

1 John 2 Sermons-Wayne Barber

Go to 1 John 1 Sermons

1 John 2:1

The Believer and Sin - Part 2

Dr. Wayne Barber

Do we have to deal with sin? Is sin a reality in a believer's life? Certainly we have already seen that it is. "My little children," John says in 1 John 2:1, "I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins...." Now stop right there. It is very obvious that John knows that because we live in bodies of flesh, we will still sin. But he has a stern message for all of us as believers: how we look at sin and how we deal with it.

We know already that John is dealing with the Gnostic heresy. I want to remind you of that because if you don't know why a book is written, then you cannot understand it in its context. John is very methodically led of the Holy Spirit of God, bringing an attack against the false doctrine that has gotten amongst these believers.

There are two things that I want us to look at. First of all is a definition of sin. What is sin? If I've got to deal with it and it is very clear that I do, then what is sin? In 1Jn 1:8-10 we have just seen the word mentioned. It is used in 17 verses in the book of 1John, so it is kind of on John's mind. It is a very prominent word in the study of 1 John.

The Greek word for sin is hamartia. It comes from the hamartano, which means to miss the mark. It's like taking a bow and arrow and shooting at a target. When you are shooting at something, you try to hit it. When you miss it, that is what sin is like. I want you to get the idea, shooting at a mark and missing the mark. That is what the whole thing is all about.

When you put that in light of the Christian's life, the Christian's walk is when you shoot at something. Perhaps it is God's mark for you but you go about it the wrong way and you miss it. You miss what God had intended in your life. It is when you choose to walk in darkness rather than light. It is when the Word of God has something very specific to say to you about your family, has something very specific to say to you about your finances, has something very specific to say about your future and everything else in your life, but you say, "I don't need that Book. God, you leave it there. I am going to do my own thing." You just missed the mark. That is sin.

"You mean to tell me the Word of God plays that kind of role in my life?" Oh, folks, how many times do we have to say it? James tells us that this Book is not so much a map, it is a mirror (cp James 1:23-note James 1:24-note , James 1:25-note). Maybe you are not in the Word of God daily. I don't mean you have to spend three hours a day studying. That is not what I am saying at all. But you are not studying it for yourself. You are not trying to discern the things of the scripture for yourself. Why would you want to do that? So that you can know the mark God wants you to hit. You may be living in sin and not even know it.

One of the hardest things we are finding out about counseling is when people come and say they want help. You take them to the Word, and they either look at you like, "I never heard that before" or they look at you like, "That is not my problem." To miss the mark is to miss what God has set up, what God requires, the standard that God demands and commands of every individual. When I choose to do it my way then I have sinned. By that very choice I have missed the mark.

All men are born into sin (cp Ps 51:5-[Spurgeon's note](#), Ro 5:12 - note). This is why we need the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ. There is not a man alive without Jesus Christ who can hit God's mark on anything. As a matter of fact, when he comes to church and tries to do good, it misses God's mark. When he wants to give to the offering, it misses God's mark. When he gives things to the church or comes and cuts the grass or goes on a mission trip, anything he does, if Christ is not in his heart it misses the mark God has for him. Every man born of Adam and born since Adam without Jesus Christ in his life has missed the mark and lives a life of missing the mark. So when you go to work and find that you have an unsaved boss who treats you badly and sins, don't be surprised. That is all he can do. When you are around sinners all they can do is sin. Why should we be caught off guard that way?

But a Christian is a little different. There is a standard God commands and demands and the Law brought that out. That standard is a way of living, the right conduct that no man apart from God can attain (cp Ro 3:21-note, Ro 3:28-note). Some people are trying to do it. They are trying to be good enough to get into heaven. You can't do that. It is like trying to climb up a ladder and the rung at the top you never can get because as soon as you grab one there is another one ahead of you and you can't seem to get there. You try and you try and you try but your whole life is missing the mark and you are going the wrong way. But when you come to know Christ, God does something from that point on by your willingness to obey in the power of His Spirit. Now you can measure up and conform

to what God requires. You couldn't do that before. Because of salvation, now you can.

Romans 1:17 (note) talks about the good news of God and it says, "For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith." What in the world is Paul talking about? What is the righteousness of God that is revealed in the good news of God? The good news of God is the gospel. What is the gospel? The good news of Jesus Christ. If I were preaching this message to a group of people who didn't know Jesus Christ, by now they would feel so condemned because they would realize they can't meet God's standards. They can't be good enough to measure up to God's standard, what God commands, what God demands, that their whole life misses the mark. Then I would bring them to the **gospel** (word study), the good news of Jesus Christ and the righteousness of God is revealed in that good news. That is why we go around the world to tell people. You are living in all this kind of garbage. You can come up out of it. You can meet God's standards but only through Jesus Christ.

You see, the righteousness of God ([Righteousness](#)= **dikaiosune** see study of adjective **dikaios** and verb **dikaioo**) incorporates three things. First of all, it incorporates that standard of right conduct He demands. The word "righteousness," **dikaiosune**, implies a standard that a holy God commands. But it also means a standard of right conduct that only a holy God can approve. Now understand what I am saying. There are a lot of men trying to approve the righteousness of other men. No man can approve anybody's righteousness. God is the one who must put His stamp of approval on righteousness. That is why Isaiah 64:6 says, "My righteousness is filthy rags in God's eyes." Men may say that it is good. God says that it is filthy rags. God is the one who has to approve it.

So far that is not good news. Until you hear the bad news, the good news is not good. The third thing that righteousness means there is that this righteousness, this ability to conform to God's standard, is what God provides to the individual who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ His Son. Oh, I tell you what, when this finally sinks into your mind, like it is beginning to sink into my mind, it just makes you want to shout.

You see, we have been declared righteous (Ed: or "justified" =**dikaioo** - word study). Look in Romans 10:10 (note) (cp Ro 10:9-note). This righteousness, this ability to conform to the standard that God commands and demands in our life comes at salvation. Verse 10 says, "for with the heart man believes (word study on **pisteuo**)." The whole key is belief, bowing before Him, admitting that you can't conform to His standard, trusting in what Christ has done. "Resulting in righteousness." Wow! Do you mean to tell me that now with Christ living in me I can measure up? Yes, we have been measured in Him. Now we can measure up. From faith to faith, His righteousness is revealed. What does that mean? Faith is obedience and when I obey Him initially, God enables me to measure to His standard. He justifies me, just as if I'd never sinned. Now every time I say "Yes" to Him in the power of His Spirit, then what God can do in my life is revealed. We see the righteousness of God revealed in an individual who has believed in Jesus Christ.

You may ask, "Why are you harping on sin?" I had better harp on it. I need it and you need it. We don't have an excuse anymore. We have been made the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ, which means now in Him we can conform to what God wants in our life. Have you ever heard somebody say, "Oh, I am just human! I can't do it!" No, it is not that you can't, it is that you won't. If you are a believer you are just simply saying, "I don't want you, God, and I will not do what You tell me to do." That is sin, and everything that results from that is missing the mark of what God commands and demands of every individual.

As you see the righteousness of God built into those three things, indirectly you are seeing the righteous character of God. He is the kind of God that not only condemns and requires but He is the kind of God that paid the ultimate price of sending His Son so that man could meet up to the standard He requires. That is the kind of God that we serve. Sin is missing the mark. Any time I choose not to obey Him or His Word, I have missed the mark of what God requires and that is sin. To the believer it is much more serious in one sense of the word. But if you are not a believer, hell is the end result. That is serious. We are held accountable as believers for the specific choices we make every day of our life. That is what it means to deal with sin all the time because we are not going to attain perfection. We are going to sin and dealing with that sin keeps us aware of what we are not and who He is.

Let's stop talking about generalities of sin. You say, "I don't understand what you are talking about. I hear you talking about missing the mark and I hear you talking about sin. What is sin?" Okay, let's just answer that. First of all, is there any area of your life that you are not allowing the Holy Spirit to control with His Word? Ephesians 5:18 (see notes) says, "Be ye [being] filled by the Holy Spirit of God." The word "filled" means controlled, dominated by the Holy Spirit of God. Ask yourself the question, "Is there anything in my life that I am not allowing the Holy Spirit of God, through His Word, to control?" Is it an attitude? Is it something else?

