



Just Love and Get Up Close and Personal | 1 John 2:15-29

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By Pastor Rachel Keeler

Group Leader Notes

Welcome to the fourth message in our current sermon series, *Just Love*, where we've been working our way through the letter 1 John. Today I am going to talk about John's warning about false teachers and how his exhortations to the church in Ephesus relates to similar problems and challenges today.

Question: What is the antidote to our worldly desires and false teachings?

Bottom Line: The antidote is not mere knowledge, but demonstrating the sacrificial love of Jesus to the people around us.

Take Home Message:

We can only be sure that we are following the authentic Christ, not a counterfeit, by loving as Jesus loved, up close and personal.

Main Scripture Reading: 1 John 2:15-29

¹⁵ Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. ¹⁶ For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷ The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

¹⁸ Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

²⁰ But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth.^[b] ²¹ 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. ²² Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son. ²³ No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

²⁴ As for you, see that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ And this is what he promised us—eternal life.

²⁶ I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. ²⁷ As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him.

Other Scripture References:

- 1 John 2:9
- 1 John 1:8, 2:4, 4:20
- Matthew 6:24
- 1 Corinthians 1:21-24

Teaching Points:

- In 1 John 2:15-17, *the world* refers to everything that stands in opposition to God.
- “Antichrist” refers to anyone who spreads false teaching.
- We are not immune to false teachings because our worldly temptations of pride, greed and selfish desires, are cleverly disguised in Christian language.

Group Discussion

Begin in prayer before reading and discussing the text.

1. Read 1 John 2:16
 - What do the 3 phrases mean?
 - Pastor Rachel confessed that she loves to be in complete control of her surroundings and her schedule. Of this, she said, “There have been times when my own desire for comfort has blinded me to someone else’s more pressing needs.” Think of one or two examples of how prioritizing your own comfort precluded you from serving someone in need.
2. Pastor Rachel mentions 3 specific false teachings: 1. Prosperity gospel, 2. Christian nationalism, 3. Self-righteousness. Explain what each of these means to you.
 - Which of these have you confronted with God’s grace in your life?
3. Pastor Rachel said we are capable of incredible degrees of self-deception. It’s too convenient for us to rationalize turning from God’s call on us to serve others in order to serve ourselves. Can you think of specific steps or strategies you can implement to safeguard against this?
4. Pastor Rachel suggested that we each take a personal inventory:
 - What poor and vulnerable people am I coming close to?
 - Who am I loving in an up close and personal way?
 - Is there anything I am doing in my life right now that does not compute, that makes no sense to the world at all, that can only be explained by the transformative power of Jesus in my life?

Let’s Pray