you will return in the same way that you've seen him go.

So ever since the angels made that proclamation that. We've been living in the last days and he could come back at any time. And God has always wanted us to live with that expectancy. Why? Well, when you live with the expectancy that something's going to happen, it's not going to surprise you. And that's what Paul talks about in one of his letters when he says, this day should not surprise you as it does, right? When a thief comes, they never announce they're coming, but those who are living in darkness are surprised because they don't live in expectancy (1Thessalonians 5:1-5). We have been expecting Jesus. The whole time. And so that is an important statement to make, but John also states here how we know that we're in the last days, and he says, ¹⁸ “.. *and as you have heard that antichrist is coming.*”

That's future, and that, of course refers to the day of the Lord. Which is different from the last days. We have the last days, which is this protracted period, and then we have the Day of the Lord, which is not a single day, but is a series of days that begins with the church being caught up to be with the Lord and entering into the great tribulation period and on through that.

That's when the Antichrist will be coming or will be established upon the earth. But he says, “...*so now*, (meaning right now) “*so now many antichrists have come.*” And John says, this is how we know that we're in that period of the last days. Jesus told us that it was going to be like this. He said that many will come in my name, claiming I am he.

And so this is how we know, this is how we know this is exactly what's going on what Jesus told us. Now we need to talk about this title, Antichrist. Now this is interesting because the actual title Antichrist, only appears within the writings of John in 1 John and in 2 John. It does not appear in the book of Revelation.

You don't see the word Antichrist, we use it a lot when we're reading through and studying through the book of Revelation. We talk about the coming of Antichrist, but the title is actually unique John in this particular situation, he is simply referred to as the beast in the book of Revelation. But John says, the presence of those who are Antichrist is proof that we are in the last days.

And the word or title, Antichrist literally means in the Greek, "instead of Christ." I bring that up to you because it does not mean opposite of Christ. I think there's a lot of people who think that whatever Jesus is, Antichrist will be the opposite. Like we have matter and then anti-matter, it's the opposite of matter.

Well, that's not the case here. The Antichrist is not necessarily the opposite of Christ. He is, "instead of Christ." And that is an important thing to keep in mind because first of all, we remember the Bible tells us that Satan appears as an angel of light, right? And so he comes to deceive in that sense.

But if you think of the Antichrist as meaning instead of Christ, rather than the opposite of Christ, you begin to see that he is in fact going to be a usurper. Now we're talking about the Antichrist for just a moment, a usurper. The word usurper means, "to illegally or illegitimately take a position of power or influence that actually belongs to someone."

And that is what the Antichrist is going to do. He is going to usurp the role that is only or should only belong to Jesus Christ.

Now let's get back to this statement John makes about the fact that all these Antichrist have already showed up. He's not talking about "the" Antichrist here. He's talking about those who come in the spirit of Antichrist.

In other words, they come as usurpers. They are not the Antichrist of the Book of Revelation. They are coming in the spirit of Antichrist. They come to usurp, they come to do that, which is similar to this individual who will be "the" Antichrist, but they usurp, they take a position illegally, immorally illegitimately that ought to belong or does belong in fact to Jesus.

Now, as John goes on, he speaks of another characteristic of these false teachers. Look at verse 19: *"¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us."* (important phrase there, he says), *"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."*

And this is another important fact. Many of those who offer a false or opposing picture, a usurping picture of Jesus actually came out of the true body of Christ, and this is what makes it so dangerous. In fact, John even goes on as far as to say they went out, that it might become plain complain that they didn't belong here, they weren't of us, and they're going out means that they were not of us.

One of my favorite authors, John Stott, wrote about this verse. He said “they might share our earthly company for a while, but they don't share our heavenly birth.” And that's a very interesting statement. Now we're not, when we say they went out from us, we're not talking about people who just broke fellowship for a period of time.