Secondly, what about how you care for your body? 1 Corinthians 6:13 says that our body is for the Lord. Is there any immorality? Is there any sexual conduct that is not pleasing to the Lord that you are committing and nobody knows about it? 1 Corinthians 6:15 shows us that sexual promiscuity is strictly forbidden because the body is a member of Christ.

Let me explain to you what we are talking about. Adultery. God says that is a choice you made. You are a believer. You don't have to make that choice. You made the choice and you have sinned. You need to deal with that sin before God. Fornication before

marriage. Sexual intercourse before marriage. Homosexuality. Incest. Ephesians tells us that we are not to let any kind of thing like that ever be named among the body of believers. You can't take these kinds of things lightly and claim to be in fellowship with a Holy God. You can't do it. Sin robs you of that fellowship with God and maybe even your relationship if you have never come to know Him. Sin is very serious.

Is there any area of impurity in your conduct concerning your body that may not concern anybody else? That is usually the cop out. "What I do, Brother Wayne, doesn't effect anybody but me." Are you entangled in the affairs of life that distract you from Christ? Are you so busy that you don't have time to get in the Word, sir? Are you so busy you can't be the spiritual leader of your family? Are you so busy making the almighty dollar that you are not honoring your vow that you have made to the Lord Jesus Christ? In 2 Timothy 2:4 (note) Paul tells Timothy, "Don't be entangled with the everyday affairs of life." In other words, you've got to live in this world, but don't let the world entangle you and choke out what God wants to do in your life.

Why is it you can't get men in a Bible study for more than about four weeks before they drop out? Why is that? Why is it that a man will sit and learn a computer manual, he will sit down and learn all the different things about his business, he will sit down and read whatever it is, but when it comes to the Word of God, he just doesn't have time? "I am just too busy. I have to work every day." That is sin in your life. How can you even know you are walking with God if you are not in the Word of God? The world just entangles us and sucks us under their current. Do you love the world and the things of the world more than you love Christ?

In 2Ti 4:10 (note) Paul speaks of Demas. He deserted Paul because he loved this present world. Have you robbed God by withholding from Him and His work your time, your talents and your money? You need to read 2Co 8:3, 4, 5 sometime. It is an admonition to the church at Corinth. The church at Macedonia didn't have a dime, and they were giving and giving and giving to an offering for the Jews over in Judea. Here is Corinth, the richest church in the New Testament, and they wouldn't give anything. They were more self-contained. They would rather take care of themselves than the cause of Christ. They were people robbing God.

Do you show love to your enemies and pray for those who persecute you? Mt 5:43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48 (see notes Mt 5:43; 44; 45; 46; 47; 48) tells you to do that. Or do you pick up the phone and see who you can tell about it? Are you bitter? Do you lose your temper when you don't get your way? Do you hide behind your smile a hidden anger that is vengeful but you don't want anybody else to know about it? Ephesians 4:31, 32 (see notes Ep 4:31; 32) says to be forgiving to one another, tender-hearted. Do you indulge in idle talk and gossip? Proverbs 10:18 drills that to the wall. Do you speak evil of others? 1Pe 3:9, 10 (see notes 1Pe 3:9; 10) speaks to you about that. Are you irregular at assembling with believers for prayer and worship? Hebrews 10:25 (note) tells us not forsake that. A lot of people take it lightly, don't they? Hebrews 10:25 says "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." Don't you ever do it.

Do humility and gentleness and patience and forbearance characterize your walk and behavior with others? Do you know what those words mean? "Humility" means a proper attitude towards yourself. You don't think of yourself more highly than you think of somebody else. "Gentleness" means your attitude towards God. It is the word "meekness." You have been broken by the Spirit of God. You don't have an ax to grind. "Patience" is your proper attitude towards others. Long suffering. Do you know what that implies? They are going to bug you. And do you know what forbearance is? It is the ability to stand up against somebody else while the provocation is going on and rather than kicking him out, you pray for him and hold him up until the provocation is over. Does that characterize your walk? Or do you get mad at any little thing, get critical, find your little group, and say what you want to say to them? That is sin.

When are we going to start calling sin sin? Are you diligently seeking to preserve the unity of the Spirit with your brothers and sisters in Christ by making sure that you at all times are at peace with them? Ephesians 4:3 says we can't produce unity. But if we don't keep that line open of forgiveness and peace, that is sin against God.

Are you a liar? I have run into some people over the years who are such good liars they don't know the difference between a lie and the truth. Do you know anybody like that? They have lied so long about so many things that they don't know the difference between a lie and the truth. Are you a thief? Is there anyone you have not forgiven? "Oh, if you knew my circumstances you wouldn't be saying that kind of stuff!" I am not saying that kind of stuff. I am just trying to tell you what God requires out of me as well as you. To refuse to do it is to miss His mark and that is sin, period! That is sin. Oh, how loosely we take it. Sin is missing the mark that God intends.

Over the years I have made this little statement. I don't know where I heard it:

**Sin will take you further than you ever intended to stray.
It will keep you longer than you ever intended to stay.
And it will cost you more than you ever dreamed you would pay.**

That is sin. For any believer to think for one second that they can get away with sin, that is a foolish deception. Sin is something we have to deal with. It means to miss the mark. It means to not conform to what God requires. We can now conform because His Spirit

energizes that and enables us to obey.

The second thing I want you to see is the disgrace of sin. I told you it was used in 17 different verses. I just want to hit a few of them. John doesn't say that sin is a disgrace but implicit in that is the fact that it is a disgrace, it is a shame to a Holy God that we would choose to sin against Him. We've got to see it as a disgrace. I've got to see it as a disgrace. I can't start letting it get into my life where I don't recognize it anymore. Remember the garments in Ephesians? We choose to put on the wrong garment or the right garment. That is what we are talking about. The right conduct is the right garment energized by the Spirit of God. The wrong garment is the wrong conduct energized by a wrong choice, and it misses the mark of what God requires.

Well, the word "sin" or "sins" is found in 17 verses. Let me just show you a few of them. We just read 2:1. Let's go back and look at it again: "My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins...", literally there it means to sin a sin. We have come so far off center that what is normal now looks like it is subnormal.

The more we integrate the world into our lives, the less we begin to care about what sin is. Then we make the mistake of calling anybody who is convicted a legalist. Now a legalist is not a legalist because he is convicted. He is a legalist when he takes his conviction and beats you over the head with it. Let's don't kick him out of the kingdom because he is convicted. That is where we all should be. It is not the intention of God that we allow it in our life in any form.

"Sin" is in the aorist subjunctive. We are to never miss the mark of what God wants. We are to always obey Him at any cost. Righteousness is the ability to conform to what God requires. Sin is never the intention of God. A sin is never excusable. It has to be dealt with.

In 1Jn 3:4, 5, 6 John picks up on it again. He says,

"Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness."

Now here we go. He does not want us to sin a sin. We know we will because that is brought out in Scripture, but that is not the intention of God. That is not what salvation made possible in our lives. Secondly, for sure, it is not to be a habit in our lives. "Practices sin," he says in verse 4. He says this is the lifestyle of a lost person. "... also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness."

Now that word "**lawlessness**" (anomia - word study) has the idea of living as if there is no standard with which you are to be held accountable. Even though we are saved (this is depicting a person who is not a Christian because he is living lawlessly) we come awfully close sometime to thinking that there is nobody we are accountable to, there is no standard that we are accountable to. Yes, there is! God's Word is the standard.

Well, verse 5 shows us why:

"And you know that He appeared in order to take away sin; and in Him there is no sin."

In other words, the very reason He came and lived on this earth was to take away the sin and make it possible for us to live a life on a higher plain and live in a way that conforms to His righteousness. Verse 6 reads,

"No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins [habitually] has seen Him or knows Him."

If you know somebody who lives lawlessly like that and doesn't ever worry about what the Word of God has to say and yet still claims to be a believer, just back off and pray because there is no signal in the Word of God that person knows Christ at all. You can't live habitually lawlessly and claim to be a believer.

