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A0435 -- August 29, 2004 -- 1 John 2:27c-29 -- Rapture and Abiding

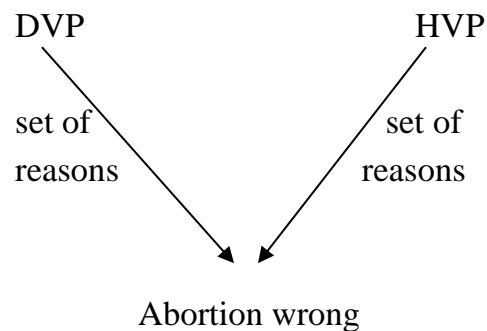
1 John 2:27c but that His anointing teaches (Present Tense) you concerning all things and is true and not a lie, and just as it taught (Aorist Tense) you, abide (Imperative) in Him.

Verse 27c ...the Holy Spirit *teaches you concerning all things*. *Teaches* is in the Present tense as shown in my translation on the back of your bulletin. This is an important observation, because if you notice down at the end of this verse, the same word is used but in the Aorist tense. You know what the Present tense means, but what about the Aorist tense? Aorist tense refers to ‘point action’ in past time. It doesn’t tell you how long it took, it doesn’t tell you what time it was, it simply tells you that an action took place at a point in the past. For example, I washed the car. I didn’t tell you when or how long it took but it’s done. That’s the Aorist tense. The significance of John’s using both the Present tense and Aorist tense of the verb “to teach” is that it tips us off to something about the Teaching Ministry of the Holy Spirit. He *teaches* presently and He *taught* in the past. This means that the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit is always consistent with what He previously taught. That is, the Holy Spirit will never, and I mean never, contradict or deny anything He previously taught. He is absolutely consistent. This ought to make your antennas perk up because we have got lots of groups, running under the banner of “Christian,” and yet claiming that the Holy Spirit did something or taught something that is actually contrary to the Word of God. How do Christians get to this point? Well, we live in an Age of Mysticism which always approaches things emotionally and experientially. So, what has happened is that we have been trained to think that an intellectual approach to Christianity is unspiritual (i.e., intellect not consistent with spirituality or faith). “If we have to use our minds it’s anti-spiritual,” they say. That is an absolutely wrong idea. But I know that most churches start with this principle. When you go to many churches, you find their goal is to create an emotional atmosphere. They are doing this because it draws a crowd and people think *emotions* are a sign of *spirituality* (*although that idea is never found in the Bible*). So, you will go to some Bible study and the first thing they will do after visitation is dim the lights and then sing about 55 praise songs. During this time, everyone gets into an emotional

frenzy. People start raising their hands and crying; and then after that, we're supposed to have Bible study, but it really consists of a session where we all share "what this means to me." And then that's it, the meeting is over. Afterward, you will hear people saying, "Oh, the Spirit's presence was overwhelming tonight." Well, there may have been a spirit present, but I can assure you, it wasn't the Holy Spirit. Not one thing mentioned at that Bible study had anything to do with true spirituality or the Scriptures. It was all man-centered.

Tell me if this isn't a common scenario. You ask someone what church they go to and they will tell you, "I go to X church." Then they will say, "Oh, you ought to come visit, the singing is great there." But have you ever heard them say, "Oh, I go to Y church and the pastor-teacher doesn't tolerate false teaching. He teaches from the original Hebrew and Greek languages so we can know for certain what the Bible really says"? Now, which church do you think the Holy Spirit is at? Do you think He's at the one where all the hoopla is going on? or the one where His word is being taught? Well, to make a long story short, 1 John 2:27 is showing us that what the Holy Spirit presently *teaches* is always consistent with what He previously *taught* and it is always connected to the Scripture. This means He is at the church where they are teaching His Word. The Holy Spirit isn't involved with or teaching anything that is contrary to the Word of God. So, we must watch out, because people like to say they got a word from God, their own personal instruction from God *independent* from Scripture. But that idea is anti-biblical. It's pure laziness for people who won't crack their Bibles and study it systematically. John would say, "These people are liars and the truth is not in them" (1 John 2:4). The Bible says that the Holy Spirit never works apart from the Word of God (Prov. 1:23). He presently teaches you (if you are a believer), but that teaching is in connection with the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit isn't whispering in your ear, He's teaching you as you study the Word of God which is only found in the Bible. So, watch out for this kind of thing, because it's all over the place today and it is really just doctrines of demons. Everyone is looking for a mystical experience, something to verify their faith. But we don't verify our faith by experience, nor do we come to know God through experience. If we came to know God by experience then, Adam had to fall in order to gain the wisdom of God, and that's folly. If knowing came through experience, then God would have had universal experience of all things. Therefore, for God to know evil, He would have to experience evil. 1 John 1:5 tells us that God is light and in Him is no darkness, not even a bit. So, knowing doesn't come through experience. If we don't come to know by experience, then how do we come to know? We come to know through the Word of God. We gain wisdom and knowledge by studying the Word of God, not by making mistakes.