There are people who leave church, for various reasons they. They get offended something happens or the church shuts down or they just they just, or they just walk away, from fellowship for a period of time, whether it's because they just got lazy or they just embrace some kind of sinful stuff and they just couldn't make their way back to church because of shame and guilt or whatever the case might be.

That doesn't necessarily mean that they were never part of us because people and I'm willing to bet some of you here in this room, went through a season in your life, perhaps where you attended church and then you didn't for a while. But you came back and you began and you reconnected with the body of Christ and you reconnected, with the Lord.

John is talking here about those who might have hung around with us for a season, but they then went out and they did not return. But one of the reasons they went out is so that they might siphon people away from the true body of Christ. And that's part of that usurping that, that John refers to as the spirit of antichrist.

They come to usurp, they come to pull people away, from their genuine devotion to Jesus. But having made reference to these individuals, these false individuals, John now says in verse 20, concerning you. He says, “²⁰ *But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge.*” Now in this statement, John is actually refuting one of the main claims of those who operate in the spirit of Antichrist.

They seek to convince people that they have special access to knowledge. That's one of the reasons that people get drawn away into various teachings and various sects (S-E-C-T-S) of Christianity because they are convinced, people convince them, if you come to our group, you're going to get something that you won't be getting at that church.

We've got the inside knowledge, and it could be just about anything. I mean, I've seen people just crop up with all kinds of different sorts of doctrinal twists and turns, which they believe sets them apart from the rest of the body of Christ,

you see, because they've figured out things that the rest of the body hasn't figured out.

They've got inside track information and they know what's really true. I had a guy write to me just last night, he was doing his level best to convince me concerning the nature of God that we have we're all wrong, and that he's got the inside scoop. And that and it all centered around, of course, the word trinity, which people love to, to jump on as it relates to the knowledge or the nature rather of God, because the word trinity isn't in the Bible.

And then they like to emphasize that that word isn't in the Bible, and so obviously it's not true. Well, it doesn't matter whether the word is in the Bible or not, you have to ask yourself the question, is the truth revealed in the Bible that the word trinity refers to? The word rapture isn't in the Bible either at least in the English. But the concept behind the catching away of the church is very clearly revealed in the Bible. So I don't care whether you call it the rapture or the catching away, or if you call it the Trinity, or if you call it just simply the nature of God, I don't care what you call it. The question is, is it in the Bible revealed?

That's the question we need to be asking. Don't let people get you high centered on this argument, that word isn't in the Bible. That's ridiculous. People have done that for years and years, well, we don't celebrate Easter, because Easter, the word Easter isn't in the Bible. Well, is the resurrection?

We don't celebrate Christmas because the word Christmas, that's a manmade word. Yeah. But he was born and is it okay to celebrate his birth with you? Are you okay with that? If I celebrate his birth, , it's kind of like you've gotten all lathered up over these things and they're non-issues, but you see people get drawn into this secret understanding.

I've got the inside track. And if you'll come to our study, if you'll, you need to come to our study because we'll tell you what's really going on. We've got information, and this is what John was really kind of facing, the teaching that was going on in the latter part of the first century when John was writing this letter, later became known as gnosticism. I don't think it had fully blossomed into what we know now as gnosticism. at that point. But it was beginning and gnosticism was named after the Greek word gnosis, which means knowledge. And it was the idea that salvation is predicated upon having the proper knowledge. In other words, if, and it speaks more of an academic knowledge, you need, I need to school you.

In other words, that's what these teachers would say. You need to let me teach you because see, these other people aren't teaching you the right stuff. I need to teach you the right. And by the, by your knowledge of this inside information, you know you're going to have what it takes and so on and so on.

Special access to knowledge, special access to inside information, such as comes by a angel that gives you tablets that only you can read with special glasses. Oh, wow, that sounds kind of familiar. Yeah, that's exactly what we're talking about, I've got the inside, 'no, nobody else knows this', 'I've been given this inside information and only I know, and I'll share it with a few special elite people, and if you come here, you can learn it too.'

