

## Remain in Christ to Avoid the Antichrists (1 John 2:18-27)

We live in an information age. It is where we are all in information overload a lot of the time. We have internet within 2 feet of us most of the day on phones. We constantly have information being thrown at us. The question we begin to struggle with is what one of these sources can be trusted? Which are right most of the time? Can I trust this site/person? AI now can right papers for us and teachers have to discern if this is human paper or computer-generated. It isn't as easy as it seems. The reality is anybody with Wi-Fi can have a platform to offer an opinion on anything they like. This can be great news because we have access to voices we haven't had access to before without the gatekeeping. But this also must put us on alert because we to figure out if this person is telling the truth. This even applies to matters of faith. We can listen to sermons all day long if we want to. We watch YouTube videos on any number of faith topics for hours. We can read 2017 books on eschatology if that is your cup of tea. So, with all this information on faith and God out there ...how do we recognize what is truth and what isn't? How do we know if someone is preaching the same Christ as us? This isn't a new problem. It is the same problem John was dealing with in our passage today. We will be in 1 John 2:18-27. You can turn there as we pray.

This section of Scripture is part of the larger in 1<sup>st</sup> John where he is talking about things that get in the way of our fellowship with God. Things like sin and disobedience. Pride and loving this world. Then he talks about one more thing. Let's read v18. John isn't so much concerned with "the" antichrist. He is more concerned with the many antichrists that have come. Antichrist isn't a really hard word to understand. It means against Christ. It is someone who has come up against the person and work of Jesus. Another way to say it is that is the person who

tries to place themselves in the position of Christ or above. Throughout history, there have been who have persecuted the work of God and many others have placed themselves in the place of Christ. They start going against what Christ has revealed as himself in Scripture. They aren't usually connected with the church because it keeps their responsibility but they are off on their own. It is why you should be wary of anybody who has an 'online' teaching ministry and does not belong to a local body. Remember chapter one of this book talks about walking in fellowship with other believers. It is easy to come off the tracks and go against what is sound Scriptural teaching when you don't have others around you. This is what the antichrist do they go against about whom we know Christ to be in the Bible. So, should we fear these antichrists? John compares against the antichrist in the next section.

Read with me starting at v.20. John uses an interesting phrase anointing from the Holy One. He means by this is the Holy Spirit. When you receive Christ, you receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. He dwells within you. Another word for the gift is anointing. Anointing can be used because it was always a sign that God is with you. Think of the Priest in ancient Israel. Or the kings or the prophets. They were the ones anointed by God. Now that everybody who receives Christ is anointed by His presence of the Holy Spirit. Look briefly at v 27. His anointing that you received resides within you. His Holy Spirit is important. It is important here because one of the jobs of the Holy Spirit in our life to guide us in truth. Remember John 14...he leads us in all truth. See that antichrists will trade truth for lies. Their biggest lie is what John deals with next.

Read with me v22. John doesn't mince words here. If you don't believe in the uniqueness of Christ. You are not a Christian. If you don't believe in the incarnation as told by the apostles, you do not belong to the church. You don't have a relationship with the father.

Christ came as human and as God to dwell among us. John talks about this in his gospel. The WORD took up residence. You have to deal with the truth claims of Jesus being the son of God, Jesus being LORD, and Jesus being the Messiah. To fail to believe these makes you a liar and you have preached a different Christ according to Paul. This is what separates Christ believers from the antichrist.

There is good news here for the believer. Read with me v24-25. If you remain in Christ, there is the promise of eternal life. It is that word we translate abide in John 15. You know about the vine and branches. It is one John theme is this abiding or remaining word. If you remain in Christ you don't have to worry about the antichrist. If you chose to follow what Christ has revealed early on in your relationship with him especially that comes through the Scriptures you will be able to easily discern the antichrist. Remain in Christ and you don't have to worry about that antichrist.

The reason for this comes in v 27. You have received the Holy Spirit who teaches you all things. He is the one who teaches you the truth. He is the reason you can read your Bible and it brings life change and revelation. He is the one inside of you bearing witness or not to what you are being taught. John isn't against hearing other teachers but he wanted his audience and us to know that we have access to the God of truth who will help us discern what we are being taught. This is because God isn't a false spirit but the one true Spirit that comes when you trust Christ.

Before you today stands a choice you can either be held sway by every turn and twist of teaching on the internet or elsewhere. Or you can choose to be in abiding commune with Jesus where you are remaining in Christ so you don't have to worry about the antichrist. You will be able to know the truth. Lets us pray.