Look down in verse 8 of chapter 3: "the one who practices sin is of the devil." Boy that is exciting; "for the devil has sinned from the beginning." It was his very attitude that got him kicked out of heaven to start with. "The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil." What are the works of the devil? Sin. When Christ comes and deals with our sin we are able, in Christ, to live differently.

In fact, sin is so serious that we are to be looking out for one another. Look in 5:16 and 18. Obviously I am not covering all the verses. We will do that as we study through 1 John. This is just an attempt to give us an idea of what we are dealing with here. In verse 16 we read,

"If anyone sees his brother committing a sin."

That word "see" is the word eido. It comes from horao, and it means you have to see a person actually commit the sin. It doesn't necessarily have to be overt. The Greek concordance puts it under the word that means intuitively understand or perceive something. In other words, you can be with somebody and you can sense in your spirit that there is sin in that person's life. Did you know that? Not only can you sense it in them, but you know it in yourself. You can sense the sin that is in somebody else, but it may

not be an overt sin.

A brother is sinning

A brother is sinning a sin. This is different from what John said in chapter 3. In chapter 3 here is a man living lawlessly. Here it is sinning a sin. In other words, every one of us has a weak problem in our life. Whatever that weak problem is, it has a trap to it and if we are not careful and abide in Him and walk in the light, we can easily be entrapped. It may be the area of immorality. It may be the area of covetousness and material things. It may be in the area of bitterness and a critical spirit, but all of us have something that is a weakness to us.

Here is what he is talking about. Here is a brother, a Christian who is falling into the trap of sin. If you become aware of it and if you perceive it in your spirit, you have a requirement.

"He shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit a sin not leading to death."

I can't wait until we get there in chapter 5. I am kind of glad it is going to be a while because I have to think a lot on it. But you know, all sin brings about some type of death. This is not talking about eternal death. For all of you who are saying, "I told you we would lose our salvation," that is not what he is talking about. There is no definite article at all. That is not what he is talking about. But there is a death.

It can be a physical death. There can be a sin that causes death in a person's life. It is almost as if God looks down and says, "I am sick and tired of you being a mockery to Me. I will take you home before I will allow you to continue to live that way." Maybe it is that way and maybe it is not, but it seems to be that way on the surface interpretation. When you see a brother sinning a sin and obviously it is not leading unto death because he is still living, you have a responsibility.

John says in verse 16,

"There is a sin leading to death; I do not say that he should make request for this. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not leading to death. We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him and the evil one does not touch him."

In other words, as we walk in that obedience there is a keeping that the Lord Jesus gives to us. But what is the responsibility? Look in verse 16: "If anyone sees his brother committing a sin he shall ask and God" will do something. That is really what I wanted to say. I have a responsibility. I am not to go to him first. I am to go to God first.

Matthew 18:15 picks up on that same thought. It tells us to go to him privately if you saw him. Then it tells you to take a brother with you. Then it tells you to make it public in the church so perhaps making it public will somehow send a signal and the person will repent. Then if he won't repent treat him as if he is not even a believer. (Mt 18:16, 17)

You know, one of the things that has really bothered me in studying 1 John is becoming aware of the fact of what I have to deal with. Most of the time when you hear a message on sin you are thinking about somebody else. That is the sad part of it. You think about people you don't like, people who don't conform to the way you are. What about you? This is what John is trying to get across. Sin is something that every believer is responsible to deal with.

I pulled these verses out of a context, but we will look at them as we study through 1 John. It will all fit together. The point is, He doesn't want a sin in my life. The point is for sure He doesn't want habitual sin and practice in my life because that means that I am not even a believer. The point is, if I see my brother, I am responsible. I am responsible.

I have been thankful over the years when people have come to me. Not at first, but after it has dawned on me that they love me and they are there to help me, I can look back and see they are the people who probably helped my growth more than anything else. I remember one year I was visiting on church visitation night. I was in a real financial crisis at that time and I picked a man as my partner who was a millionaire. We went out to visit a few houses. We pulled up in a certain place and I said, "You know, Tom, I just want you to pray for me." Yeah, right! What I want you to do is write a check, but I didn't tell him that. I told him about my situation and I said, "I've got a real problem." After I told him he looked at me and said, "Wayne, you don't have a problem, you have a crisis." Then he said, "Son, I know exactly what you are doing and that is sin." I said, "What?" He said, "You are telling me all this stuff because you want me to answer your problem. You are not willing to go to God and let God deal with it and let God take care of your problem." Boy, that stung me! But you know what? That was one of the best things that ever happened to me because God began to show me, "Hey, big boy, is God your provider or is He not?"

I am a manipulator in my flesh. What are you like? You are exactly the same way. Every one of us are after Adam. If we are after our flesh we will manipulate anything we can manipulate to get our way in the midst of it. You can tell I am not real comfortable. I am not comfortable at all. I don't like dealing with sin. I don't feel like I need to be telling you about sin. We all need to be on our knees

letting God speak to each of us. I am no better than anybody else. I have not arrived! Until we learn to see the seriousness of sin, all we are going to end up with down here is conduct that we call right that falls so short of what God commands. It ought to nauseate everyone of us.

Are we going to deal with our own sin? That is the key. I am responsible to you if I see you sin. You are responsible to me when you see me sin. Let's remember that in the days to come. We are on equal ground with one another. The Gnostic heresy is convenient today. It is being preached with a different cover on it. But if you will come to what God says, we are all responsible for flesh and for sin and we deal with it every day of our life.

1 John 2:1-6

We Can Know That We Are Believers!

Dr. Wayne Barber

Once I led a Bible study in a school setting. We were kicked out of that school by a member of another religious group who said we were teaching a certain kind of doctrine which was strictly from the Word. He said, "Sir, you cannot teach people they can know that they have eternal life if they are Christians. We don't know and we will not know until Jesus comes again." I said, "I beg your pardon. Have you ever read 1 John 5:13?" I read it to him and he said, "Would you read that again? I am not sure I have ever read that before."

We can know that we are believers, and I want us to see that. I want us to see the confidence which we ought to have in confessing our sin. We have seen the consequence, but what is the confidence? What kind of confidence must I have when I confess my sin to a holy God? Look at 1 John 2:1: "My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we [John includes himself] have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

The apostle is very tender in his words, "My little children." It is almost as if he is saying to them, "I have been around a little longer than you have; and if you sin – and you will – I am not going to kick you out of the family. I am still going to love you and I am still going to encourage you. I am still going to be there to put my arms around you." He tells them something very encouraging. He says, "Listen, when you confess your sins you must know you have an Advocate with the Father who is Jesus Christ, the Righteous."

The word **Advocate** is the word *parakletos*. In older Greek it was used in court settings. When someone was accused of something, someone would voluntarily, not by demand, step from the crowd, walk up, take his place beside the accused and speak on his behalf. He would speak in his defense. That is exactly what John is talking about here. You see, in the courtroom of heaven, God the Father is the Judge as he pictures Him here. And every sin is subject to the judgment of God. God the Father is the one who sent His Son into the world to die for sin. Therefore, He is the one who is holding court here. When the devil runs to accuse us before the Father, which is what he does day by day, then Jesus steps alongside of us, takes His place and defends us. He speaks a word on our behalf. He is our Advocate. The idea is of a defense lawyer and He is always speaking on our behalf.

He is certainly qualified to be our **Advocate**. It says that He is Jesus Christ the righteous. Actually, a better translation is "Jesus Christ, the Righteous One." By using the term "Jesus," His earthly name and "Christ," His resurrected name, he depicts the fact that He is the only one who could ever stand in our behalf. He is the only human, being born of a virgin, to live sinless on this earth, fulfilling every requirement of the law. He qualified to be our substitute on the cross. There is a man in heaven who is our representative. Every time we sin and then properly confess that sin, He stands there and speaks on our behalf. Now I don't know about you but that makes me want to confess even that much more, knowing I have someone who is going to speak on my behalf, someone who knows that His blood has covered all my sin, whether it be past, present or future.

This implies something very important. He knows my motive when I confess. We need to understand this. He is the Righteous One. He is the one who stands along beside us. He is the one who speaks on our behalf. But He knows when we half-heartedly confess anything before the Father. So to reap the benefit of confession, we have to make sure we understand who is examining our hearts when we confess that sin before a holy God.