See, this is exactly what John is saying, but what does he say again in verse 20? Look with me again in verse 20. He says, ²⁰ *"But you have been anointed by the Holy One,"*

That's another way of saying you've received the Holy Spirit Christians, and he says,

"... and you all have knowledge."

In other words, you have knowledge by virtue of the Holy Spirit.

Do you understand Christians, that God has not withheld knowledge from his children? He gives us his Holy Spirit, and we receive the knowledge that we need through the Spirit, right? And there's no inside track. That only a few select elite people have. It doesn't exist. You've all been given knowledge. It is universally granted to those who, by faith, come to Jesus and make him Lord and Savior, and it happens of course, through the Holy Spirit. So, you know when I get these notes from people sometimes who want to tell me about their special inside track of inform. Sometimes I respond to them and frankly, sometimes I don't because I can kind of tell by the information that I've received whether or not there's an openness in their heart.

And sometimes people, they're just not ready to talk about it because all they want to do is argue. But there's one thing that I know for sure, there's no, nobody would come to the conclusions they come to by just simply reading the Bible. You don't come to those conclusions. You don't, you don't come to the conclusions of the, what they call the pagan influence of the origin of the doctrine of the Trinity, which they love to talk about by just reading the Bible.

Now, reading the Bible will just help you understand the revelation of God and through his Holy Spirit, he will use the word to speak to you about that, which is true, right. And if you just read the Bible and you just forget about these other sources of inside information, God's going to lead you into all truth.

But if you allow yourself to be influenced and you to do this, you got to watch a YouTube video, or you got to read a book or a pamphlet or something like that where somebody says, I've got the inside track. And then you get influenced by that. And there are some people who are kind of born with a natural tendency toward conspiracy theories.

Like, I think they're keeping information from us. And so, and if you go start going down that path pretty soon, you're going to go around telling people the earth is flat, and we never actually walked on the moon and all these other things. You know that because they're just keeping this stuff away from you, you know that don't you?

They're just keeping all this information around. It's called paranoia too. And personally, I think it's ridiculous. What God wants you to know, He has given you in the scriptures, and as you open your heart to the scriptures and allow the Holy Spirit to do what He does best, He leads you into all truth. And you don't have to go find some guy meditating on a mountaintop who knows who has the inside track that nobody else.

Look what John goes on to say in verse 21. He says, ²¹ *"I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it,"* (He says, I know that you know the truth because you're believers and you have the Holy Spirit living within you and he says), *"... and because no lie is of the truth."*

So, what is what John is saying here in this verse 21? Is he saying, I'm not writing to reveal the truth to you. I'm writing to confirm the truth to you because you already know the truth. Do you know that that's what I do as a teacher. When John says earlier, you don't have need of a teacher, what he means is you don't have need of someone to teach you things that you can't otherwise know through the Holy Spirit and through His word. Now, that doesn't mean we don't need teachers in the body of Christ, but what are teachers supposed to do? Are they supposed to reveal truth? No. They're supposed to confirm truth.

The truth is here (picks up the Bible). This is it. We're not cutting any new revelation here, guys. I don't get up here on a Wednesday and Sunday and say, I've got a, I got something you guys have never heard of before.

That would be the height of arrogance, wouldn't it? And it would be unbiblical. It's not my job to reveal. It is God's job to reveal. It's my job as a teacher to confirm and that's what you ought to do. You ought to walk out of here going, yeah, I see that confirmed in the word of God and it's confirmed in the witness of my own heart.

The Holy Spirit confirms, when you go to church, you ought to have a confirmational, yes, from the Holy Spirit when you leave and if you don't, you might be in the wrong church. That's just something to keep in mind. The Holy Spirit should always confirm what is being said. That's my job too, just to confirm.

Right, and that's what John is saying. I'm not writing to you because you don't know the truth, I'm writing because you do know it. You do know the truth and no lie is of the truth, right? And so just keep in mind guys, truth is revealed by the Holy Spirit, right? Truth is revealed by the Holy Spirit through the word of God.