What about the *all things* that John refers to in v. 27? He says that the *anointing* presently *teaches you concerning all things*. Well, the *all things* refers to just that, anything. Now, what about things we learned before we became believers? Or, what about things that unbelievers have learned? Did the Holy Spirit teach them? No. They do have inherent knowledge, a knowledge of God's existence through creation and conscience. That knowledge comes from God, but what about learned things? Here's how the Word of God looks at this idea. Let's say you (a Christian) and a non-Christian friend both agree that abortion is wrong. Okay, well you might assume that you share the same knowledge. That is a misconception. Maybe you agree on the surface about abortion, but from the biblical point of view, you don't agree on how you got to that conclusion. In other words, there are different ways in which you and your non-Christian friend came to that conclusion. There's a DVP way and a HVP way.



The set of reasons that you and your non-Christian friend used to generate that conclusion are different. What the Bible argues is that your non-Christian friend has come to the conclusion inconsistently, because HVP can never provide the basic grounds for epistemology, for knowing truth and having moral absolutes because it doesn't acknowledge the God of Scripture (Christian theism). So, just because you agree on the conclusion does not mean that you really agree. As a Christian, you have concluded that abortion is wrong from a different set of reasons than your non-Christian friend, and you have a place to stand, a firm place to base your reasons and argue for the absolute wrongness of abortion. But your non-Christian friend does not; he stands in mid-air trying to make up morality. So, **while it appears that non-Christians and Christians agree and share the same knowledge on many issues, they actually do not because the Bible thinks of knowledge as incorporating the set of reasons as well as the conclusions.** So, it is not enough to simply agree on the conclusions. We have got to agree on the set of reasons behind the conclusions in order for there to be real agreement and for it to be a thing taught by the Spirit of God. Of course, everything that the Spirit of God teaches *is true and not a lie*. God is light and in Him is no darkness at all, not even a bit (1 John 1:5).

So, the Spirit of God will never teach you a lie. But John makes this point, because of the *antichrists* who did teach lies. Just last week, I was watching an address made by a lady at Union Theological Seminary, and she said, “We really need to listen to what the Buddhists are saying because we can learn a lot from them, particularly about meditation techniques.” John says, NO, you learn from the Spirit of God, not from false teachers. Finally, John concludes this sentence with an imperative. An imperative is a command to follow. The command is: *abide in Him*. See, the Holy Spirit is always abiding in us. We do not ever have to ask the Holy Spirit to abide in us. It is a declaration of Scripture that He does abide in us (as per the beginning of this verse). But we are the ones who need to *abide in Him*. *Abide* is John’s favorite word, *meno*, and it means to “dwell,” to “remain or stay.” We are to “remain” or “dwell” *in Him*. This is written to advanced believers, so even advanced believers can stop abiding in Him (1 John 2:12-14). We need to constantly be abiding in Him in order to grow spiritually and detect deceivers. This is the end of this major section of Scripture that began in vv. 12 and extended to v. 27 where John is **Warning the Well-Prepared**.

This week, we are moving into the fifth section of 1 John. For a review of the first four sections, see last week’s lesson. In the fifth section, John is embarking on a new concept with his readers, **Learning to Recognize God’s Children** (1 John 2:28-3:10). He is leaving the warnings about the World System and the Antichrists and moving on to the abiding Christian life. We are moving into the body of the letter that begins in 2:28 and closes at 4:17. We know this because of a literary device that ancient writers used called an *inclusio*. An *inclusio* marks off the beginning and the end of a section by beginning and ending with the same word(s) and concepts. 1 John 2:28 and 4:17 both use the word “confidence” (*Gk. parresia*) and the concept of the Judgment Seat of Christ. So, from 1 John 2:28-4:17, John is concerned with exhortations on how to live the Christian life. John calls this “abiding.” Paul calls it “being transformed by the renewing of your mind,” James calls it “being a doer of the word and not a hearer only.” So, what we have in John is a large section of exhortation that is bracketed by the Judgment Seat of Christ. This makes a lot of sense because the Judgment Seat of Christ is an evaluation of the Christian’s “good and bad” done while in the body (1 Cor. 3:12-15). It is not a judgment to determine salvation. It is a judgment restricted to believers to evaluate their works, whether good or bad, and to determine their rewards or lack of rewards. How does God determine rewards? This can be demonstrated mathematically in the following formula:

$$(\mathbf{O}_C \div \mathbf{O}_G) \times 100 = \% \text{ of } \mathbf{C}$$

\mathbf{O}_C = # Opportunities Capitalized

\mathbf{O}_G = # Opportunities Given

\mathbf{C} = Capacity

Here is an example. Let's say at this time in your life you have been given 100 opportunities (\mathbf{O}_G) to bear fruit. So far, you have capitalized on 36 of those opportunities (\mathbf{O}_C) by the filling of the Holy Spirit. Now, divide the \mathbf{O}_C by \mathbf{O}_G and multiply that number times 100, and that is your percentage of capacity at that point in time. So, at this time in your life, you are at 36% of your possible capacity of rewards. You have forfeited 64% of your possible rewards up to that time. Now, what can you do about this? The only way to increase above 36% is to capitalize on future opportunities. You have got to increase that top number in the equation (\mathbf{O}_C). As \mathbf{O}_C increases, your full capacity of rewards increases. Let's say at a later time in life, your opportunities given have increased from 100 to 1,000 ($\mathbf{O}_G \uparrow$). And now you have capitalized on 720 of those opportunities ($\mathbf{O}_C \uparrow$). So, to see where you are on that day at that time, divide \mathbf{O}_C by \mathbf{O}_G and multiply that number times 100. Now you can see that you are up to 72% of your possible capacity of reward. So, your rewards are proportional to the # \mathbf{O}_C divided by # \mathbf{O}_G . This demonstrates how a believer who is highly productive early on in the Christian life can lose reward later in life if he doesn't capitalize on later opportunities given. Because as the bottom number of that equation grows and the top number stays the same, all of a sudden, the percent of capacity drastically decreases.

2.28 Kai. nu/n(tekni,a(me,nete evn aurtw/|(i[na eva.n fanerwqh/| scw/men parrhsi,an kai. mh. aivscunqw/men avpV aurtou/ evn th/| parousi,a| aurtou/Å

2.28 And now, little children, abide in Him, so that if He appeared we may have boldness (parresia) and not shrink back from Him at His coming (parousia).

Verse 28 is the theme verse of this next section. The first thing John does is repeat the command to **abide in Him**. **Him** refers to Christ, because He is the one who is going to appear. **Abide** is the Greek word *meno*, which you should know by now. *Meno* means “to remain,” “to dwell.” We are supposed to **remain** or **dwell in** Christ. Why? So that if **He appeared, we may have confidence**. The Greek word for **confidence** is actually much stronger than this. There is another Greek word for **confidence** that John could have used if that was what he wanted to communicate (Gk. *pepoithesis*). But John chose the Greek word *parresia*, and it means “boldness,” “openness,” “frankness.” It is used of one who does things publicly rather than secretly (John 7:4).

The second reason we should *abide in Him* is so that *we may...not shrink back from Him at His coming*. The Greek word for *shrink back* is *aischuno* and it means “embarrassed.” We don’t want to be embarrassed, and we can avoid being embarrassed at Christ’s coming if we *abide in Him*. Now, let’s look briefly at the Doctrine of Abiding. Turn to John 15:1-8. This section of John’s gospel falls within chapters 13-17, what is known as the Upper Room Discourse. It is the only section of John’s gospel that is written to believers. The rest of the book is a series of eight miracles John records to convince non-Christians to believe. But chapters 13-17 are written to believers that they might have the abundant Christian life.

"I am the true [genuine] vine [grapevine], and My Father is the vinedresser. ²"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away [*airo* – lifts up so that it can bear fruit]; and every *branch* that bears fruit, He prunes [cleanses] it so that it may bear more fruit. ³"You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you [His apostles were already believers]. ⁴"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me. ⁵"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing [emphasize nothing]. ⁶"If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned [This is not talking loss of salvation but loss of physical life. There are two words in Greek for “burn.” One means burn with consumption and the other means burn without consuming (e.g., burning bush LXX) the latter use is used here, the unfruitful believer will be saved spiritually but he will die physically, 1 Cor. 3:15]. ⁷"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. [The prayer of the abiding Christians will be answered.] ⁸"My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and *so* prove to be My disciples."

So, there must be an organic, vital union between the believer and Christ if the believer is to bear fruit. As the branch is to the vine and the vine to the branch, so the believer must abide in Christ as Christ abides in the believer in order for there to be fruit. When we abide in Christ (the true vine), our prayers are answered (that’s a promise), the Father is glorified, and we prove to men that we are Christ’s disciples (we are a witness to the world). Notice in v. 7 that to abide in Christ, His words must abide in us. Abiding in Christ is necessarily connected to the commands of Scripture. We have to follow the commands of Christ, but we cannot follow those commands unless we are abiding in Christ and His words abiding in us. Thus, the important words: *apart from Me you can do nothing* (John 15:5). So, if

we are going to avoid embarrassment, then we have to ***abide in Him*** so that we will have ***boldness*** in the hour of His coming.

Two words are used here of Christ’s coming (*phaneroo* and *parousia*). The question we have to ask is, do these two words in this context refer to the Second Coming? Or to the Rapture?ⁱ The Second Coming is Jesus Christ’s bodily return to the earth *with* His saints. The Rapture is Jesus Christ’s coming in the air *for* His saints who will be caught up to Him. There are several differences between the Second Coming and the Rapture. Let’s review these differences because some scholars think that the Rapture and the Second Coming are the same event but this ignores the details of various texts. Scripture is clear that there are enough differences between Second Coming and Rapture passages to indicate that they are different events that occur at separate times.ⁱⁱ And there are a few hints that 1 John 2:28 is talking about the Rapture and not the Second Coming. But let’s review these differences between the Second Coming and the Rapture:ⁱⁱⁱ

Rapture	Second Coming
Christ comes <i>for</i> His own (John 14:3)	Christ comes <i>with</i> His own (Rev. 19:14)
He comes in the <i>air</i> (1 Thes. 4:17)	He comes to the <i>earth</i> (Zech. 14:4)
He <i>claims</i> His bride (1 Thes. 4:16-17)	He comes <i>with</i> His bride (Rev. 19:6-14)
Removal of <i>believers</i> (1 Thes. 4:17)	Manifestation of Christ (Mal. 4:2)
<i>Only</i> His own see Him (1 Thes. 4:13-18)	<i>Every eye</i> shall see Him (Rev. 1:7)
<i>Tribulation</i> follows (2 Thes. 1:6-9)	Millennial <i>kingdom</i> begins (Rev. 20:1-7)
Saved are <i>delivered from wrath</i> (1 Thes. 5:9-10)	Unsaved <i>experience the wrath</i> of God (Rev. 6:12-17)
<i>No signs</i> precede Rapture (1 Thes. 5:1-3)	<i>Signs</i> precede Second Coming (Luke 21:11, 15)
Focus: <i>Lord and Church</i> (1 Thes. 4:13-18)	Focus: <i>Israel and the Kingdom</i> (Matt. 24:14)
A <i>mystery</i> in OT (1 Cor. 15:51)	<i>Revealed</i> in OT (Jer. 23:5-6)

The key difference related to 1 John 2:28 is revealed by the first-person plural pronoun ***we*** that John uses. By using ***we***, John is assuming that he and his readers may be on earth when Christ appears! There are no signs that precede the Rapture. It happens suddenly and without warning. But the Second Coming has at least 30 prophesied events that must precede it! So, John must be looking at the Rapture and he is assuming that it could occur in his generation! This is what we call imminence. The Doctrine of Imminence states that “the Rapture can happen at-any-moment.” Some prophesied event *may* precede the

Rapture, but no event *must* precede the Rapture. I like the way A.T. Pierson stated it. He said, “Imminence is the combination of two conditions, viz., certainty and uncertainty.”^{iv} What he means is *certain* to occur but *uncertain* when it will occur. So, the best way to think about the Rapture is that it is an event which can happen “at-any-moment.” The constant testimony of Scripture is that the doctrine of imminence is supposed to keep the Church on her toes. It is supposed to result in a different lifestyle, a lifestyle that will not be ashamed of Him if He suddenly appears. That is the topic of 1 John 2:28 and 3:2. John wants us to have an abiding lifestyle so that we can have *boldness* and not be *embarrassed* if He appears. If we live on our toes, we will lean toward an abiding lifestyle and we will capitalize on given opportunities to bear fruit.

2.29 eva.n eivdh/te o[ti di,kaio,j evstin(ginw,skete o[ti kai. pa/j o` poiw/n th.n dikaios,nnhn evx auvtou/ gege,nnhtai

2.29 If you know (oida) that He is righteous, you also know (ginosko) that everyone doing righteousness has been born (gennaō) of Him.

Since v. 28 was the theme, verse 29 begins a new thought. We know this because John leaves out a connective word.^v **If you know that He is righteous** is a fifth-class condition,^{vi} meaning that John did not take it for granted that his readers knew that **He is righteous**. It would be pressing the condition too far to say that they did not know that **He is righteous**. But John may be using this conditional because his readers did know that there were some who denied that **He is righteous**. The false teachers may have denied that **He is righteous**, as I mentioned when I taught 1 John 1:5; but if you did **know that He is righteous**, then you also know the following: **that everyone doing righteousness has been born of Him**. For the first time in this epistle, John mentions the new birth or the Doctrine of Regeneration, which will be a major topic of interest in 1 John 3:6, 9. This verse indicates that one who has been born again can be recognized if his life manifests Christian **righteousness**. This is not humanistic or secular righteousness, but a righteousness totally formed by Christ Himself. True righteousness is impossible apart from being born again (i.e., regenerated). As I mentioned, **has been born of Him** is the Doctrine of Regeneration. The Greek word for “regeneration” is not found in this verse; but whenever you see the concept of “born again,” then the author has the Doctrine of Regeneration in view (cf. John 3:3, 7; 1 Pt. 1:3, 23; Gal. 4:29; 1 John 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 7). What is regeneration? The Greek word is *paliggenesia* and it means “to live again,” “to begin again” (Matt. 19:28; Tit. 3:5). As *redemption* has to do with the *body*, *regeneration* has to do with the *human spirit*. In the NT, the word may be defined as “the creation of Christ’s life in the believer.” It is the bestowing of “eternal life” in distinction from “soul life” (Heb. **nephesh**). It is the re-creation of the human spirit (Titus 3:5). The picture the Bible always associates with

regeneration is creation. You are a new creation. The same power that created the universe in Genesis 1-2 is the same power that regenerated or re-created your human spirit.

The test here in 1 John 2:29 is that if one meets the first condition of knowing that *He is righteous*, then he will also be able to recognize when His *righteous* nature is actually being *manifested* in a person's life. This verse does not say that we can judge whether another person really is saved or not by looking at his deeds. That is a wrong deduction. To say that, John would have said something like, "Whoever does *not* do righteousness is *not* born of Him." But the significant thing is that John never makes that statement. Contrary to many, many Bible teachers, who claim that the test to see whether one is really a believer or not, is to check your deeds. The Bible never says that. The Bible says that if we believe, we already know that we are saved. There can be no front-loading (Lordship Salvation) or end-loading (Perseverance of the Saints) of the gospel message.

ⁱ The word 'rapture' is not found in the Bible. However, it is found in the Latin Bible (lat. *rapture*). In the Greek it comes from the verb *harpazo* which means "caught or snatched up". So, while the word 'rapture' is not used in our English Bible it is a concept taught in Scripture. It refers to the 'catching up' of all believers who are on earth to Christ in the air. It is Christ coming *for* His saints *before* the tribulation as distinct from Christ's coming *with* His saints *at the end* of the tribulation.

ⁱⁱ The timing of the rapture is a controversial issue. This author has struggled with the issue in the halls of debate extensively. An article that does a good job of setting the playing field for studying and/or debating the issue is *Arguing for the Rapture: "Who Must Prove What and How?"* by John S. Feinberg in *When the Trumpet Sounds*, edited by Thomas Ice and Timothy Demy (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1995), 187-210.

ⁱⁱⁱ Chart modified from Ed Hindson's article in *When the Trumpet Sounds*, edited by Thomas Ice and Timothy Demy (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1995), 157-158.

^{iv} Much of the information on imminency came from Tim LaHaye, *The Case for the Imminent Rapture of the Church* (Dallas, TX: Pre-Trib Study Group, Dec. 2000), 3.

^v In the Greek this is called an *asyndeton* and the lack of one indicates that the author is beginning a new thought. Some examples of *asyndeton's* are "since", "therefore", and "then".

^{vi} When the subjunctives encroached on the domain of the Hellenistic optatives, the 3rd class condition opened up into new vistas in *Koine* Greek. The 5th class condition is therefore a subset of the 3rd class condition and is typically called a "present general condition". For the form to be considered a 5th class condition there must be an indicative verb in the apodosis. This condition is fulfilled in the present text. (See Wallace, Daniel B, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics*), 470.

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