

## 1 John Chapter 2 Continued

**1 John 2:15 "Love not the world, neither the things [that are] in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."**

"Love not the world" is a command implying that action now in progress must cease: "Stop loving the world!" There is of course, one sense in which Christians should love the world, since God Himself did and does (John 3:16). But in the sense of pledging personal loyalty and devotion of one's whole being and means, Christians are to "love" God first and foremost (Deut. 6:5; Mark 12:30).

Christians are in the world, but not of the world. Our home is in heaven. We need to keep our thoughts and desires set on things above. "World" in this example here, is speaking of the sin of the world. It is speaking of worldliness and fleshly lives.

Loving the world, in this sense, would be trying to please the desires of our flesh. To love the world, would make us a flesh man. Christians should be spirit men. The world and the things of the world are carnal.

This does not mean that we cannot enjoy the families God has given us, or the blessings we have received from Him. It does mean that we should not be caught up in worldly living. God must be first in our lives. We should not be hanging on to the world, but should eagerly await our home in heaven with Him.

Although John often repeats the importance of love and that God is love (4:7-8), he also reveals that God hates a certain type of love: love of the world (John 15:18-20). In this text, John expresses a particular form of the fourth test (i.e. the test of love).

Positively, the Christian loves God and fellow Christians. Negatively, an absence of love for the world must habitually characterize the love life of those to be considered genuinely born again. "Love here signifies affection and devotion. God, not the world, must have the first place in the Christian's life (Matt. 10:37-39; Phil. 3:20).

"The world" is not a reference to the physical, material world but the invisible spiritual system of evil dominated by Satan and all that it offers in opposition to God, His Word, and His people. "The love of the Father is not in him": Either one is a genuine Christian marked by love and obedience to God, or one is a non-Christian in rebellion against God.

Meaning in love with and enslaved by the satanically controlled world system (Ephesians 2:1-3); Col. 1:13; James 4:4). No middle ground between these two alternatives exists for someone claiming to be born again. The false teachers had no such singular love, but were devoted to the world's philosophy and wisdom, thereby revealing their love for the world and their unsaved state. (Matt. 6:24; Luke 16:13; 1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Peter 2: 12-22).

**1 John 2:16 "For all that [is] in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."**

“World” for John signifies the evil desire and sin so much a part of human existence.

“For all that is in the world” (James 4:4). While the world’s philosophies and ideologies and much that it offers may appear attractive and appealing, that is deception. Its true and pervasive nature is evil, harmful, ruinous, and satanic. Its deadly theories are raised up against the knowledge of God and hold the souls of men captive. (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

“Lust”: John uses the term negatively here for a strong desire for evil things.

“Flesh”: The term refers to the sin nature of man; the rebellious self dominated by sin and in opposition to God (Romans 7:15-25; 8:2-8; Gal. 5:19-21). Satan uses the evil world system to incite the flesh.

“Eyes”: Satan uses the eyes as a strategic avenue to incite wrong desires (Joshua 7:20-21; 2 Sam. 11:2; Matt. 5:27-29).

“Pride of life”: The phrase has the idea of arrogance over one’s circumstances, which produced haughtiness or exaggeration, parading what one possessed to impress other people (James 4:16).

“Not of the Father”: The world is the enemy of the Christian because it is in rebellion and opposition against God and controlled by Satan (5:19; Eph. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:4; 10:35). The three openings presented, if allowing access to sin, result in tragedy. Not only must the Christian reject the world for what it is but also for what it does.

The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life are what got Eve in trouble in the garden. She looked, desired, and wanted to be as God. Lust of all kinds fall into the category of flesh and worldliness.

**1 John 2:17 "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."**

John predicts that the temporal world (Greek “Kosmos”), will pass away but that believers who do the will of God will live forever in the age to come. This prophecy foresees the coming destruction of the earth. (2 Peter 3:7-13; Rev. 20:7-10).

We have learned in a previous lesson that this world will pass away. In fact, we read that it will melt with fervent heat. Even if that were not the case, the world for each person will pass away in approximately 100 years. We are born dying. Death is the sentence of all who do not receive eternal life in Jesus.

God is eternal. He shares that eternity with all who believe. To do the will of God means that we have received Jesus as our Savior, and are living in the salvation He gave us. Jesus is the

Quickening Spirit who gives us eternal life. In fact, He is Life. To receive Him means that we receive Life.

“The world passeth away”: The Christian also must not love the satanic world system because of its temporary nature. It is in the continual process of disintegration, headed for destruction (Romans 8:18-22).