In a trial there is a defense team for the accused. Everything they know is based on what he has told them. He says he is innocent and they come before the public and say on his behalf that he is innocent. They have to go on what he says. For all they know he may be lying to them. They can't really know his whole motivation because no man knows that except the man himself.

That is different with our defense team. It is wrapped up in a Person. He knows our motive. He knows our hearts. You don't get away by running that sin by Him and saying, "Oh, yes, by the way, I did that. You are right. I confess it. I am so sorry." Then you go

right on and do it again. He knows half-hearted people when they bring sin before Him. But He is the righteous one qualified to stand in our behalf.

Verse 2 will light your fire: "and He Himself." I like the way that is translated because that is the way it is in the Greek, "He Himself," not just "He." That emphasizes it even stronger. "He Himself is the [propitiation](#) [or satisfaction] for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world." That means Honduras, America, or wherever you go. It is referring to the sins of the whole world.

What does it mean to have the [propitiation](#) for our sin? That is a big word. Well, the word in the Greek is hilasmos. It is connected with the blood that Jesus shed for us in verse 7. It says in verse 7, "but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin." Let me show you how it is connected. The word hilasmos comes from the word hilasterion, which is the Greek word in the New Testament for what we call "[Mercy Seat](#)."

Remember, the Mercy Seat was that solid gold piece that sat on top of the ark. What was in the ark? In the ark were the tablets of the Law. The Law condemns all men, but on top of that was the Mercy Seat and God could look at man, not because He had fulfilled the Law, but because of the blood that was sprinkled on that Mercy Seat. When the High Priest would come in on the [Day of Atonement](#), he would sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice on that Mercy Seat and immediately God said, "I will meet you right there. I will fellowship with you in the blood at the Mercy Seat."

The Apostle Paul picks up on this in Romans 3:25 (note) and says, "Jesus is our Mercy Seat." It is through Him and His shed blood that we can enter into fellowship with God. His blood is not just a payment for our sin. It is the bridge that establishes a brand new relationship with God. This, once again, nails the false doctrine of [Cerenthus](#). Cerenthus said He was not a man. He couldn't have been a man. Well, how did He bleed? He had to have had a body. He had to have been a man. It was His shed blood that became the basis upon which we now can fellowship with God. This is the good news that we need to have, the confidence when we got before Him. His blood has covered all sins. There is no sin you can commit or that I can commit that His blood cannot cleanse.

That is the good news of what it means to have Jesus as an Advocate. He is an Advocate who loves us. He has proven that. He came and died for us. He is a man, the God-man. He is at the throne. He represents all of us. When we confess our sins properly, He is the one who steps in and makes a word for us with the Father to let Him know that what He did on the cross has already covered that sin and will cover every sin that we commit while we are here on this earth. The consequence of confession of sin is the cleansing, but oh, the confidence of confession is that we have someone there who loves us and who has paid the ultimate price for us. He is the righteous one and when the devil comes to accuse us, He steps alongside and speaks a word on our behalf in our defense. He intercedes for us day-by-day. He died for us and He is our Advocate before the Father.

When you find a Christian who won't confess sin, it becomes a little bit suspect as to whether or not he is a Christian. Maybe he doesn't seem to understand what he was saved from and what he was saved to. Perhaps he doesn't understand. 1 John would be a great book for that person to read. 1 John 5:13 says, "These things are written that you might know that you have eternal life." If you find somebody who is trying to live in sin and not confessing that sin, it is pretty obvious something is amiss, either in their understanding or in what they profess. Maybe they don't really have what they profess.

We are really ending up in verse 2 what we have been talking about in the believer in sin. I am trying to accomplish two things. He moves out of that. In verse 3 he says, "And by this we know that we have come to know Him." How do we know that we have come to know Him? How do we know that? Can you know it? Certainly you can know it. But how can we know that we have come to know Him?

Well, first of all, one of the best ways that I can know that I have come to know Christ, that I have experienced Him intimately, that I have had the experience of salvation in my life is by the fact that I am willing to obey His commandments. I am not only willing, but I feel the responsibility in my heart of obedience towards Him. There is something that happens to a believer. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." What is different about him? If you will study the New Covenant in the Old Testament (see New Covenant in the Old Testament), we have a brand new heart. God's Spirit now lives in my spirit and God's Spirit in me motivates me with a will to obey the Lord Jesus Christ. I have to work at not wanting to obey the Lord Jesus Christ. I have been changed because of the process of salvation.

So one of the ways you know that you are believer is by the fact that not only do you obey, but you have that something inside of you that compels you to obey. It is the Spirit of God. It is the brand new heart that God has given to us.

John says in verse 3, "And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments." The first verb is in the present tense. By this we can know and always know... constantly, you never doubt it. "That we have come to know Him" is perfect tense. That means there has been a time back in my life when I experienced Him as my own and came into intimacy with the Father through His Son Jesus Christ.

The word for "know" there caught my attention. It is the word *ginosko*. That is a knowledge that you can have but something else has got to happen first. It is not a given. It is something that I can know every day of my life if something else is there. That is what he says. We have to keep His commandments. Now let me share this with you real quickly. Maybe you are doubting your salvation. I can say without question there is an area of your life that you are disobedient in. There is something that you have not taken before the Lord. There is something that you are harboring in your life. Because when you are keeping His commandments, present tense, if you are living that way, you are not going to have any doubt. You are knowing and you are knowing and you are knowing. It is a day-by-day experience. But the moment I choose not to do that, and I choose to let sin stay in my life of any degree, immediately the doubts begin to come in my life.

"If we keep His commandments" is in the present subjunctive. Subjunctive means it is conditional. Not every believer is going to be keeping it all the time. When you are not keeping His commandments that opens up the windows and the doors of doubt to get into your life. Most of the people who are doubting their salvation, if they are truly believers, are people who are not willing to obey Christ in some area of their life.

I remember one night my daughter called me from college. She said, "Daddy, I need to talk to you." I said, "What, Stephanie?" She said, "Daddy, I don't think I am saved." Now I am her father and I know Stephanie. If Stephanie is not saved I am the Pope of Rome. I said, "Stephanie, what do you mean you don't think you are saved?" "Dad, I confessed a sin in my life yesterday and I want to do that same sin today. I must not be saved." I said, "Stephanie, I don't think you quite understood this thing about confession yet. Tell me some other things that are going on in your life." She said, "Oh, Dad," and she began to give me about a three week long history of some things that were happening. One of her friends said something about her, something happened in a classroom one day, she didn't make the grade she thought she was going to make. I think at that time she was dating, and her boyfriend hadn't called her at a certain time, or whatever. But when I added up everything that was going on in her life, it became obvious why she was doubting.

Sometimes we get overwhelmed by circumstances in our life. Sometimes we get our focus off of Jesus. We get our focus out of His Word. Why is it we are not consistently, constantly, knowing that we have come to know Him? It is because we are not consistently, moment-by-moment living and walking in His Word. The very moment we stop looking at the Lord and start looking at the lions, we are overwhelmed. Some of the "being overwhelmed" is the doubts that come according to our salvation. If you are doubting something about your salvation, ask yourself the question, "Where is it in your life that you have not yet learned to surrender to God and learned to choose to obey Him in a consistent manner?"

John says, "We know that we have come to know Him, present tense." We are knowing all the time. We are learning. We understand. There is no doubting coming in.

The word "keep" is the word *tereo* (word study). It comes from the word that means a warden, one who guards, one who keeps an eye on, one who therefore obeys. So it is not just a mere mechanical obedience that he is talking about here. The Pharisees did that. He is talking about a person who senses the responsibility. There is a compulsion within him to obey the Lord Jesus Christ. If he is not doing that, he understands that something is amiss because there is something new about him. The moment you get saved, God's Spirit enters into your spirit and He begins to will and to work in your life as a believer. Obeying Christ with a sense of responsibility, awe and respect is the first identifying mark that John gives of a true believer.

The word "know" is to know experientially. There is another truth involved in this. When we received Christ into our hearts through repentance and faith, we know Him experientially. You just don't know about Him, you know Him. You are intimately acquainted with Him. His Spirit and your spirit have meshed together. You know Him. You have been birthed again into the kingdom of God. A person who is birthed into His Kingdom as we said, senses a responsibility, senses a need to obey Him because it is God's Spirit within him, leading him to think that way. Those who are habitually unrighteous can never say they have known Him. They cannot do that. You cannot live habitually in sin and never sense the obligation and responsibility to obey Christ and claim to be a Christian.

