

That You May Know – 1 John 2:18-27

*“We pursue being a disciple making family: surrendered to Jesus, transformed by the gospel, and **saturated in His word.**”*

John continues his attempt to help the believers to see what a Christ follower looks like and how to navigate successfully in a world that hates them. He points out here that the “false teachers” will not only leave the fellowship but will also try to draw people away as well. It may seem like this is not something we would fall for, but John is pointing out ways that we can be prepared for the attack of the evil one. He points out that there are clear warning signs and safeguards for believers against these attacks. John also points out how we may have security as a believer and not doubt the work of Christ in our life.

Discussion Questions* -- *do not feel the pressure to cover them all

1. In the opening verses John talks about “in the last hour.” This idea of the last hour would cover from the time of Jesus’ ascension until his return. Many people have different views about the timing of His return. Some early Christians in Thessalonica quit their jobs believing it was imminent and now 2,000 years later we may find ourselves on the other side of the spectrum forgetting that His return is a reality. Regardless of our view on the specifics or timing for the return of Christ we must live with an urgency and minister with an awareness of His return. How does the return of Christ and living in the “last hours or last days” impact your walk as a Christ follower? How often does His coming return cross your mind? Would there be a difference in your life or ministry if this reality was more prevalent in your mind?
2. It is pointed out that we know we are in the last hour because the antichrists have come. Antichrist means to go against Christ or in the place of Christ. John points out that there are many antichrists. We also know that “a” antichrist is coming that will be like a superman of evil. The spirit of antichrist is something Christians must watch out for as we live in the last days. Satan is a counterfeiter and will typically take the truth and skew it towards evil. We see that there will be those in the “fellowship” that will leave the fellowship because they do not believe that Jesus came in the flesh and that He is not God. Not only will they leave the fellowship but they will try and lead others away. How does God use the church fellowship to help protect us from false teachers? What are some ways today that antichrists are working in the world? Where might we find these missionaries of evil (e.g. podcasts, blogs, TV, etc.)?
3. The spirit of the Holy One will always lead us into the truth as we are anointed in Christ and abide in the Word. We know that the Spirit will teach us and remind us what we need to know to obey and walk in the Lord. The antichrists will not abide in the word, nor have they been anointed. There may be an appearance that they are in Christ but the fact that they have left the fellowship because they

don't believe Jesus was God in flesh proves they were not. John points out the opposite as well that because the Christ followers believe Jesus is the Messiah, they will be in fellowship with other Christians. John points out that whoever confesses the Son has the Father and they should abide in what they heard from the beginning. It is an attempt to protect the believers from the antichrists' false teaching, John points out there is no need for anyone to teach them. He is not saying that teaching in the church is wrong because that is part of God's design and also, He has gifted teachers. John is pointing out that they don't need some "special knowledge" like the Gnostics were claiming. What are some ways today that we downplay the work of the Holy Spirit in illuminating our hearts to the scripture? What are some ways that we as Christ followers may "elevate" the teaching or teachings of certain personalities above scripture? What are some ways today that we add to the message of the gospel? How does the fellowship of believers help us to abide in Christ?

4. We will talk in more detail about this next week, but we are promised eternal life through our relationship with Jesus and the Father. We have been anointed by God, and we abide in Him. This obedience to Him will help us find security in our salvation. Not that we are earning salvation, but it will help us in understanding our fellowship with God. Like a family member may always be a member of the family, the fellowship with the family may be broken because of something that was done. Through repentance and confession, the fellowship is mended. As we abide in Him and strive to walk in obedience we will find security in our salvation. When we blatantly sin or unwilling to forgive, we may find ourselves ashamed at Christ's return. John writes about this. If Christ were to return today would there be things that you are blatantly doing or not doing that would make you ashamed before Him? Would you confess those things? God has designed the fellowship of believers to help us in this area. How can being in the fellowship of the church help us to work through areas of disobedience (e.g. pride, arrogance, laziness, gossip, slander, unbelief, idolatry, etc.)? How can the fellowship help us to find security in our salvation?