And one of the truths that God's word reveals to us is concerning Jesus. And by the way, the Holy Spirit loves to reveal Jesus. Jesus even said that. He said, when the spirit comes, he's going to take from what is mine, and he's going to reveal it to you, He's going to show it to you. I believe that the Holy Spirit loves to talk about Jesus and the Spirit does that He reveals who Jesus is to us, and when the Spirit is revealing who Jesus is, we know who He is. He's God the Son, He is one with God, He is the word of God, made flesh the creator of all things. We see these things in the Word, they are revealed to us and our heart confirms that they are true. But these other teachers come along and they try to get you to question what the word of God says and what the Spirit is revealing.

And look what John writes in verse 22. He says, ²² *Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? (he says), "...This is the antichrist..."*

This is the spirit of Antichrist that I was telling you about is already in the world. Now, yes, the Antichrist is coming, but the spirit of Antichrist is already here, and you can tell the spirit of Antichrist. That spirit denies who Jesus is as revealed in the word, okay? Very important!

He goes on to say, he who denies, I'm still in the end of verse 22, *"...he who denies the Father and the Son."*

You see there's a package deal that's kind of going on here, but those who deny the nature, the deity, the relationship between the Father and the Son as it is revealed in the scripture.

Revealed through the Holy Spirit are the ones that John is talking about here. And he calls them the liars, they are the liars. Because to know the Father is to know the Son. And to know the Son is to know the Father, right? And that's why John says in verse 23, *“²³ No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.”*

Now, this is fascinating, you need to look at this verse and really see what it's saying, and I think that this is what was going on in John's day, people were denying who Jesus is as revealed by the Spirit. They were claiming to know the Father, but the very same people were denying the revelation of who Jesus is, as Son of God, Savior of the world, equal to God the Father as revealed by the holy apostles and prophets, right? And John says, you can't do that. You can't separate the two. You can't say, I believe in the Father, but I deny the Son. You can't do that, it's a package deal, right? If you deny the Son, you are denying the Father.

Why is that? Well, because the Son perfectly reflects the Father. Let me show you a couple of passages on the screen. Oh, both on the same slide.

(Slide)

Colossians 1:15

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

Hebrew 1:3

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Colossians 1:15: (Jesus, that's the 'He') *“...is the image of the invisible God,”*

Hebrews 1:3: *“³He, (Jesus) is the radiance of the glory of God.”* Look at this *“...and the exact imprint of his nature.”* When you have seen him, when you have heard him, you have heard the Father.

Remember when Philip asked Jesus, he's talking to them about the Father and this and that, and Philip, he's just, you can hear the frustration as you read the passage. He goes, just show us the Father, and that'll be enough for us.

Remember that? And you got to think, you got to wonder if Jesus kind of took a deep breath or maybe a deep sigh at that moment, oh, Philip.

And he even said, Philip, don't you know, have I been with you so long and you don't know me? Don't you know that when you have seen me, you've seen the Father? Wow, what a mindblower. But that's why John says you can't deny. You can't deny the Son and say, I know the Father. Jesus is the perfect reflection of the Father.

It's this perfect image, it's this exact representation. And you can't say I believe in one, but I don't believe in the other. If you say you don't believe in the other you don't believe in the one because they're one and the same. That's what Jesus said that got him into trouble.

I and the Father are one and the same, and they picked up rocks to stone Him because that they considered that to be blasphemy. The fact is Jesus was speaking the truth. They just didn't want to accept it.

So, whoever confesses the son has the Father also, because Jesus is this perfect reflection of the Father.

Verse 24, *“²⁴ 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.”*

What is John saying here? He's appealing to his readers not to depart from the teaching that they were given. Keep in mind these things probably in John's day had not yet been codified into a specific book form. They were perhaps still letters from Paul and Peter and John himself that were still circulating among the churches, but they hadn't been put together yet in what you and I would refer to as the New Testament. And so, a lot of what these guys believe is what they've been shown and what has been given to them through the apostles and so forth.