“He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever”: In contrast to the temporary world, God’s will is permanent and unchangeable. Those who follow God’s will abide as His people forever. While God offers eternal life to His children, the present age is doomed (1 Cor. 7:31; 2 Cor. 4:18).

**1 John 2:18 "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."**

In (verse 17), John has stated that the present evil order of things is passing away. This leads to his affirmation that it is the last time. Antichrist appears in the whole New Testament only here (and in verse 22, 4:3, and 2 John 2:7). He is the ultimate opponent of God, God’s plans and God’s people (see also 2 Thess. 2:1-12; Mark 13:14).

“Many antichrists”: While the term’s first occurrence refers to a particular person prophesied in Scripture, this one is plural and refers to many individuals. John uses the plural to identify and characterize the false teachers who were troubling John’s congregations because their false doctrine distorted the truth and opposed Christ (Matt. 24:24; Mark 13:22; Acts 20:28-30).

The term therefore, refers to a principle of evil, incarnated in men, who are hostile and opposed to God (2 Cor. 10:4-5). John writes to expose the false teachers, the wolves in sheep’s clothing who purvey damning lies (Eph. 5:11). “The last time” is a phrase referring to the “latter times” or “last days”, i.e., the time period between the first and second comings of Christ (1 Tim. 4:1; James 5:3; 1 Peter 4:7; 2 Peter 3:3; Jude 18).

This again, is speaking of Christians, when it says little children. The last time indicates the nearness of the coming of Christ. Jesus warned of this very thing (in Matthew 24).

Matthew 24:24 "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if [it were] possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

The appearance of these antichrists is another sign that the coming of Christ is near. The word "antichrist" just means those who are opposed to Christ.

**1 John 2:19 "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would [no doubt] have continued with us: but [they went out], that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."**

“They went out from us ... they were not of us”: The first characteristic mentioned of antichrists, i.e. false teachers and deceivers (verses 22-26), is that they depart from the faithful (see verses

22-23), for the second characteristic and (verse 26), for the third. They arise from within the church and depart from true fellowship and lead people out with them.

The verse also places emphasis on the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. Those genuinely born again endure in faith and fellowship and the truth (1 Cor. 11:19; 2 Timothy 2:12). The ultimate test of true Christianity is endurance (Mark 13:13; Hebrews 3:14). The departure of people from the truth and the church is their unmasking.

Some in the church, but now departed, were never really part of it. Here is a clear distinction between those who merely appear to be Christians, based on outward affiliation, and those who really are, whom the Lord knows and claims as His own (1 Cor. 8:3; Gal. 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:19).

Many times, these false teachers and prophets, who are really opposed to Christ, pretend to be Christians. These people many times come to church and stir up the people. After a time, it is apparent that they are not Christians.

It is best, if you discover them, before they do any damage to the other believers. Usually they do not boldly come out against Christ. They just plant doubt in the other believers. One of Satan's favorite statements is, "Did God say". If he can get you questioning, he has won that battle. Be steadfast, unmovable in your belief.

Verses 20-21: Two characteristics mark genuine Christians in contrast to the antichrists. First, the Holy Spirit (the anointing, verse 27), guards them from error (Acts 10:38; 2 Cor. 1:21). Christ as the Holy One (Luke 4:34; Acts 3:14), imparts the Holy Spirit as their illuminating guardian from deception. Second, the Holy Spirit guides the believer into knowing "all things" (John 14:26; 16:13).

True Christians have a built-in lie detector and persevere in the truth. Those who remain in heresy and apostasy manifest the fact that they were never genuinely born again (verse 19).

### **1 John 2:20 "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."**

"Unction", in the verse above, means anointing. This would mean an anointing from the Holy Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit is our teacher and guide.

John refers to the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (John 14-16). Yet Scripture does not suggest that God's Spirit works in hearts apart from God's Word (James 1:18, 21).

This unction then, predisposes John's readers to recognize and respond to God's truth, but not to arrive at it independently of the biblical and apostolic Word. Had the readers been capable of knowing all things apart from written and spoken instruction (1 John), would not need to have been written.

**1 John 2:21 "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth."**

This is a further statement of (verse 20). "All things" (in verse 20), is spoken of here as Truth. John is writing to the church, and not to the world. Notice the word "know", which is so evident in John's writings. He reminds them that no compromise of the Truth will do.

