

1 John

Lesson 3

Chapter 2:15-29

Leader Guide

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Walking in the Light, Part 2

Lesson 3, 1 John 2:15-29

Prayers

Introduction to 1 John 2

How do you tell if promises people make to you are genuine? You probably consider whether the person is a reliable source, do some personal research, or find they have a proven history. John writes to new Christians stating his credentials as a witness to what he has seen, heard, and experienced from Jesus. John was near the end of his life and experienced a lifetime of walking in the light with Jesus. In the second chapter of his letter, John continues discussing what it means to be in fellowship with Christ and offers four tests of how a Christian knows if his faith is genuine. The first and most significant test of real faith is obeying God's commands. Obedience stems from a love for God and others and reveals a life transformed by the Holy Spirit. The second test of genuine faith is whether a Christian has a love for the "world" – that is, for sinful desires and materialism. The third test acknowledges the truth that Jesus is the Christ. True faith also recognizes false doctrines detracting from the deity of Christ and the message of salvation by faith in Christ alone. The final test is that genuine faith leads the righteous to do what is right.

Read

^{1Jn 2:15} Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ^{1Jn 2:16} For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. ^{1Jn 2:17} The world and its desires pass away but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

^{1Jn 2:18} Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. ^{1Jn 2:19} They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

^{1Jn 2:20} But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. ^{1Jn 2:21} I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth. ^{1Jn 2:22} Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist—he denies the Father and the Son. ^{1Jn 2:23} No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

^{1Jn 2:24} See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. ^{1Jn 2:25} And this is what he promised us—even eternal life.

^{1Jn 2:26} I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. ^{1Jn 2:27} As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to

teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him.

^{1Jn 2:28} And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears, we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

^{1Jn 2:29} If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him.

Discussion

1. Verses 15-17. John's second test for his readers to know if they know Jesus is that they do not love the world. The Greek word John uses for the world is kosmos. Kosmos means "order" and is the opposite of chaos. It is the same root word we use for the heavens and cosmetics. The heavens are ordered, and make-up orders the chaos of our faces! John is not talking about the order found in nature. Greeks also used kosmos to describe the order of the human world with its social, economic, political, and religious systems. Refer to the following verses and discuss why John tells new Christians not to love this world or anything in it?

^{1Jn 2:15} Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ^{1Jn 2:16} For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. ^{1Jn 2:17} The world and its desires pass away but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

1 John 5:19 We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.

^{Jn 6:27} Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

^{Jas 4:4b} ... don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

John uses the Greek word "agape" for love. Agape is unconditional love, the same kind of love God has for us and we have for God. We are not to love anything in the world above God and we are not to love the world's values because they are in opposition to God. John is saying that Satan corrupts worldly systems. Greeks worshiped a pantheon of gods, were devoted to the pursuit of sensuality, and took pride in their many extraordinary accomplishments and creations (mathematics, art, sculpture, architecture). They rejected Christ, and the wisdom of God seemed like foolishness to them. (What was the wisdom of God they rejected that seemed like foolishness? - Christ died for their sin, and they could not save themselves by their discipline or intellect.

2. Compare John's instruction 1 John 2:15 to John 3:16. How do you reconcile these apparently contradictory scriptures – God loved the world, but you are not to love the world?

^{Jn 3:16} "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

God did not love the social and political systems created by man; he loved men. John's statement logically follows his first instruction to love our brothers.

3. Verses 18-19. John is the only gospel writer who uses the term antichrist, and his use of the word is very different from its use in modern fiction. Who does John call an antichrist?

^{1Jn 2:18} Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. ^{1Jn 2:19} They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

An antichrist is a false teacher who denies that Jesus is the Christ, Son of God, fully man, fully God.

- a. From where did the antichrists come?

Antichrists came from the church and accepted the false teachings of the gnostics.

4. Verses 20-23. What is the test to determine if someone is an antichrist?

^{1Jn 2:20} But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. ^{1Jn 2:21} I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth. ^{1Jn 2:22} Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist—he denies the Father and the Son. ^{1Jn 2:23} No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

Antichrists deny the truth about who Jesus Christ is.

5. The relationship between the Father and Son demonstrates Jesus's divinity. John refers to the relationship between the Father and the Son in every chapter of his gospel except for chapters 9 and 19. Nine is the healing of the man born blind when Jesus declares he is the Messiah, and 19 describes his beating and crucifixion. Summarize in your own words the truth about God the Father and Jesus the Son in the following scriptures:

^{Jn 1:1} In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ^{Jn 1:2} He was with God in the beginning.

The Son, also called the Word, was with God the Father from the beginning and is God. The Father created all things through his Son.

Jn 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the **Father**, full of grace and truth.

The Son, also called the Word, came from the Father to become a man in the flesh and lived among men – [to reveal his Father to men].

Jn 3:35 The **Father** loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. Jn 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him.”

The Father loves the Son, so whoever loves the Son and believes in him will have eternal life.

Jn 6:37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. Jn 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. Jn 6:39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. Jn 6:40 For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

The Son came down from heaven to do his Father's will, and his Father's will is to give eternal life to everyone who believes in the Son.

6. What are some of the relationships between the Father and Son that the false teachers might deny?

**God the Father, Jesus God, incarnate through the Holy Spirit and virgin birth.
Jesus and the Father are one. Jesus told his disciples if they had seen him, they had seen the father.**

His divinity

His humanity

His physical presence

His role in creation

His death resurrection

His power to forgive sin

His power to give eternal life

7. Verses 26-27 What anointing does John refer to?

¹Jn 2:26 I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. ¹Jn 2:27 As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him.

Holy Spirit. Some references say it is Holy Spirit working through the Scriptures.

John encourages his readers with the fact that the Holy Spirit is living in them. The Spirit has joined them with Christ, who has made them into new creations—people who know the gospel and who know God. This makes them different from the antichrists, who have no such anointing. This anointing will enable them to realize how opposite to them the antichrists are.

8. Why did John say in verse 27, they did not need anyone to teach them since some were being led astray by false teachers, the influence of Greek philosophy, and pagan religion?

^{1Th 1:5} because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. ^{1Th 1:6} You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.

Christians have the truth of scripture to know the fundamental truths of Christ: repentance, forgiveness, and godly living. They have received the anointing of the Holy Spirit through baptism, who leads them in wisdom and understanding. The truth of scripture is the test of any teacher or teaching about God, Christ, or man's need for salvation through faith in Christ alone.

9. Verses 28-29. What is John's final test so his readers would know if they knew Jesus?

^{1Jn 2:28} And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

^{1Jn 2:29} If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him.

The simplest definition of righteousness is found in verse 29, "do what is right" because Jesus is righteous, and we are born anew in him. The Greek word defines righteousness in terms of moral conduct in relation to others in all dealings of the "kosmos"- religion, business, legal, political, or any other relational system. The opposite of righteousness is wicked.

10. What does it mean for a Christian to be righteous? Refer to the following verse and discuss the various aspects of righteousness.

Some teaching on righteousness by Jesus and Paul

^{Mt 5:6} Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Mt 5:10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Mt 6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Ro 3:21 But now a righteousness from God, apart from the law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. Ro 3:22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, Ro 3:23, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, Ro 3:24, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Jesus' teaching stresses the right actions and having a righteous character.

Paul's definition is broader-

- 1. Christ is righteous**
- 2. We are righteous by our faith in Christ**
- 3. We are forgiven of our unrighteous sins by God's grace, for Jesus' sake.**
- 4. We are to love others.**

Prayer adapted from Ezekiel 11: 19-20

Dear Father, we confess that we have not loved you or our neighbor with our whole heart. We pray for undivided hearts and a renewed spirit. Remove our hearts of stone and give us a heart of flesh. We pray that we follow your decrees and laws out of love and devotion to you. We thank you for being our God, calling us into fellowship with Jesus, and calling us to be your children. AMEN