And John's word to them is, you heard it now, abide in it, stay with it. And he says, if what you heard from the beginning abides in you, in other words, that's the truth, the truth of who Jesus is, what he came to do, and what it takes to be saved. If that abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father.

So he is saying, do not depart, do not let go, do not stray from the teaching that you have received when you came to know Christ and His forgiveness through the cross. He says, let that truth abide.

That means to remain, don't let anybody steal it, don't let anybody confuse it by coming along and telling you they've got an inside track. Don't let anybody confuse you. Go back to the Word, check everything. Test everything by the word of God. Everything. Everything you hear, you should test by the word to see if it's true, and that's the way you're going to stay out of trouble, and that's the way you're going to abide in what you've heard.

Keep checking it out. Be a Berean right. Remember the Bereans? Checking it out, seeing if it's true. And all this information that John's been giving us up to this point in this letter really underscores the importance of holding fast. To the truth that is given to us in God's word given to us through Revelation by the Holy Spirit and not allowing those outside influences to take hold of our heart and drift away.

Because listen, Christians, if it wasn't possible for Christians to drift away, we wouldn't be hearing these warnings, okay? I'd love to tell you that as a believer, it's not possible for you to drift away but we have all kinds of warnings in the word of God not to drift away,

and that is a serious matter. Verse 25 says, “²⁵ *And this is the promise that he made to us - eternal life.*” When God's truth lives in us and abides in us. Then God lives in us. And when God lives in us, his promise lives in us. And that promise is eternal life. Okay? That promise is eternal life. Have you ever thought about the definition of eternal life?

Because I think if you were to ask some people, what does it mean to have eternal life? Some people would say, well, you get to live forever, but that's doesn't even begin to scratch the surface. Do you understand that God created mankind to live forever? Now we lost that on a physical level when sin entered the picture.

But the soul, that part of you that is soul, that doesn't die. The body dies. That's why God said you are made of dust and to dust you will return. But that doesn't mean your soul dies. The soul lives on. And the soul is either going to live on, separated from God or the soul is going to live on in the presence of God.

So this whole idea, we're not just talking about the continuation of living when we talk about eternal life, it's way more than that. In fact, you might be interested to know that a common Greek word that is used in the New Testament for eternal life is a word that speaks more of quality than it does quantity, it is more of a quality of life. And what quality are we talking about? Well, quality, the quality of eternal life is a difficult thing to define. If I said to

you, define for me the quality of eternal life. That's it's tough, but throughout the New Testament, you need to know that eternal life is always equated with knowing God.

Let me show you a passage. We're going to get to this later in our Sunday study of John, but it's in John chapter 17, and this is Jesus speaking.

(Slide)

John 17:3

And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

He says, “³*And this is eternal life, that they know you,*” He's praying to his Father at this point, ... *the only true God in Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.*” Did you see what Jesus just did for you and me?

He just defined the quality of eternal life and the quality of eternal life is knowing and experiencing God for eternity, knowing and experiencing God for eternity. You might say, well, I already know God now; you have a down payment, you have a down payment. You are going to spend the rest of eternity learning to know the depth of the nature of God, because you see, He is the source of all wisdom, He is the source of all knowledge, He is the source of all pleasure, He is the source of all satisfaction, He is the source of all wonder, and to know him and to enjoy Him for eternity is eternal is eternal life. So you know, in that sense, eternal life does begin at the time you get saved because you begin to know the Lord, don't you?

That's what John's been writing here. I'm not writing to you because you don't know the Lord I'm writing. Because you do know, you know the Lord, you know the truth, but listen, there's so much. Remember what Paul said to the Corinthians. We see now as through a mirror that's really dim and giving us kind of a warbled view.

