

## WALKING IN THE LIGHT

Discerning what is true! 1 John 2:18-27

March 11, 2018

BCC, Midway

Illustration: \$20 bill – to illustrate something counterfeit or false.

**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**.*

### INTRODUCTION:

Last week we saw how John affirmed them in their faith and in what they believed: You are forgiven through the blood of Christ; you have a relationship with Him and you have overcome the evil one.

Then he warned them about loving the world – if they went that direction the love of the Father would not be in them.

Now he follows up that affirmation and that warning with more affirmation and more warning.

Before the last of the 12 apostles died there were already false teachers whom John refers to as antichrist.

He is going to show the difference between those who were followers of Jesus and those who had left the fellowship.

### **The Last Hour: Verse 18**

**Verse 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.*

What is John talking about. He opens and closes this verse with “it is the last hour.”

In all of the NT only here do we find this particular expression.

There are similar phrases however in the NT:

**Acts 2:17:** *In the last days, God says, I will pour out My Spirit on all people*

**2 Peter 3:3: First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.**

Here the last days refers to the final days of the interim period between Christ's coming and His return (cf. 2 Timothy 3:1; James 5:3).

John in his Gospel speaks about "the last days" (John 6:39-40, 44, 54; 11:24; 12:28).

**John 6:44: no one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws Him, and I will raise him up at the last day.**

Here John refers to a future day of resurrection and the final judgement.

John also emphasizes that Jesus' mission has the effect of passing judgment in the present. Those who believe already have life, while those who do not already are judged. The last days, seals this present verdict (3:17-21; 5:25-27).

**John 3:18: Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stand condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.**

So against the back-drop of these verses where do we fit in John's statement, "it is the last hour?"

Some think that John believed that this community was really at those last days. However maybe it is better to think of it this way: the judgement and blessing expected in the last days are already taking place in Jesus. The die was being cast in every decision that people were making.

John, the elder sees the reality of separation and judgement being worked out in his own flock. Judgement is already being passed in the present.

Specifically we know that the author has in mind those who have left the church, a separation that is serious, a separation that shows that those who have left have passed judgement on themselves.

The Bible speaks of signs that will happen before the end (Mark 13:4-5; 2

Thessalonians 2:1-12; 2 Timothy 3:1-5):

False teaching; divisions in the church and among friends and family.

These are already part of the landscape that the Elder sees.

These signs signal that the decisive event by which God passes judgement and grants salvation has occurred (M. M. Thompson, IVP New Testament Commentary Series; 1-3 John, 72-73).

### **Summary:**

John is looking back and interpreting this split as evidence of the nearness of the hour, and of the outworking of the judgment expected at that time.

For John the question of the exact time of the last judgment is of secondary NB.

Regardless of when the last judgment occurs, God's judgment is now being put into effect when people either acknowledge or deny Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God.

It is so much more NB to recognize Christ as the only way to eternal life and judgement now, than to try and decode timetables about when that last judgment will occur.

All predictions of Christ's coming and God's final judgment have so far proved to be incorrect.

This epistle's message is that the sifting of the church occurs as one responds to Jesus.

This has eternal relevance. This is at the heart of John's warning, *this is the last hour* (Thompson, 74).

SO WHAT! Are you ready? Have you chosen Life? Do you believe the truth?

### **The Division and Contrast - Us and Them: Verse 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.**

John has already hinted at it, but this is the first time in the letter that John acknowledges the fact that a group of people had left the church. In these few verses he is going to refer to them as liars, deceivers and antichrists.

**Verse 20: But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge.**

Note the continuing contrast beginning with the word "but."

Two extremes; liars, deceivers and antichrists and now, *But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge.*

As extreme as light and darkness; life and death.

Note that anointing and knowledge work together.

We will combine verse 20 with verse 27, so will look at this verse then.