But here is the double truth. Those of us who have known Him, who know Him, and are walking in obedience to Him, not only do we know Him experientially, but we are knowing Him day-by-day, more and more, deeper and deeper than ever before. There is a beautiful truth here. Paul says in Philippians 3:10 (note), "I want to know Him." Now, wait a minute Paul, you are the greatest preacher in the New Testament. You want to know Him? He said, "I want to know Him. I want to experience Him. I want to know the power of His resurrection, the fellowship of His suffering." You see, there is more and more and more of experiencing Him and it is to always to the degree and to the measure that we are willing to obey. Consistent obedience is the mark of those who have known Him and are knowing Him daily through that obedience.

How do you know if you are a Christian? Look at your life. Do you ever feel like you need to obey God? Do you feel He has a hammer over your head ready to wipe you out if you don't, or is there something inside that says, "Hey, I owe this. It is an obligation. I have a sense of awe as to who He is. There is something in me that pulls me and compels me to obey what His Word says"? Well, you didn't put that there. God put that there. That is the beautiful nature of God that is now within us that motivates us and compels

us. That is the heart of God beating inside of a believer.

Verses 4-6 show us that it is our walk that determines our talk. A lot of people say a lot of things. It is not how loud you shout. It is not how high you jump; it is how straight you walk when you come down.

The Apostle John wants you to know something if you think it is just all the external things that are going on in your life. He says it is your walk that determines your talk. Well, in verse 4 he says, "The one who says, 'I have come to know Him' [I have come to experientially know Christ Jesus. They probably said it very devotionally, just moved to tears] and does not keep His commandments," does not love His Word. That is part of keeping His commandments, loving His Word. If you are a guard, if you are a warden, you want to make sure you are guarding what God says. If you don't have time for the Word of God in your life, there is something amiss. "The one who says, 'I have come to know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar."

Excuse me, John, you are a little tough. Can't you say that a little bit nicer? Okay – "and the truth is not in him." The word "not" there means not in any way, shape or form is any truth in that man at all. "Good night, do you mean to tell me that there are people who have been members of the church for years, but they have never been born again?" Absolutely. Absolutely. Joining a church won't do a thing for you in heaven. As a matter of fact, we look at church membership as accountability. I had better not speak for everybody else. But I look at it as accountability. I am already in the body of Christ, but I need to be accountable, and accountability is membership. I can't find membership anywhere in the New Testament, but I think it is important in our culture. Somebody needs to be accountable to something and it is the Word of God. It is not the elders who hold us accountable. The elders are held accountable by that same Word.

There are a lot of people who just go around and say, "Oh, I am saved. I am a Christian." When did you get saved? "Thirty years ago." You did? What is God doing in your life today? "I got saved thirty years ago." Well, what is He doing in your life today? "I got saved thirty years ago. Don't you know I am saved?" Well, not really, let me go home and watch how you live to find out whether you are saved or not.

That is exactly what John says. You have to remember what John is doing here. The whole system of [Gnosticism](#) made people not responsible for the way they lived because they were spirits living inside of a carton that was evil. You have heard that preached even today. It is just Gnosticism with a different shade on it. Watch how a person walks. Don't listen to what he says. Watch how he walks. He will tell you whether or not he truly is a believer. Our walk speaks a whole lot louder than our talk (See notes on James 2:14-23 - faith and works).

John shows those who talk the talk, but then, secondly, those who walk the walk. He says in 1Jn 2:5,

but whoever keeps His word [on a continual basis], in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him.

What does it mean for the love of God to be perfected? The word "perfected" has the idea of fulfilled. It is God accomplishing what he wants to do with His love. There are two things Jesus came to do, one was to die for our sins, the other was to now indwell believers. His love is not fulfilled until that can take place. If a man rejects His love and rejects His Word, then His love is unfulfilled. God's love in us is what changes us day by day. For it to be fulfilled a person has to respond to the gospel. Then a person walks in light of that in obedience in the power of the Holy Spirit (see Obedience of faith). That is when His love is fulfilled in you and me.

1Jn 2:6 continues,

"the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked."

That little word "ought," *opheilo* (study on related word *opheiletēs*), is in the present tense and it refers to an obligation. There is never a place and there is never a time when I don't sense the duty and obligation and responsibility to walk according to what God's Word has to say. When that has disappeared in your life you had better check it out to see if you know Christ or not. We are not talking about a system of religion where you pump yourself up in your own self-determination to do something. We are talking about a total change, a birth, where the Holy Spirit of God has given you a brand new heart. He lives in you now and He is there to will and to work. He is the one causing us to want to obey, causing us to sense the responsibility of obedience.

"To walk as He walked." That is a powerful phrase. There are two words for "walked" here. The first word for "walk" is the word **peripateo** (word study), which means to walk about, wherever you go, whatever you do. The second word is a different word. It is the word that means to walk according to a pattern. What John is saying here is on a daily basis, on a consistent basis, there is something in me as a believer that makes me sense the duty of walking as He wants me to walk as He walked.

Now how did Christ walk? Look in John 5 and he shows us how He walked: as the God-man. He speaks here as the Man. Paul says in Philippians 2:5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 (see notes) that He submitted Himself and became in the form of a bond-servant (word study) and was obedient unto death. That is how Jesus walked. John 5:19 says,

Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

In other words, He submitted Himself absolutely in obedience to His Father. Even though He was equal to Him, as the Man He submitted Himself in obedience. We are to walk as He walked. How did He walk? He walked in full submission to His Father. As Jesus was to His Father, we are to be to Jesus.

How do you know when a person is saved? I watched for something in my children when they said, "Daddy, I received Jesus in my heart." You know, I watched them. It's like the old pastor who was preaching one day. He gave a beautiful message and his daughter walked down weeping and gave herself to Christ and asked Jesus to come into her heart. He didn't get excited at all. One of the old deacons walked up to him and said, "Man, I can't understand it. Your daughter comes to receive Christ and you don't even get excited." He said, "Listen, I have been around for a while. When I start seeing the Father treat her as His child, then I will get excited."

You see, there is something that happens when you get saved. There is something that happens within. Obedience is not some mechanical thing that you do just so you can get the privileges and the perks. Obedience is something that you are divinely motivated to do from within. It is His Spirit in you. His Spirit in you will always let you know, "This is what God wants and this is not what God wants." You still have a will to choose against that, but the way that you know that you are a believer is that you sense the responsibility, you sense the calling, you sense the awesomeness of God, you sense the fact that you must obey Him. If that is not there, there is something missing somewhere in your life.

Can we know that we are believers? Yes, we can. You can know it every day and never doubt it if you are walking in submission and obedience to what God's Word and God's will is in your life. When we live in it, that shows us without any question in our minds that we are His.

Confession of sin is an act of obedience. It doesn't mean you are always going to do it right. But the moment you do it wrong, you know what you need to do. You need to get to Him. You have an Advocate with the Father. Get to Him and make sure your confession is with repentance. When you do that the Lord in you will stand up for you and you can continue to know that you are in the faith.

Do you know anybody right now who is living as if they don't even know God and yet they profess to know Christ? Do you have anybody in your family or in your neighborhood? Do you know anybody who says they are a Christian but aren't living that way? Doesn't it put a dark cloud in your mind? I tell you what it does for me. Rather than assume they might be a Christian and just not know, I go ahead and assume they are not a Christian and begin to pray for them that God would begin to do a super work of salvation in their heart.

How can I know that I am a believer? Something in me compels me to obey the Lord Jesus Christ. I may not always do it, but I am miserable when I don't. And I don't doubt my salvation when that is operating in my life on a consistent basis. I don't doubt it. Because that conviction of sin and the compulsion to obey Him keeps me understanding that I am obviously His.