It's not a good image. We can see, but it's not perfect, it's, I always like to say, it's like those mirrors they put up in the rest stops. They're not made out of glass. You ever, it looks like you're in a fun house. Have you ever gone into the bathroom and you do your business, you come out to wash your hands and look in the mirror and your face is like all distorted because it's, somebody's punched this thing and it's got warps in it, and your face is kind of going all over the place.

That's kind of the way we see as far as understanding the things of the Lord. We can see, but it's, it's not the greatest picture. It's like Paul says it's dimly through a dark mirror. But he says there's coming a day when we are going to see as though face to face, and we're going to know as we are known.

How much does God know you? He knows you perfectly, doesn't He? Down to the very number of hairs or lack thereof on your head. Well, listen, you're going to know one day as you are known according to the Apostle Paul. That's crazy. And you're going to spend eternity knowing who God is. And you'll never mind the depth of who He is. You will never mind the depth of who he is.

I know that's kind of a mindblower. We always think of everything as in finite terms. I finished the book. I finished the class of algebra. I finished this. I read through the whole Bible. But when it comes to knowing God, you will never finish. But that is eternal life. To know the source of life and joy and peace.

All the things that the world is running after but can't attain to ours in Christ Jesus. We have been given a down payment of them today. We've begun to know the Lord today. We will know him even more when he returns, and that's when our eternal life will be fully realized. Again, we have a down payment.

We talk about eternal life as if it's a done deal. I'm born again, I'm saved. I'm saved. But do you know that the Bible also talks about Jesus coming and bringing salvation? He's bringing it for those who are waiting. We're waiting by faith for the full payment of our salvation, and it is a wonderful promise, but it is predicated on the truth of God's word.

Remember that the promise is predicated on the truth of God's word. God speaks the truth, and He wants you to abide in the truth because therein lies the promise of eternal life and the promise is eternal life. So hang on to the truth. Don't let go. Don't let anybody tell you anything that isn't in the Bible. So important.

We get back to verse 26, that this is the first verse that we read. This is again, that reminder of why John is reminding the believers of all these things. He says, *"²⁶ I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you."* And they're trying to pull you away.

And guys, deception is a powerful tool of the enemy, and I already said before. So is it possible for a Christian, a born again Christian to be deceived? Is it possible? You darn tooting it is. That's why there are so many warnings. Look on the screen.

(Slide)

Ephesians 5:6

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

2 Thessalonians 2: 3

Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction

1 John 3:7

Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous.

Ephesians, "*Let no one deceive with empty words,*"

2 Thessalonians, "*Let no one deceive you in any way.*"

1 John, we're going to see this in the next chapter, "*Little children, let no one deceive you.*"

Is it possible to be deceived? Well, obviously it is, or these guys wouldn't have said so. So abide in the truth, hang on, don't depart, hold fast, hold fast to the truth, right, that God has given.

Verse 27, “²⁷ *But the anointing that you received from him abides in you,*” and this is John's way of talking about the presence of the Holy Spirit. He calls it the anointing. He says, and I have to wonder, let me pause there for a moment. I have to wonder, if he's using this term specifically because some of the false teachers were using the word anointing.

Do you know, I still see this going on today. I still see people using the false term or speaking falsely of anointing, and they'll talk about, I have a special anointing from God, to reveal certain things about God that you don't know. I have a special anointing, and I think that's one of the reasons that John is saying you have, you've received the same anointing.

You've got the anointing. You've got every anointing you need through the indwelling presence of God's Holy Spirit, okay? And he says, and it's from him who abides in you, who lives within you? So don't be drawn away by somebody

who says, I have a special anointing. He says, and that's when he goes on to say, *"...and you have no need that anyone should teach you."*

Again, he's talking about teachers who claim a special anointing, people who have that inside track, right? Because as I said, a true teacher doesn't reveal, he confirms what's already in the Word. I don't go outside the Word to talk to you about what is true, because there (points to the Bible) this is where we're going to, this is where we're going to camp out right here, right on the scripture (points to the Bible again).

And so you don't need anybody to teach you that because you have the Holy Spirit living within you. And he communicates to your spirit that you are a child of God and he communicates what is true. Do you know that even in the Old Testament, God prophesied that when the new covenant came, they wouldn't need special teachers to teach them or to reveal truth?

Let me show you this prophecy from Jeremiah Chapter 31:

(Slide)

Jeremiah 31:34a

And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD.

He says, *"³⁴and no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother saying, no, the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest declares the Lord."* And when we went through Jeremiah, you might remember I told you that word, know, is not intellectual knowledge. When he says they will "all know," it's personal, experiential, intimate knowledge, okay?

How do you get personal, intimate knowledge of God? By having a personal, intimate relationship with God. Nothing is more personal than his Holy Spirit living inside of you. That's pretty personal, right? And his Spirit lives in you.

That's what is he doing? He's communicating to you. He's talking to you. And by Him we cry, Abba Father, where does that knowledge come from to call Him Father through that intimate knowing, right? I know Him. It's not something somebody taught me, it's something the Holy Spirit revealed to me, right? I am a child of God.

I know that I know that I know that I know I'm a child of God. Not because somebody said, Hey Paul, you're a child of God. The Holy Spirit confirmed it, and it's a joyous thing, but people, we've got to get back to the Holy Spirit to be our compass. I am getting more bold in my responses to people when they ask me questions.

If they're a believer, they should have an expectation that the Holy Spirit's going to lead them in the way that they should go. So when they say, pastor Paul, what should I do? I'm starting to write back to people now and just saying, what's the Holy Spirit telling you? I need to do that because they need to stop asking humans what to do because the source of all wisdom and knowledge lives within them.

All wisdom, all knowledge, lives within you. Ask Him, He is the source of truth, right? We get confirmation, we get understanding, we get revelation from the word, but there are some things that the word doesn't actually cover. Have you noticed that? Have you ever noticed that you're not going to go in the Bible and find a verse that says you should take that job in Cincinnati, not going to, you're not going to see that in the word.

So what do you do when you have a personal sort of a specific question like that? Well, you rely on the Holy Spirit to lead you because He's not limited. He can tell you anything. He's not limited to the written page. These words are wonderful, they're glorious, but they're limited. They're limited to the size of the book, and the 66 books that make up the Bible. The Holy Spirit has no limitation on what He can speak to you. I'm not talking about something He's going to reveal that's going to be contrary to the written word. I'm talking about some of the specifics that the Holy Spirit would speak to you about, regarding marriage or a job, or so many other things.

One of the big bugaboos with people we've talked about this before is when it comes to giving, how much am I supposed to give, well, the Bible says that each man should give according to what he's determined in his heart to give, and that assumes that this is between you and the Holy Spirit.

And so people are like, Pastor Paul, just tell me how much I'm supposed to give. No, you ask God. Lord, what do you want me to do? What do you want me to do? See, we don't like to hear that. You know why? That's hard work. I got to listen to the Holy Spirit, and I'm not used to listening to the Holy Spirit.

I'm used to listening to people. I get my news from other people. I get my direction from my boss. I listen to this. I listen to that. I listen to my wife, she

tells me what to do. That was a joke. And now, suddenly I'm supposed to listen to the Holy Spirit. I'm out of practice.

It's not easy to quiet one's heart to listen to that still small voice. It's not easy, but we've got to learn. He is the source of all truth. He will never lead you astray ever.

John finishes verse 27. I guess I kind of finished. Stopped in the middle of the verse, but he finishes that verse by saying, “...*But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in him.*”

And the exhortation is repeated in verse 28, “²⁸*And now, little children, abide in him,*”

Okay, abide in him. He says it again. Can you say it too much?

“...*abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming.*”

Okay, hold the phone. Is John telling you and me here in the scripture that it's possible for a believer to shrink in shame when Jesus returns?

Yeah, that's what he's saying. Isn't that what you read? Let's read it again. He says, guys, abide in him so that when he comes back, none of us are going to shrink in shame, but rather we'll have confidence. Wow, that's really crazy. See, this is something we don't really like to think about sometimes, the Apostle Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, he spoke, he wrote about a believer who's saved, but it has nothing to show for it. Let me show you on the screen.

(Slide)

1 Corinthians 3:13-15

each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. ¹⁴ If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

He says, “¹³ *each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. ¹⁴ If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he*

will receive a reward. ¹⁵ *If anyone's work is burned up he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.*” Now, this is a fascinating passage.

He's saying here. Now listen, the fire is simply the glorious presence of God, okay? God is a consuming fire. The Bible tells us that our God is a consuming fire. Well, what does he consume? That which can be consumed. So when you stand before him, that which can be consumed, will be consumed. What is that which can be consumed? All that is done in the flesh because some of some Christians will spend their life saved because they believe that Jesus is the Messiah, he is the Savior of their lives, and they believe it with all their heart, but they've lived their life for self.

And Paul says they will be saved. You know why? Because we're not saved by works, we're saved by grace through faith. So is it possible to be saved by grace through faith and have no works? Well, Paul is saying ultimately there might be nothing for that person to be rewarded for. They literally escape as someone through the flames.

Are they going to be ashamed on that day?

Do you think when the fire of God's glorious presence rushes through all that they've built and remember it can't touch the foundation because the foundation is Christ. But everything they've done, do you think they're going to be ashamed on that day that they didn't live their lives for Jesus, that they didn't live their lives for His glory and to build up the kingdom of God, and to encourage people, and to share the gospel, and to just live their lives, to glorify God.

And that means to be the best husband that I can be, or the best wife that you can be, or that's the best employee I can be. I'm just going to live my life for the glory of God. Do all things for the glory of God, that's what the Bible says.

I want to glorify Him with my life. I want to give glory to Him. And that's something that cannot be consumed. It will follow me and a reward will be given. But what about those things that have been done in the flesh?

So in verse 29, he ends this section, this chapter by saying, “ ²⁹ *If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.* ”

And this is not a passage about the assurance of your salvation. John is just really making a simple statement here, and he's saying that a child exhibits his

parents' character because he shares his parents' nature and therefore, to practice righteousness means to follow the example of Christ, and that means he emulates Jesus, or his heart is to emulate Jesus by the evidence, as evidence of his new birth.

So again, I really believe John is making this point because of the false teachers and the things that they were saying. Claiming that other things are evidence of salvation, but that's the kind of special knowledge and special insight that we have to really watch out for, because it's dangerous.

And I want to just repeat to you that the idea of special knowledge and special insight, those are very seductive very seductive things, so be very careful about them. But they appeal not to the spirit, but to the flesh. The idea that I have an inside track, and I can tell you that appeals to your flesh, not to your spirit.

It's called the pride of life, and we have to be very careful of that sort of stuff. So let's pray.

Heavenly Father, thank you for your Word. Thank you for loving us so much that you share all good things with your children. Thank you, Lord, that you are the source of truth and we don't have to go to some human being who has elite status, special knowledge, an inside track that only he possesses.

Lord, you have given us your Spirit, and through your Spirit, you reveal truth to our hearts. And as we dig into the scriptures, we see it laid out and we pray that you continue to give us the strength, Father God, to guard that truth and to be very zealous of the truth that is in our hearts through Jesus. Who He is, what He is, how we are saved. Lord, you sent your Son that we might be saved. You gave us your Holy Spirit, that we might have the truth and that we might be led into all truth.

Lord, lead us into all truth. Forgive us, Lord, that we've gotten out of practice when it comes to listening to your voice, discerning the direction of the Spirit, listening, understanding, hearing your voice. Help us, Jesus, to quiet our hearts, to truly hear you. Fill us, Lord, with greater knowledge and understanding from the Spirit. Thank you, Father, for the gift of eternal life, knowing and enjoying God for eternity. In the name of your son, Jesus Christ, we pray, amen.