### **The Truth - What is Truth? Verses 21-23:**

John is now going to tell them clearly that they know the truth, but there are others who have been deceived by lies and they are believing those lies. Once you know the truth you should be able to discern the lie.

**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 (Or comes from the truth).**

John first of all affirms them in the fact that they know the truth.

And then he gives them a clear measurement of what is true and what is a lie. He is going to point out to them who a liar is and also who the antichrist is.

**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.**

He who denies that Jesus is the Christ, the anointed One, the Messiah, has believed a lie and with that believing they have also become anti-Christ. They are one and the same person.

How can you be anything else? You are either on one side or the other. You can't believe both, you can't sneak in somewhere in between; you can't sit on the fence.

So, anyone who tells you that they don't believe that Jesus is who He claimed to be is a liar and also anti-Christ.

You either believe what the Bible says or you don't.

All of the OT points ahead to the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ.

All of the NT is about Him and how all who believe in Him can obtain eternal Life - only through Him.

Why is the person who denies that Jesus is the Christ called a liar?

Because he has chosen to believe The liar – the evil one.

**John 8:44:** You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

### **The Inseparable Unity of the Father and the Son – Verses 22-23**

**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.

First John mentions only Jesus, because Jesus is where the false teachers usually get it wrong.

However it goes further than that. If you get Jesus wrong, you will also get the Father wrong.

There are some people who don't like the name Jesus. They are OK with God, whatever they mean by that, but start talking about Jesus and some people get uncomfortable.

They may feel that as long as they believe in God they are OK.

Well the truth tells us that is not OK.

**23:**No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.

It is very NB that we understand the truth about the Father and the Son.

They are inseparable and they are One but they are not the same Person.

3 distinct Persons make up the triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

If someone asks you the question: Do you believe that Jesus and God the Father are the same Person? What are you going to say?

No, they are 2 distinct persons. Even these 2 verses make that very clear. One is called Father, the other Son. The distinction is very clear.

They are both God – we know that when Jesus came to earth put on human skin, He gave up some of the rights He had with the Father in heaven – for a time.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> day of creation we read:

**Genesis 1:26:** Then God said, let Us make man in Our image, in Our likeness and let them rule over the fish of the sea. . .

**John 12:44-45:** Then Jesus cried out, "When a man believes in Me, he does not believe in Me only, but in the One who sent Me. When he looks at Me, he sees the One who sent Me.

**John 14:9b:** Anyone who has seen Me, has seen the Father. How can you say, 'show us the Father?' Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in Me?

When Jesus was praying to His Father in heaven was He praying to Himself?

The **inseparable unity** of the Father and the Son – very NB

Maybe a lesson from this is that just as Father and Son are inseparable so it should be with their children. So, therefore, we should not wrestle against flesh and blood.

Lies divide; truth unites.

**The Teaching: Continue in what you have been taught – Verses 24-27:**

**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.******

Here John reminds them of the body of teaching that they have received from him and from others. That body of teaching centres around the Person of Jesus and the Good News of the Gospel. That which caused them to be born again – to receive eternal Life (25).

These verses remind me of what Paul wrote to Timothy:

**2 Timothy 3:14-15: But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.**

**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.*****

He is referring here to the teachings about Christ and what He taught.

He assures them that if they remain in the teaching, in the truth, they have received, then they have a relationship with the Son and with the Father, in other words they are abiding in the Son and in the Father. Another way of saying that is that they have eternal Life.

Note again the inseparable unity between the Father and the Son.

**25: And this is the promise that He made to us—eternal life.** He is the One that taught them about eternal Life and how they can obtain it.

**26: I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you.**

John is writing them to remind them of the truth they heard from the beginning, precisely because false teachers, liars, antichrist are trying to deceive them and draw them away from the truth.

**The Anointing by the Holy One: Verses 20, 27**

**Verse 20: But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge.**

**27: But **the anointing that you received from Him abides in you** (he mentioned this twice in v. 24), 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.****

Three times in this verse we read about teaching. This anointing refers to a body of teaching that they heard from the beginning – the message that was preached to them and that they then believed.

