

John's Letter to the Church
1st John
Lesson 2

2:18 Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen; from this we know that it is the last hour.

"It is the last hour!" What an eye opener for anyone! People of all generations have always wondered when the end of the world would happen. Here John indicates that he and the people of his generation had already entered into the last hour. Just what does that mean?

The last hour is the period that the Antichrist will come. As you see in this passage, there is not just one antichrist but there are many. While many people are always looking for the one antichrist to come before Armageddon, that term is never associated with him anywhere. The term is only found in

1 John 2:18 Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen; from this we know that it is the last hour.

1 John 2:22 Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.

1 John 4:3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.

2 John 1:7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.

Notice that 1 John 2:22 actually defines the word "antichrist." It says "Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son." That's the reason John says in this passage that there are many antichrists in the world. There are many who denied the deity of Christ and His relationship with God the Father. This is how we know that it is the "Last hour" because of all the people who deny Jesus Christ!

19 They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but *they went out*, in order that it might be shown that they all are not of us.

We often wonder what has happened to people who were once involved in the church and then stop coming. Such is the case here. John tells us exactly what is wrong with the people who fall away from the gathering of the corporate body of Christ called the church. Now he is not talking about those who have found disfavor in a church because of some tragic event that has taken place. Those who have gotten their feelings hurt will usually find their way to a body that they feel safe with and continue their corporate worship. Tragic events between people happen all the time because they are in relationships and people have differing

opinions and views which often bring conflict. In this passage John is talking about the person who tries church for a while and then drops out and never returns. The problem here is that the person tried church, but he didn't try Jesus. The single element that holds the united body of believers together is the Lord Jesus. He is the only factor that matters in the whole plan. People who differ with other people, but still have a love for the Lord will pick up and go on with their lives in another body of believers. But people who do not have him in their lives will stray from the body and continue living their lives apart from God. As John states in this verse, "they left because they were not part of us." They had not entered into that all important relationship with the Lord.

20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.

The relationship with the Lord Jesus is the major factor in a person's membership in the corporate body called the church. This relationship is sealed by the Lord with the "anointing from the Holy One." Once a person puts his trust in the Lord Jesus as his Lord and Savior, they are anointed by Him. When a person leaves the corporate church body and never returns to it or another sister body, the reason is because they do not have the anointing from the Lord because they have not entered into the necessary personal relationship with Him. For those who have this anointing, it is clearly evident to them for they are assured of this anointing. For those without this anointing, they are without a relationship with the Lord.

21 I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth. 22 Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. 23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.

As verse 21 indicates, this letter is written to those who know the truth. Lies are simply not the truth. Think about that for a moment! Perhaps your family has spoken lies about you or something you have done. Perhaps you have conveyed to them the absolute truth, but they continue to conjure up fabrication. It seems that nothing you say can change their mind. The thing you need to understand is that you can not change their mind. There is another problem going on here. The words they are speaking are just the fruit of the problem. There is a root problem that is deeper than the fruit being exhibited. There are people in this world who do not care about the truth, they only care about themselves. Most people like this have lived from lie to lie all their lives. While they claim to be moral and ethical, the people around them know them and know the truth about them. They have a perception of reality that is their perception and nothing can change their mind. Perhaps they take you to court over the issue. Even if you prove you are right and they are wrong in a court of law, even if they lose the case and you win, you can not change their perceptions. They will always say, "You may have won, but I know you really did it!" You see, the truth just doesn't matter to them.

Such is the case with many people about Jesus in His position as the Christ, the Messiah. Even the Jews who are God's chosen people deny that Jesus is the Christ and Messiah. In this sense, they are considered antichrists. They are against Him in everyway. They have fabricated lies that confirm in their mind that He is not the Messiah. When we tell them the truth they still deny Him as the Messiah. They are not alone in this attitude toward Jesus.

Many people who are not Jews deny Jesus as Messiah also. The Bible confirms that even though they believe the lie that He is not the Messiah, one day "every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord."

How can the Jews do this when God the Father has made a covenant with them? How can they deny Jesus as the Messiah? How can God remain in the covenant? Wasn't this done in the Abrahamic covenant? We must understand that the Abrahamic covenant was from God to Abraham. The Abrahamic Covenant is an unconditional covenant. God made promises to Abraham that required nothing of Abraham. The covenant promised Abraham that he would be blessed in these ways:

- 1) The promise of land (Genesis 12:1).
- 2) The promise of descendants (Genesis 12:2).
- 3) The promise of blessing and redemption (Genesis 12:3).

The land of course is the Promised Land. The descendents include not only Israel, but many other nations. The promise of redemption is through the Messiah, this same Messiah that Israel is constantly seeking. When He came, they denied Him! But the Bible also promises that in the future the Jews will turn and recognize Him as Lord before the Battle of Armageddon! So while they deny Him now, one day they will recognize Him as who He is!

Jews who deny that Jesus is the Messiah will not be granted an entrance into heaven. Salvation for Jews happens exactly like salvation for everyone else. You must put your faith and trust in the Lord Jesus as your Messiah. There is no plan for the Jew that is different for the Gentile. Salvation only comes to them through a belief in Jesus, which is how they enter into a relationship with the Father. If they deny Jesus, they have also denied the Father. No one can come to the Father except through the saving work of Jesus. While the Jews do not deny the Father, they still deny Jesus and, therefore, they are not in a true relationship with the Father. They are living a lie!

[24](#) As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.

John has now returned to the topic of abiding in the Son and the Father. Everything that has been said to this point has to deal with your ability to abide in them. What does the word "abide" mean? It means "to live in." "Abiding" means to "be living in." Are you living in the Son? You can only be living in the Son if you believe that He is the Christ, the Messiah. If you do not believe in Him, then you are an antichrist and not in a relationship with Him. John is directing this letter to those who knew Jesus as the Christ from the very beginning. What an incredible thing it would have been to have actually walked and talked with Jesus here on earth. To have believed in Him and lived with Him in those days would have been a marvelous thing. But that was not God's plan for your life. Had it been God's plan, then you would have lived in those days. But you live today! You do not have the opportunity see Him in the flesh. We have not seen Jesus and we did not have the opportunity to believe from the very beginning, but we do have the opportunity to believe even without seeing and holding to Jesus as the Christ and Messiah and abide in Him. Jesus said:

John 20:29 Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."

If you abide in Him, He abides in you. If you live in Him, He is living in you. If He is living in you, then you are the recipient of a grand and glorious promise!

25 And this is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life.

What a promise! Eternal life! It is a promise from Jesus Christ the Messiah Himself! But you can not separate this from the context of the passage. This is a promise that applies only to those who are abiding in Jesus and He is abiding in them, resulting in eternal life.

26 These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you.

This letter is a warning to believers. Believers will be constantly bombarded with people wanting to teach another doctrine, a doctrine that is different than that which is taught in the Scriptures as a whole. Don't allow anyone to deceive you with a false doctrine.

If someone comes and tries to teach you that Jesus is not the Christ, but the first of God's creations, they are not abiding in Christ, they are false teachers. If someone comes to you teaching that Jesus is just a god but not the God, they are false teachers and you should not let them be your teachers.

If someone comes to you teaching that Jesus was just another messenger or prophet of God, but not the Christ, they are false teachers and should not be your teacher. All these are types of deceivers that are in the world. Be aware, you should not allow these to be your teachers.

27 And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

Did you catch the promise in this verse? The verse promises that the anointing will be your teacher. This anointing is the Holy Spirit that lives within those that are abiding in Christ. The Holy Spirit will teach you and give you insight into God's Scripture. By allowing Him to teach you, you are abiding in Christ!

28 And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.

Abiding in the Lord is paramount to your position in the kingdom of God. Are you afraid of the day that the Lord will rapture His church? On that day will you be ready to see Him face to face or will you be ashamed of the life you have lived? Can you stand before the Lord with full confidence that you have constantly and continually abided in the Lord? Have you lived for the Lord and allowed Him to live in you? Will you be ashamed when He reviews your record? God's children must be ready for His coming! One day He will come for you

and you will have to review your life with Him. Live your life with Him and He will abide in you as you abide in Him.

29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.

Living in Christ truly means living a life of righteousness! Righteousness only deals with relationships with people. How are you treating others? Are you treating people in a manner that would show that Jesus is abiding in you and you are abiding in Him? Practicing righteousness is one fruit that shows you are living in Christ and Him in you!