Verses 22-23: "Denieth the Father and the Son": A second characteristic of antichrists is that they deny the faith (i.e. sound doctrine). Anyone denying the true nature of Christ as presented in the Scripture is an antichrist (4:3; 2 Tim. 2:11). The denial of Christ also constitutes a denial of God Himself, who testified to His Son.

John defines the anti-Christian spirit of false prophets and false teachers by explaining that they deny that Jesus is the Christ. Their blatant rejection of Him as the Messiah is also a rejection of His incarnate deity.

**1 John 2:22 "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."**

Anti means against. To deny Jesus brings death to the one who denies. Jesus is Life and Truth. Christ interchanges with Messiah. These that John is speaking to, then are possibly those looking for Messiah, and did not recognize Him in Jesus. To deny the Son, is to deny the Father who sent Him.

Literally, the liar: He is the epitome of a lying deceiver who claims to represent Christianity, as John's opponents (probably Gnostics, were doing), but who accords Jesus Christ less than His full due as Savior and coequal partner with the Father.

These should be sobering words for modern understandings of religion and Christianity which deny Christ His scriptural status by making Him less than fully divine.

**1 John 2:23 "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also."**

Because God has chosen to reveal Himself definitively in Christ, it is not possible to know God personally and truly without fully acknowledging Christ in the fullness of His power and being.

Jesus said, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father". For there to be a Father there had to be a Son. To deny the Son, would be to deny there was a Father. The Father and the Son are inseparable.

Verses 24-25: "Heard from the beginning": The gospel that cannot change. Let it remain; do not follow false teachers (2 Tim. 3:1, 7, 13; 4:3). Christian truth is fixed and unalterable (Jude 3). If we stay faithful to the truth, we continue to experience intimate communion with God and Christ and persevere to the full eternal life (5:11-12).

**1 John 2:24 "Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father."**

John exhorts his readers to persevere in the face of false teaching and belief. The Greek text emphasizes the readers, in contrast to those who have gone out (verse 19): "You, therefore, let what you have heard from the beginning abide in you."

The pure gospel message that had been brought to them was to be kept at all cost. Let this gospel message live continually (abide), in you. This is simply saying; reject the false message of the antichrist. To hang on to the teachings of Christ, brings the Father and the Son into your life.

**1 John 2:25 "And this is the promise that he hath promised us, [even] eternal life."**

Look with me, at the promise in the words of Jesus.

John 6:47 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."

John 10:28 "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any [man] pluck them out of my hand."

We see from this that eternal life is in Jesus. To have Him is to possess eternal life.

**1 John 2:26 "These [things] have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you."**

A third characteristic of antichrists is that they try to deceive the faithful (1 Tim. 4:1).

John makes it clear that much of his treatise has been called forth by opponents of orthodox teaching.

"Them that seduce you" is speaking of those who are opposed to Christ who with flattering words is trying to draw them away from the Truth. John is writing to them and to us to be aware of these false teachers.

**1 John 2:27 "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."**

(Ephesians 4:11-16), indicates that the Spirit often uses human instruments to fulfill His role of enabling believers to distinguish between truth and error. In any case, it is the Word of God that

furnishes the believer with knowledge, and which the Spirit then makes relevant and applicable in the believer's life (see Romans 10:17).

“Anointing”: John is not denying the importance of gifted teachers in the church (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11), but indicates that neither those teachers nor those believers are dependent on human wisdom or the opinions of men for the truth.

The Holy Spirit guards and guides the true believer into the truth (verses 20-21). If God is true (2 Cor. 15:3; Jer. 10:10; John 17:3; 1 Thess. 1:9), and Christ is the truth (John 14:6), so is the Holy Spirit (5:6; John 15:26; 16:13).

“Abide in Him”: In response to such deceivers, the task of the genuine believer is to “walk in truth,” i.e., persevere in faithfulness and sound doctrine (see verses 20-21, 2 John 4; 3 John 4).

The "anointing" here, is speaking of the Holy Spirit dwelling inside of us which teaches us all Truth. It brings to remembrance the wonderful teachings we have had.

John 14:26 "But the Comforter, [which is] the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

It is the Holy Ghost that reveals to us all Truth.

John 16:13 "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, [that] shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

Verses 2:28 – 3:3: This section deals with the “purifying hope” of every Christian, which is the return of Christ. John uses this purifying hope to reiterate and elaborate on the moral test (love and obedience), of a true Christian. The hope of Christ's return has a sanctifying effect on moral behavior.