It is linked to the Holy One, it is linked to knowledge, it is linked to teaching and it is linked to abiding in Him. This anointing abides in you. The teaching they have received from the Holy One teaches them to abide in Him.

This anointing has to do both with a body of teaching and a Person.

That makes me think of the Holy Spirit – who is called by John in his Gospel “the Spirit of truth.”

**John 14:23, 26:** *Jesus replied, “If anyone loves Me, he will obey My **teaching**. My Father will love him and we will come to him and **make our home with him**. . . But the Counsellor, the **Holy Spirit**, whom the Father will send in My name, will **teach you all things** and will remind you of **everything** I have said to you.*

**John 16:13a, 14:** *But when He, the **Spirit of truth**, comes, He will guide you into **all truth**. . . He will bring glory to Me by taking from what is Mine and **making it known to you**.* (Talking here about Christ’s teachings).

Since it is the assignment of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, to teach them all that Jesus taught His disciples, I believe John is referring here to the Holy Spirit.

Another reason I believe it refers to the Holy Spirit is because none of us comes to a knowledge of the truth without His help. None of us enter the kingdom of God without His help. John records Jesus’ words in John 3 where Jesus in talking to Nicodemus tells him that unless he is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Unless you are born from above. This supernatural spiritual birth is the work of the Holy Spirit.

It is this anointing that allowed them to hear and understand the truth in the first place.

They could not have received it without spiritual, supernatural help.

**Ephesians 2:8-9:** *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not of yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.*

**Note he says, the anointing you received from Him.**

It is something that the Holy Spirit gave; we could not have received it any other way.

The anointing is tied in with a body of teaching, the truth, that they had received ultimately from the triune God, Himself.

**Anointing:** Could this anointing also include the thought of being set apart? When things and people were anointed in the OT – they were set-apart for holy use, as in the various utensils used in the tabernacle. The High Priest was anointed – setting him apart from all the other people, to serve God.

***But the anointing that you received from Him abides in you,***

This Holy Spirit empowered teaching which you have received from Him, is the vantage point from which we understand the next phrase:

*And you have no need that anyone should teach you.*

Sometimes people have used this as an excuse not to submit to any teacher or teaching. This is how false teaching begins: “God Himself has revealed this to me and who are you to argue against that. Look what it says in 1 John 2:27.”

Maybe you have used this verse or you have heard others use it like this.

John is referring here to the false teachers.

Because the true believers have been taught by Spirit-anointed teachers, they do not need to be taught by these false teachers.

Because of the anointing you have received from Him, you certainly do not need to have anyone of those liars, those antichrists teaching you.

In the next phrase he again reminds them of the anointing they have received and that *His anointing teaches you about everything, and it is true and no lie* –in contrast with the false teachers. That anointing which has taught you the truth, also taught you to remain in the truth – to remain in the Father and in the Son.

CONCLUSION:

If we are going to walk in the Light, we need to discern what is true and what is false – what is counterfeit.

The Apostle John helps us to do that. Who do you say that Jesus is?

Salvation and Judgement hang in the balance depending on how you answer that question. This has eternal relevance. This is at the heart of John's warning, *this is the last hour*.

Are you ready? Have you chosen Life? Do you believe the truth?

PRAYER:

SONG: Onward Christian Soldiers

1. Onward Christian soldiers, marching on to war,  
With the cross of Jesus going on before:  
Christ the royal Master, leads against the foe;  
Forward into battle see His banners go:

CHORUS:

Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war,  
With the cross of Jesus going on before.

2. like a mighty army, over the Church of God;  
Brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod,  
We are not divided, all one body we:  
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.

CHORUS

3. Onward then, ye people, join our happy throng,  
Blend with ours your voices in the triumph song,  
Glory, laud and how our unto Christ the King:  
This through countless ages, men and angels sing.

CHORUS: