

GREAT INFORMATION Pt. 2

1 John 2:20-25

As we continue our study in **1 John 2** we continue learning about how John, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, identifies who are and who are not true believers. There are and there have always been pretenders of all sorts. Here the Apostle is specifically referring to those who profess to know Christ, but in reality do not.

Looking back at **verse 19** we remember John said something remarkable about those who had failed to “continue with” the other believers. He said the reason they went out from those who were true believers instead of remaining with them was because they were never really true believers or actually a part of them in the first place. True, they professed they were believers, but their actions spoke louder than their words.

Verse 20 informs all of us that continuance with Christ is evidence of truly being in Christ. Remember in an earlier part of this study I told you the “proof is in the pudding?” Anyone can say they belong to Christ or that they have been saved, but the truth of the matter is, only those who “continue with” or in Christ actually were and are saved! In fact, in **verse 25** John informs us that if someone says they were saved and only lasts for two years, or six years, or eleven years in their walk and fellowship with the Lord they were not actually saved. If someone has something less than “eternal life” it is not the life Jesus gives to those who place their trust in Him.

How do we know that? **Verse 20** tells us we have “an unction from the holy one and we know all things.” Wow! The “unction” John is speaking of is the permanently abiding presence of the Holy Spirit that indwells every believer. It is the Spirit of Truth that takes His abode in the heart of those who have repented of their sins and who have by faith have received Christ as their Savior. He is that “(an)other comforter” Jesus promised would come after He returned to the Father as a result of His prayer according to **John 14:16-18**.

This “unction” is actually referring to the coming of the Holy Spirit into the heart and life of the believer at the moment of their salvation. It is a one-time event and can never be repeated. Just as the priests in the Old Testament were anointed only once upon entering into the priesthood so the believer, at the moment of their salvation, once and for all receives the Holy Spirit as the result of their trusting Christ as Savior.

Although varied as to the kind of ministry the Holy Spirit does for and in the believer, one of the ministries the Holy Spirit does, is to enlighten the one in whom He dwells to the truth. He enlightens the believer on what is truth since He is the Spirit of truth. Doesn't that make sense? And the good thing about that is He does the same to all of those who trust Christ as Savior. Not just some, but all!

He also enables us to discern what is and what is not true if we simply listen to what He says to us. John says when He (the Spirit of truth) comes to dwell in the believer then a believer can "know all things." I believe this was directed as a rebuttal toward the Gnostics who claimed to possess some super, secret knowledge known only to some few enlightened ones. But John says those who actually possess true knowledge are those who have actually had a personal experience with Christ and are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The kind of knowledge John is referring to is the kind of knowledge that is both absolute and final.

The internal presence of the Holy Spirit gives the believer the ability to discern the difference between truth and error. It is not an ability reserved for some special few, as with the Gnostics, but for all who know Christ personally. What a blessing that truly is!

According to **John 16:13**: "...when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you (the believer) 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." If we but submit to His lead, He will enable us to understand what we need to understand at the time we need to understand throughout our life as a follower of Christ.

John continues in **verses 21-23** with both an affirmation for those who have the Spirit dwelling within as well as additional information about antichrist. The affirmation is to those who "know the truth." This is both simple and simply wonderful! All those who are believers have the Spirit. And because of that anointing, they know God's Word and they know the truth! They know the truth about God's Son because they have been illuminated by the Spirit of God that dwells within.

The additional information provided by John on the antichrist, found in **verses 22-23** is pointed and powerful. Actually, he gives us here a definition of antichrist. Now John knew there would one day be the manifestation of "the antichrist." But he also knew anyone who denied the truth about the Son of God becoming the Son of Man through the virgin birth was being motivated by and possessed by the spirit of "the antichrist." When he said they were "a liar" he meant that those who

denied the truth about Christ Jesus had been influenced by the attitude that would infect “the antichrist” which will be manifest in the last days. This kind of thinking springs from the same spirit that comes from him. This is in light of the fact that he is, in reality, the source of or the father of lies.

The antichrists of John’s day (and our day) deny the deity of Christ. They deny that Jesus the man is actually the Christ or the Messiah: the one who was and is “God manifest in the flesh.” Here, John goes to the very heart of Gnosticism. Remember that Cerinthus (a man of Jewish lineage and educated in Alexandria) denied the miraculous conception of Jesus. He taught that *after* the baptism of Jesus by John in the Jordan the Christ came upon this Jesus of Nazareth in the form of a dove which enabled Him to do the miracles He did and to declare the Father as He did. Cerinthus also taught that Christ departed from Jesus at the cross or before He began to suffer because he believed it was impossible for a spiritual being to suffer. He believed Jesus was buried and actually arose out from the dead, but that the Christ was not a part of those events.

May I say if Jesus was not the Christ then the death He died could not have atoned for His sin let alone the sins of the world! If Jesus had not been both God and man, deity and humanity in the same body, there would be no salvation, no hope, and no help for lost mankind. It’s just that simple. If Jesus is the Savior (and He is) then He **must** also be the Christ.

This son of thunder is clear in proclaiming this much needed declaration that anyone and everyone who denies “Jesus is the Christ” is “antichrist” and, therefore, they also “deny(ieth) the Father and the Son.” John knew the Father and the Son were so close it is totally impossible to separate them for although they are two, they are one. He knew it was impossible to have one without the other. He knew if you deny one then you must deny them both.

Verse 23 is an interesting verse for many reasons. In this verse, if you will notice, you see several words written in italics. Do you know what that means? It means those words were not found in the original manuscripts but were supplied by the translators in an attempt to clarify the passage or the reading. All words in italics found in the King James Bible are there for the same reason. To make clear and to provide what they believe to be more readability. I think in most cases leaving them out would not have cause any problems, although for the most part that is, they do provide some degree of aid. (With that being said, if you notice, the other versions of the Bible are not as honest in their translations. I can’t help but wonder why?)

Please notice what **verse 23** so plainly states. When it comes to the Father and the Son, you can't have one without the other, it is just that simple! **But**, the good news is, when you have one you also have the other. They are inseparable, eternally inseparable. What John is saying here is profound. We could spend a great deal of time on the fact that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. God manifest in the flesh. The thing John wants to emphasize as a conclusion of this truth is that if someone denies the eternal relationship which the Father and the Son have, they are not a child of God and are, in reality, unsaved regardless of what they profess.

On the other hand, the one who confesses or "acknowledgeth the Son" is a saved individual and because they are saved, they not only have the Son but they have "the Father also."

Verse 24 is very informative. Here the Apostle both admonishes and informs. The admonition is to just "Let that, therefore, abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning." The beginning, I believe, goes back to the incarnation. It goes back to when God became "flesh and dwelt among us" (**John 1:14**). It speaks of the sinless life Jesus lived while living among sinful men in a fallen world. It also refers to the death that He died and the fact that He came out from among the dead never to die again. It also speaks of His ascension, and His promise He would come again.

Please notice what is said in this verse. "Let that therefore, abide in you,...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 seems to be saying, with an eye on **verse 19**, that those who "went out from us" and at one time had been exposed to the truth, only professed the truth but in reality did not possess the truth.

How do I know this? Because John goes on to say "if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us:" This verse is giving us vital information about a true believer. What he says is both simple and profound. If a person is exposed to the truth and truly embraces the truth and makes it their own, *they will continue, all the way to the end*. That is what Paul is saying in **Philippians 2:12b-13** where he says: "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and do of his good pleasure." What has been worked into those who believe is the salvation those who trust God's Son as Savior receive according to **verse 13**. **Verse 12b** tells us it our privilege and responsibility to work that salvation out all the way to its completion

or to its end. A poor illustration is it would be like working an algebraic problem all the way out to its completion.

Beginning something is important but not as important as completing something. The Bible clearly teaches that those who are truly saved will continue. The fact that someone continues to the time of their glorification is proof that that someone actually possessed and not just professed salvation in Christ. In fact, the next verse provides great information on this very thing! And with this verse, we will bring this study to an end, but what a verse it is! It reads: “And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.” **1 John 2:25**. Talk about shoutin’ ground, there it is!

There is so much that could be said about eternal life here, but I will do my best to keep my remarks brief...well, as brief as I can. May I begin by saying I’m glad I have eternal life and know I do! Do you? Are you sure?

What is eternal life? Eternal life is much more than quantitative or a quantity of life. It is life without an end. It is also more than qualitative or a measure of life. It is a life of a new dimension. Eternal life is life that is life indeed. It is life as God knows life (isn’t that amazing?! Actually, it is the very life of God!

In **Titus 1:2** Paul declares eternal life is a promise God made. It is a promise of a God which cannot lie made before the world began! This literally means God is “the un-lie-able God.” I really like that by the way don’t you? According to **John 17:3** it is the kind of life one receives when one receive Christ as Savior.

Eternal life is the *only kind of life God knows and gives*. I know there is a great deal of misunderstanding about someone having eternal life and what that means. But if we allow the Scripture to speak and take what it says as it says it, then there is only one conclusion we all can come to. That is, when someone repents of their sins and by faith receives Christ as their Savior, they immediately become the recipient of eternal life. Eternal begins at the time of one’s conversion not the time of one’s death. People wrongly think eternal does not begin until death. But that is not what the Bible teaches.

May I say something? If someone says they are saved, regardless of how long they may do the things like a Christian does, if they **lose** their salvation in a day, a week, a month, a year, a decade after they claimed to have been saved, they had some kind of life, but it was not eternal life.

When the Godhead in eternity past decided to create man they knew one day they would also have to provide redemption for man. They knew man would fall and need to be redeemed. So, they pledged themselves to a plan of redemption for all those who would place their trust in that plan. It was a plan made before the world began. Before God gave to Adam natural life He promised to make eternal life available to men, all men. Although eternal life is available to everyone it is only actual to those who repent of their sins and by faith receive Jesus Christ as their Savior. In fact says in **Ephesians 2:8** “For by grace are saved through faith...”

In closing I want to quote one of, if not the, best known verses in all the Bible. It is **John 3:16** which says: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Of all the writers of the New Testament the beloved John made reference to eternal life and everlasting life more than all the others. In fact he used the phrase “eternal life” no less than twelve times out of the twenty four total times it is used. He used the phrase “everlasting life” seven out of the eleven times it is used as well.

Although for years I did not believe I had eternal life because I did not understand the truth about eternal life. Today, I rejoice completely in what it means for me to know I have eternal life because I have trusted Jesus Christ as my personal Savior.

It is “know so salvation” God has promised to us and provided for us. If we understand what the Scriptures say about eternal life, we will not abuse it. But we will find a peace and security that enables us to serve our Lord and Savior in a way that is honoring to Him and satisfying to us.

Do you have eternal life? I hope you not only possess eternal life but rest in the fact that you do! If you don’t, you can have it by trusting Christ as your Savior, right now. If you haven’t, why not do so now.

In our next study, Lord willing, we will be informed by John that it is possible for members of God’s family to be ashamed when His Son returns for those He has redeemed by His blood. I don’t want to be one of those who will be ashamed. Do you?

Thomas Price, 2020