



Eternal Life

A Study of 1 John

Why did Jesus come to earth?

- What if someone doesn't know all that?
- What if someone is indifferent to all that?
- What if someone rejects all that?

- John wants us to know that we have eternal life (1 John 5:13)
- Three *diagnostic* tests:

ETHICAL

SOCIAL

DOCTRINAL

1 John 2:18-25

- The Doctrinal Test: *Is Jesus the Christ?*
 1. Those Who Are Anti-Christ (18-19, 22-23)
 2. Those Who Abide in Christ (20-21, 24-25)

1. Those Who Are Anti-Christ

A. A Sign of the Times (18)

- “Children, it is the last hour”
 - *The last hour* => the imminence of Christ’s second coming
 - NT writers saw it both as very near and yet *not yet*

1. Those Who Are Anti-Christ

A. A Sign of the Times (18)

- “and just as you heard that antichrist is coming”
- *Antichrist – against Christ* – one who seeks to turn others from Christ by promoting wrong views of Christ (2 John 7)
 - Differs from a *false Christ* – one who claims *to be* Christ (Matt. 24:5, 24; Mark 13:6)

1. Those Who Are Anti-Christ

A. A Sign of the Times (18)

- “even now many antichrists have appeared”
 - Contemporary false teachers foreshadow the one who is to come at the end
 - “you will know them by their fruits” – what they **do** and **say** (Matt. 7:15-23; 12:33-37)
 - Not always blatantly obvious (cf. Eph. 4:14)

1. Those Who Are Anti-Christ

B. In but not of the Church (19)

- They were *in* but not really *part of* the church, which their leaving showed
 - True fellowship comes from *believing* and *practicing* the truth (1:3, 6-7; Eph. 4:14-15)
 - Cf. *factions & selfish ambition* (1 Cor. 11:19; Gal. 5:20; James 3:13-18)

1. Those Who Are Anti-Christ

C. Liars who Deny God (22-23)

- Claims that differ from reality (1:6; 2:4; 4:20)
- “*The liar*” – in the spirit of the antichrist (4:3)
 - Intending to lead others away from the truth
 - “The heretics’ theology is not just defective; it is diabolical.” (John R.W. Stott)

1. Those Who Are Anti-Christ

C. Liars who **Deny** God (22-23)

- **Deny** – reject truth once you are aware of it
- Opposing the truth of the Incarnate Son (1:2)
 - They misrepresent His true identity and work:
 - Deny true deity and/or true humanity
 - No propitiation -> no redemption -> no *life*
-> walking blind in the darkness

1. Those Who Are Anti-Christ

C. Liars who Deny God (22-23)

- “who denies both the Father and the Son”
 - Jesus and the Father are one (John 10:30)
 - “No one comes to the Father but by Me”
(John 14:6)
 - Therefore, to reject one is to reject the other
 - You cannot deny Christ and be a Christian

1. Those Who Are Anti-Christ

- John is writing against those who claim that only a select few have *true knowledge* of God
- But their *knowledge* includes things that are *not true* of Jesus (2:22), which proves they do not *have* the Father either (2:23)
 - They are not walking in the *Light* (1:5-7)

2. Those Who Abide in Christ

- “But **you**” (20)
 - True believers, in sharp contrast to the many antichrists (*they, who, whoever*)
 - Walk in the light (1:7)
 - Keep His commandments (2:5-6)
 - Love their brothers (2:10)
 - *No middle ground*

2. Those Who Abide in Christ

A. Have an Anointing (20)

- “But you have an anointing from the Holy One”
 - Something they *have* – a current possession
 - Something they *received* – in the past (2:27)
 - From *the Holy One / Him* (2:20, 27)
 - Related to knowledge/knowing/teaching

2. Those Who Abide in Christ

A. Have an Anointing (20)

- “But you have **an anointing** from the Holy One”
- The Holy Spirit, who *testifies* to the truth because He *is the truth* (see 5:6)
- Some Gnostics claimed to have an *anointing* that initiated them into their truth

2. Those Who Abide in Christ

B. Know the Truth (21)

- “you *all* know” because you all heard it from the very beginning (see 1:3; 2:21, 24)
 - It was evident that the truth was *in* them (see 1:8; 2:4)
 - They were *practicing* the truth (see 1:6-7)
 - They were doing the will of God (2:17)

2. Those Who Abide in Christ

B. Know the Truth (21)

- *I have written to you to remind you of what you already know (cf. 2 Pet. 1:12-15)*
- “no lie is of the truth” – you have been given the truth; anything that differs from that is a lie

2. Those Who Abide in Christ

C. Hold to the Apostolic Message (24)

- *What you heard from the beginning, in you let it remain (abide)*
 - The message of Christ delivered by the apostles (1:3; John 17:20)
 - Antidote to heresy (see Eph. 4:14-15; 1 Tim. 6:3-4; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2 Pet. 3:1-2; Jude 17)

2. Those Who Abide in Christ

C. Hold to the Apostolic Message (24)

- *in you let it remain (abide)*
 - Allow the truth of the gospel message to continually control your thinking and actions
 - The truth should take up permanent residence within you
 - We must *keep believing* the message

2. Those Who Abide in Christ

C. Hold to the Apostolic Message (24)

- *If in you remains what from the beginning you heard, also you in the Son and in the Father will remain*
- Real fellowship with the one true God depends on knowing and living out the truth He has presented (1:3; 5-7; 2:3-6; John 14:23)

2. Those Who Abide in Christ

D. Have *Eternal Life* (25)

- As long as we remain faithful to the message / walking in the *Light* / practicing the truth, we will share in God's *Life*
 - “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” (John 17:3)

Summary

- True believers hold to the truth as it has been presented by the apostles (2:24; cf. 1:3)
 - The Holy Spirit confirms it (2:20-21)
- Those who deny the truth demonstrate their rejection of it by leaving the fellowship (2:19)
- True believers will recognize the *antichrists* by both their exit (19) and their false teaching (22)

So What?

- We must be sure that we hold fast to the true apostolic gospel message: *Jesus is the Christ!* – with all of its implications and expectations
 - Faithfulness bring fellowship and *Life*
 - Deviation brings separation (*death*)
 - See Col. 1:21-23; 2 Pet. 1:8-11

So What?

“Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called ‘Today,’ so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end...” (Heb. 2:12-14)