I have told my kids one of the things that helps me the most is that when I sin, the conviction I sense is one of the best ways I know that I am one of His. I was in another city not long ago in a meeting and I had an afternoon free so I decided I was going to go see a movie. Well, I don't know enough about movies anymore to know what is good and what is not good. I picked one that I thought would be okay. I picked out some of the actors in it and I thought it would be alright. I haven't walked out of a movie in a long time, but when I went in, sat down and that thing started I saw the twist that thing was going to take and something inside of me said, "Get up and get out of here. You are not a part of this. This is not in your life. Move and move now!" Where did that come from? You think you don't program yourself to be that. That is the Holy Spirit living in your life and He will let you know to obey.

Now, you may not do it. I did. I got up and left. It cost me! I hate that part of it. You may not do it, but if you don't do it you will sit there and you will sense the conviction of almighty God on your life saying, "This is not what you are. And you don't need to be here." If that is not in your life, I would check it out. Do you even know Jesus Christ at all? It is not some religion you give your allegiance to. You are birthed into a body and the Holy Spirit of God lives in you. If you try to fake it, your talk and your walk will not match and everybody else will know. Hopefully we will all know whether or not we are in the kingdom of God.

1 John 2:7-11

The Believer and Relationships

Dr. Wayne Barber

Have you ever noticed that one of the most identifying marks of a believer is not how loud he can shout or how high he can jump, but it is evidenced by the way he lives? It is evidenced by his relationships. That is a principle that follows throughout the New Testament. Galatians says the fruit of the Spirit working in a person's life is love. Immediately you find when you are walking rightly with God your relationships become what God orders. We are going to see that loving our brother is evidence that we know the Lord Jesus Christ, that we are walking in the light in which He is.

Now remember this, 1 John is a book of contrasts to show the people who are of the faith and to show the people who are not of the faith. There is one thing to remember as you study 1 John. We must remember as he draws these distinctions, a believer by his own choice can choose to walk in the darkness; a believer by his own choice can choose not to love his brother. But if we choose to sin, if we choose to walk in the darkness, if we choose not to love our brother, then our testimony to the world that we know Jesus Christ becomes bogus at that point. The world looks at us and says, "Wait a minute. This is the way we live. You couldn't know Christ. You are in the darkness. You are not supposed to be in the darkness." There is a fine line that you have to draw. Is a person saved or is he not saved? If he is walking in the darkness, does that mean he is not saved or does that mean he is a Christian who has just chosen to walk over in the darkness? Remember, a Christian can sin. He can step over into the darkness, but he cannot live habitually in the darkness and claim to know Christ. We have already established that in 1 John. It will come up again in chapter 3.

So there is a fine line as you go through 1 John. He draws the contrast. Yes, a believer can sin. We know that. But he cannot live that way habitually. That is what John, I believe, is trying to draw out. The Gnostics said they were the enlightened ones. John says, "Do you want to know who the enlightened ones are? Look at their obedience to God. Look at them and how they deal with sin. Look at them in their relationships and you are going to see who the true enlightened ones are. You will see who the True Light is. It is not some mystical knowledge. It is Jesus who is the Life and the Light of the world."

We must test the confessions of those who say, ourselves included, who say they know Christ. In 1 John 2:7 notice what he says:

Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you have heard.

John wants them to know that what he is about to write is not something new to them. He uses the word **kainos** (word study), which is qualitatively new. In other words, I am not writing something to you that is qualitatively brand new. It doesn't come to you as a surprise. It is not something you have never heard of before. As a matter of fact, what he is saying is, "The commandment that I am writing to you comes out of the Old Testament. It shouldn't be a surprise to you. The command to love your brother, which we are about to get into, is not something new. Why, it is an old commandment. Not only did I write to you in my gospel, but it is all the way back in the Old Testament." In its simplest form, the command to love one another is found in Leviticus 19:18 where it says,

Love your neighbor as yourself, I am the Lord.

One day Jesus was asked, "What is the greatest commandment?" He quoted that verse as the second greatest. He said the first greatest commandment is in Deuteronomy 6:5,

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength.

But the second greatest commandment, He said, was the one found in Leviticus 19:18,

Love your neighbor as you love yourself.

So this is not something new, loving our brother, loving our neighbor. It is not something new. It is in the Old Testament.

In John 13:25 Jesus spoke of believers when he said,

"By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, that you love one another."

So John says, "This is nothing new that I am writing to you. As I am contrasting those who are truly of the light and those who are of the darkness, what I am saying to you is nothing new."

But look at what he says in verse 8:

"On the other hand [or again], I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining."

Now wait a minute. He uses the word **kainos** (word study) again, which means qualitatively new. He just said he wasn't writing something qualitatively new. Then he says in verse 8 that I am writing something qualitatively new. Come on, John, make up your mind. Is it new or is it not new? What is he trying to say?

Well, he says, "which is true in Him and also in you." You see, there is something qualitatively new about this commandment. Even

though they were told to love one another in the Old Testament and this is not something new, this is not something foreign to them, they have already been told that, it has taken a different dimension in Him. In other words, Jesus came and through His teaching and by His example He raised that commandment, the standard of that commandment of love one another, to a standard no man had ever heard before. It was qualitatively new in its emphasis. It wasn't a new commandment in the sense of loving one another, but in the way they were to love one another, to love "as I have loved you".

What is happening here? If I am of the light, if I am enlightened, if Jesus is in my life, who is the Light and Life of the world, and if I am daily walking in His light, then something is happening to prove the fact that He lives in me. It is putting out darkness that is around me. Look in verse 8 again: "because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining." Who is the true Light? John tells us in chapter 9; Jesus is the Light of the world. Now where is He shining? He is shining in people who are His own, people who are saved. When I choose to walk obediently and deal with sin, which we have already seen in 1 John, then something happens to me. It is like He turns on His light in me and the evidence of that light being in me is not some glow that I have. It is the love for people that flows out of me. That is His light shining in this world through people who are believers. To me the context is a beautiful picture of what he is saying. The light of God's love in you and in me is putting out the darkness of hate that is all around us. The darkness is passing away.

Now you can look at that in many ways. We know that the world, because of sin, plunged us into the fact that we have a corruptible body. I know that every day I live, every breath I take, I am getting closer and closer and closer to an incorruptible body. Are you excited about that? I mean, one day we are going to die and one day we are going to have a new body. Jesus is coming for the church. He is going to glorify us. The darkness is passing away. There is going to come a day when the world is going to be absolutely perpetrated by light. Not only that, because of Adam's sin, the world was plunged into corruption and it is getting more and more corrupt. But there is coming a day when that will pass away. There is a day that is coming when God is going to put out all that corruption and God is going to bring His Kingdom to this earth.

But also one of the other consequences of man's sin was the immoral way man treats other men. If you are believer you can't habitually live like the world lives treating one another. You can't do it. He says, "It is My life in you. You can't do it. It is My Light in you shining in this world, and that light shining in you will put out the darkness of the hate that is all around us." You know, it is incredible to me how you can't get lost people to understand this, and yet at the same time it is understandable why you can't. They don't have minds that can think clearly. The leaders of our country need to just sit down and understand the need for all mankind is Jesus Christ. When you get a man saved, he is delivered from the darkness. Now the Light is in him. He is in the Light. He has been made light, Ephesians says. Now as he walks in that Light, the love that God is loving him with and has loved him with begins to flow out of him and around him. The hate is being put down. The darkness of hate is being put down. If you will just follow the context, that is what John seems to be saying, that even though we are in the world of darkness, the Light that is in us is putting down the darkness of hate that is around us.

There is a contrast here. Who is of the Light and who is of the darkness? Many people say, "I am walking in the light." Look at their lifestyle. Look at their relationships. It will speak loudly as to whether or not they are truly of the light or they are of the darkness.

There are three things I want you to see in 1Jn 2:9, 10, 11. I want us to kind of look and see what John is trying to bring to the surface. You know, we have to test the confessions of people. Remember, it is not how high you jump and how loud you shout, it is in your relationships. It is in your relationships.

First of all I want us to look at a description of hate in 1Jn 2:9: "The one who says he is in the light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now." John uses the present tense here, "the one who keeps on saying." There are three times that is used in chapter 2. Go back to 1Jn 2:4: "The one who keeps on saying, 'I have come to know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth in no way is in him." Look down at verse 6: "the one who keeps on saying he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked." If you are going to say that, let your walk match your talk. Then again in verse 9, "The one who keeps on saying he is in the light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now."

The Greek word for hate is *miseo*. I want to show you a description of what this hate is. Can a believer hate someone? Certainly they can. If they choose to walk in the darkness, this is the consequence of darkness. If you walk in light you don't have to worry about the consequence of darkness. However, if they live habitually that way, it makes their confession that they know Christ bogus and it may be that they don't know Him. Continue to remember, there is a fine line that we are walking as we are talking about these truths. Luke 6:22 reads, "Blessed are you when men hate you." What are they going to do when they hate you? There are three things that Jesus brings out here: "and ostracize you, and cast insults at you, and spurn your name as evil for the sake of the Son of Man."

"I am worried. Do I hate my brother? Do I really have hate within me?" Well, I don't know. Let's examine it. What does the word "ostracize" mean? It is the word *aphorizo*, which comes from *apo*, away from, and *horizo*, to define something, to draw a line. When I hate somebody, when I am walking in darkness, I draw a line and simply say, "I am never crossing that line to associate with you. I

hate you. I will not associate with you." That is what hate is. Hate always ostracizes people whereas love pulls them in. It is the exact opposite. So hate ostracizes someone. That is when we draw a line and refuse to associate with them.

When I was in youth work we had a basketball tournament in Memphis. I remember, we had a great time. They asked me to come back and do a camp for them and I did. The first night I gave an invitation. I opened it up to anyone who wanted to respond and a precious, black boy came walking down the aisle with tears just streaming down his face. He said, "Brother Wayne, I have never in my life given my heart to Jesus Christ. I want to receive Jesus in my life to be my Lord and my Savior." He got saved at that camp. I want to tell you, that one boy getting saved to me was worth the whole trip and everything else that happened all week long. It seemed to set a climate for the whole week.

Well, a few months later, the fellow who was the youth man at that particular church called me. He said, "Wayne, let's have a Christmas tournament. Let's bring my team down and get your team together and get two other churches over there. We will have a ball. We will sleep in the gym. We will have cookouts. We will just have a great time and play basketball over the weekend." I said, "Sure." He said, "Wayne, do you remember the guy you led to Christ at the youth camp?" I said, "Yeah, how is he doing?" He said, "Super. He is on our basketball team." I said, "Great." He said, "Wayne, I know how you feel, but how does your church feel about having a black man in your church?" I said, "Certainly, man, if they love God they don't see color." He said, "Well, Wayne, will you do me a favor? Will you talk to your committee before we go ahead and plan this?" I called my committee together the next night and said, "Guys, we are going to have a tournament." They said, "Wonderful. Super. What are we going to do?" I told them all the things and began to share with them. They thought it was the greatest idea. I said, "There is one more thing that I need to let you know but I am sure it is not going to be a problem to you, but they asked me to ask you. There is a precious black boy I led to the Lord when I was down there and he is on their team. Certainly it is alright for him to come on in and be in the tournament, isn't it?" You know the rest of the story. The chairman of that committee said, "What! We will never let a black man walk in this church!" They made me cancel the tournament.

That stuck in me for a long time. I could tell you other stories about people who sit in churches like ours, people who sit on committees and make decisions, people who say they are missionaries, people who say they are believers but won't allow a black person to get in their eyesight. You had better check out to see if you are saved if that attitude is in your heart. I mean it! God does not look at color. God sees people. People who draw those little lines, who step back and say, "I am not going to associate with you," have nothing more than pure hatred in their heart. If they are a believer, they are walking a fine line from God taking them out of here to keep them from making a mockery out of Him. I would be venturing to say they are probably not even a believer.

That is hate. That is racial hate. There are other kinds of hate. There is hate when you have bitterness between somebody who has wronged you and you won't associate with them. You won't talk to them. You won't even sit on the same side of the church they are on. You draw a line and say, "I refuse to associate with you." Is there anybody like that in your family? There is family hate. There are families that won't even talk to each other, relatives that won't even call one another. They have drawn a line. What does that say? John says, "We are making a contrast here. These people have come in here and said they are enlightened. Who are they? Here is what it means to be enlightened. A believer deals with sin. A believer is obedient. But a believer has relationships that turn nobody away. He accepts; he doesn't repulse. That is hate."

The second thing in Luke 6:22 that Jesus uses for hate is that they will cast insults at you. This is to your face. To reproach, to defame, to assail with abusive words. You see, hatred at some point, shows itself with words meant to insult and to inflict pain, to verbally treat someone without any respect for them whatsoever. Have you ever been in a church business meeting filled with tension? Somebody gets up and begins to disparage somebody and points a finger at them and begins to cast insults at them without any respect for them as a human being? Have you ever witnessed that? That is hate. That made their testimony that they are a Christian bogus to this whole world. This whole world laughs at that kind of thing because that is the way they live. They may have been Christians, but I wouldn't give you a whole lot of credibility for it. They could be. That is what I said. It is a fine line we are walking here, but if they are living habitually that way, John says no way.

Thirdly, they spurn your name as evil. Ekballo, means to cast out. Ek, means out of, and ballo, means to cast. The idea is to reject something. It's like you had something in your body and your body rejected it and cast it out. That is the idea. It is the same as to slander someone, to speak against you falsely and spurn your name. Hate will cause you to tear somebody else down to make yourself built up. You see, one of them is to cast it in your face. The other one is to say it behind your back.

You say, "You mean to tell me that when I sit in the privacy of my home and I want to tear somebody down, that means that I hate them?" Yes. That's hate. There is no in between ground here. You are either loving them or hating them. We don't seem to understand that. If we are not committed for their best, if we are not committed to pay whatever price is necessary for their spiritual benefit, then that is hate. And hate is a signal that you are walking in darkness. You may be a Christian. I am not going to cross that line. But John says that is the picture of those who are not. They don't have any light in them at all. They are walking continuously in darkness. That is a definition of hate. John shows that as the first identifying mark of a believer, as we see a believer and his

relationships.

Secondly, let's look at the danger of not loving your brother. This is in 2:10. You don't see it right off, but I am going to sort of sneak in the back door on this one. "The one who loves his brother abides in the light and there is no cause for stumbling in him." The present tense again is used. It is talking about somebody who loves and continues to love his brother. It is not a one time "I love you." It is a "loving" of his brother. It is a lifestyle. He is the one in which there is no cause for stumbling.

There is safety in constantly loving our brother. What is the safety? There is no cause for stumbling. The word for "stumbling" there is the word skandalon. Scandal comes from that. It is the word that refers not to a trap that captures you, but it refers to the trigger that snaps the trap. There is a certain trigger which causes the trap to shut. It is not talking about the trap itself as much as it is talking about the trigger. In other words, you are going to pull the trigger on a trap that is already set if you choose not to love your brother. There is a trap there, and that trap will imprison you and that trap will injure you and may wreck your life like you have never known before when a believer chooses not to be consistent in loving his brother.

Let me show you how that happens. There is a trap set for us all the time. One of the things that I love about the book of James is it says to count it all joy, brethren, when God chooses to test you. Everything in life, to me, is a test. The key to it is relationships. That is the bottom line.

I remember when we were building our new Worship Center. We were sitting in a room one day, and somebody said, "You know what? I just found out that this church is not going to have windows!" Somebody said, "What? A church with no windows!" Now listen, when we walked in the trap was already set. It was waiting to be triggered and the only way it was going to be triggered was if somebody in there was unwilling to die to self at the expense of loving his brother. That is the only way that trap was not going to go off. It was already set. Well, somebody got upset and said, "I have never seen a church in my life without windows." Before you knew it we had some of the best men in the church sitting in a room fussing over the fact that we didn't have windows in the church. Some of us didn't want them and some of us did want them.

We left that meeting and I was thinking, "What in the world have we been through today?" I got home and started praying about that thing. I was praying, "God, just shut their minds down and give us no windows." That is not the way to do it. As I was praying it was like God was saying, "Son, son, son. It is just a test. It is just a test. Take all the books off the table and bring out a clean sheet of paper. Let's just see if you are walking in the light. Let's have a little irritation here. Let's see who is going to pull the trigger. Die to it." I remember praying. I said, "God, if you want to make it a glass house, help yourself. Just so our relationships can be back like they ought to be."