In anticipation of Christ's return and reward (1 Cor. 3:10-17; 4:1-5; 2 Cor. 5:9-10; Rev. 22:12), a genuine Christian walks in holiness of life. Those who do not evidence such behavior manifest an unsaved life. In these (five verses, 2:28 – 3:3), John has given five features of the believer's hope.

**1 John 2:28 "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."**

John Repeats his emphasis on abiding (verse 27), to introduce it as the first feature of the believer's hope (in 2:28-3:3). Whenever John refers to abiding he's referring to persevering in the faith of salvation, which is evidence of being a true believer (John 15:1-6).

The hope of Christ's return produces the effect of continual abiding in every true believer as they long for the glorious future prepared for them. Paul called it "loving His appearing" (2 Tim. 4:8), and said those who do that are the ones who will be crowned with eternal righteousness in heaven. Abiding signifies a permanent remaining in Christ and guarantees the believer's hope. Those who truly abide continue in the faith and in fellowship with the saints (verse 19).

In contrast to (verse 27; "you abide"), however, he commands (imperative), believers to abide. The command signals that abiding is not passive; continual, active abiding must be pursued by every genuine believer (Phil. 2:12). Salvation is eternal because of the Lord's side, He holds us (John 6:37-44), and because of our side, we persevere in faith and obedience (John 8:31-32).

It is not unlike salvation in which God sovereignly saves, but not apart from personal faith from the one He saves. Or in the case of sanctification, God conforms us to His Son but not apart from obedience. The New Testament is rich with statements about God's work and the work of the believer. Paul said it well (in Col. 1:29).

"When He shall appear" refers especially to the Rapture and gathering of the church (John 14:1-6; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:13-18), and the judgment Seat of Christ to follow (1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Col. 5:9-10).

"Confidence ... not be ashamed before him at his coming". The word "confidence" means "outspokenness" or "freedom of speech". Those who are saved will have confidence at Christ's coming because they will be blameless in holiness based on abiding in Christ (Eph. 5:27; Col. 1:22; 1 Thess. 3:13, 5:23).

In contrast, there will be many, like the soils (in Matt. 13), who are temporary look-alike believers (see 13:20-22). Who did not believe, who did not persevere in abiding and consequently, face only shame at His appearance.

Wishing to please the Lord, and not be ashamed before him at his coming, ought to motivate believers to stand firm, to abide in him.

Stay with God, and let Christ in you live through you, and there will be no fear of error. The Holy Ghost takes up habitation in those who will receive Him. We will not be ashamed, when we follow the leading of the Spirit of God, and get our flesh under subjection to that Spirit.

**1 John 2:29 "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him."**

"Every one ... that doeth righteousness is born of Him". This is the second feature of the believer's hope (in 2:28-3:3). The hope of Christ's return not only sustains faith (verse 28), but makes righteousness a habit. The term for "born" is the same verb used (in John 3:7), where Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be "born" again.

Those truly born again as God's children have their heavenly Father's righteous nature (1 Peter 1:3, 13-16). As a result, they will display characteristics of God's righteousness. John looks from

effect (righteous behavior), to cause (being truly born again), to affirm that righteous living is the proof of being born again (James 2:20, 26; 2 Peter 3:11).

The idea seems to be that he who practices what is right, being born of God (3:9), need not fear Christ's coming (verse 28). Spiritual rebirth is stressed in John (see 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18; also John 1:13; 3:3-8).

A Christian is born again of the Spirit. Our flesh is buried in water baptism, and we rise to new life in Him. This is speaking of Jesus Christ the Righteous. We take on His righteousness.

## **1 John Chapter 2 Continued Questions**

1. Love not the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Christians are \_\_\_ the world, but not \_\_\_ the world.
3. What is "world" in verse 15 speaking of?
4. Christians should be \_\_\_\_\_ men.
5. What are the three things that got Eve in trouble?
6. He that doeth the will of God \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Verse 18 says it is what time?
8. What does the last time indicate?
9. What does the word "antichrist" mean?
10. These false teachers pretended to be whom?
11. How do they bring the false message?
12. What is their favorite statement?
13. What does "unction" mean?
14. "All things" in verse 20, are spoken of as what in verse 21?
15. Who is a liar in verse 22?
16. What is another word for Christ?
17. To deny the Son, is to deny the \_\_\_\_\_ who sent Him.

18. What had been taught them from the beginning?
19. What promise did Jesus make to the believers?
20. Eternal life is in \_\_\_\_\_.
21. What is the "anointing" in verse 27 speaking of?
22. Who guides us into all truth?
23. How do we know we have His righteousness?