The next day different ones called me and I called them and somebody stopped me in the parking lot and said, "Man, what are we doing?" It is just a test.

Let me ask you a question. What are you going through right now that is irritating you to the point that if you haven't done it already, you are about ready to pull the trigger on a trap already set and it is going to imprison you and it is going to injure you and it is going to wreck a relationship that otherwise could be salvaged if you will just choose to love your brother. Boy, I tell you what, if we could just learn to live that way, we could rejoice and hold hands and go right on into heaven. But as it is, we fight each other. That is the way it is. Churches split all over the place and families are devastated. What happened? Somebody pulled the trigger and the trap snapped. Now you have an imprisoned individual.

I want to tell you something, in a church you can get upset with somebody and not only imprison that other person, you can imprison the whole body of believers just because somebody was careless and pulled the trigger. It holds the whole church hostage.

Back in Numbers 11, Miriam really didn't like the wife Moses chose. She had dark skin. They had problems back then, too, didn't they? God called them out and said, "Hey, Miriam, you. Come here. Aaron, you, come on, buddy, get out here. And Moses." God struck her with leprosy. Moses began to pray for her and said, "Oh, God, don't do that to her." God said, "Alright, but she will be out of the camp for seven days." The scripture records that over a million and a half people were held hostage for seven days because one individual pulled the trigger and chose not to love her own brother.

That is the way it works. It is just a test to see who is going to pull the trigger. Don't pull the trigger. Walk in the light. Choose to die to your own rights. Choose to die to your own privileges. Choose to die and say, "God, you are the one who loves me and I will love this person regardless, whatever it costs me."

Well, what is the safety in it? The safety is there is no stumbling in it. But he goes on in verse 10: "The one who loves his brother abides in the light and there is no cause for stumbling in him." Let's take issue with that. That little word "him," auto, can be "him" or "it." I think "it" is a better translation. There is no cause of stumbling in the light. We have already seen that principle back in chapter 1. In Him there is no consequence of darkness. There is no stumbling. There is no cause for stumbling in the light. None of us have arrived to the point that there is no cause of stumbling in us. But the light, if we will choose to walk in it, there is no trap that is going

to be triggered. Although the trap is always there, it is not going to be triggered. We can walk in the safety of the light that He is. The danger of not loving my brother is the danger of triggering a trap and imprisoning me and him and whoever else that might be involved in the situation.

You say, "What is this love anyway?" Well, it is a love conditioned by how Jesus loved us. It has a measure to that. How did Jesus love us? Greater love hath no man but that he lay down his life for his brother. Let me tell you something about this love that is on my heart. I looked up all the verses and decided to do it like this instead of looking them all up. To boil it all down, do you know what it means to me to love somebody as Jesus loved us? It is not this mushy stuff that goes around making everybody feel better. I thought it was for years.

This lady in our church came to me and said, "Would you quit counseling my husband?" I said, "Well, okay, why?" She said, "You are ruining him. Every time he comes in you try to make him feel better. That is not what he needs. Back off." The more I began to study what God's love is like, the more I realized she was right. God loves me today. When I sin do you think He is nice to me and walks up and just pats me on the shoulder? Are you kidding me? Man, it is tough and it is difficult and it is raw sometimes. But see, His kind of love does what is best for the spiritual benefit of whoever the recipient is, no matter what it costs, no matter what He gets back. He does what He believes to be best for that individual. That is what real love is all about.

We have this idea that if you don't make somebody feel better you haven't loved them. But you see, there is safety in choosing to walk in the light because you are going to be loving your brother. The trigger is not going to be pulled. Nobody is going to be entrapped. Nobody is going to be imprisoned with that. The moment I choose to walk in darkness is the moment the trap closes. The harm, the hurt, oh man. You know the rest of the story because we are all human and we have all walked in that darkness.

There is the description of hate. It will ostracize you, yell at your face, insult you to your face and then talk about you behind your back and make you look little in the eyes of others so it can look bigger. The danger of not loving my brother is that there is a trap ready to be pulled. When I choose to walk in darkness that trap is going to be triggered and somebody is going to be injured as a result of it.

Finally, there is the disorientation of walking in darkness. People who choose to walk in the darkness think they know where they are going. But I want to show you something in verse 11: "But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness [notice how John equates the two all the way through here], and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes." The picture here is of a person who hasn't got a clue where he is walking. He has no clear goal. He doesn't know where he is going. Why? Because he has chosen to walk in darkness. In the light you can see where you are going. In the darkness, you can't.

Jesus said the very same thing in John 12:35, 36. He says those who walk in the darkness don't know where they are going. They are aimless. They have no clear direction in their life. That is another disorientation that comes as a result of people who walk in darkness. Now remember what John is doing. He is contrasting light and dark. He is saying, "Hey, these Gnostic people who say they are enlightened don't have a clue where they are going. They are walking around in circles. They don't have the light. You have the light. Walk in the light. The proof of that is the love you have for your brother." But remember, a believer can choose to walk in the darkness and become disoriented and doesn't have a clue where in the world he is going.

Is there anybody that you are not loving? That is a hard question, isn't it? Is there anybody who somehow has harmed you or hurt you or inflicted wounds on you? That is usually where it starts. You pulled the trigger and now you are in prison and they are in prison and everybody is held hostage because you have chosen not to walk in the light. That is always the truth. It is not how loud you can yell or how high you can jump or what language you say you have in your prayer time. It is your relationships, bottom line.

When Hank Hanegraaff wrote the book, "Christianity in Crisis", it exposed a lot of people and their false doctrine. One man was standing up in front of a whole congregation having them say, "I am God. I am God." Another man got up and said, "Jesus spoke to me this morning and told me I could have been the Redeemer of the world." He wrote the book to expose the error that is in this country today. Paul said, "Mark those who cause division." That is exactly what he said to do. Some of these people he exposed got on television. One of them made the statement, "Hank Hanegraaff should go to hell for writing that book." Let me ask you a question. Do you hear any love here anywhere? We want everything just to be so nice and nobody ever hurts our feelings. We just love to be around these people. They are so nice to us. That is a loving church. Right! A loving church is a church that takes your situation with great integrity and treats you and does to you what they believe to be spiritually beneficial to your life even though it may hurt you. It is meant to heal in your life. That is what love is. Love hurts in order sometimes to heal.

1 John 2:12-17

The Believer and the World

Turn to 1 John 2:12-17. We have already looked at "The Believer and Sin," "The Believer and Obedience" and "The Believer and His Relationships." Now we are going to look at "The Believer and the World." Remember, 1 John is written as a contrast of what believers are and what believers are not.

John is combating the Gnostic heresy of that day. 1 John 2:26 says, "These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you." We know the Gnostic heresy was having an effect on that church. In 1 John 1:4, he says, "And these things we write, so that our [but really your] joy may be made complete." Something had robbed them of their joy. Any time your focus gets off of Jesus on anything but Him, your joy goes with it. John is trying to share with them, "Hey, something is going on and I am writing these things because there are those people who are trying to deceive you and lead your eyes off of your sufficiency in Christ."

Look in 5:13. He says again, "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God in order that you may know that you have eternal life." One person said there are about eleven different signs of whether or not you are a Christian in 1 John. I am not teaching it quite that way, but I think it would be helpful to read it and find out what they are. It is a contrast: this is a Christian, this is not a Christian. As we work our way through it we have to remember that. So when it comes to the believer and the world, we have to understand what our relationship to it is. How are we to be in it but not of it? What does God have to say to us? What are the marks of a person who knows Christ? How does he live in this world but not be of it?

Well, in 2:12-14 we find the audience to whom John is writing. This is sort of comforting to me because in every church you have different levels of maturity. You can't force a level on people. People are where they choose to be in their personal walk. I can't put your level any higher or any lower. You can't make my level any higher or any lower. It is by my choice. It is by the measure of my willingness to surrender to Christ that gives me the level of maturity that I am on. In verse 12 he says, "I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake."

"Little children" there is the word *teknon*. This refers to newly born children. They have the potential of growth. Everything is there. They are fully equipped. Don't you wish sometimes you could give a child his legs when he is ten and hand him his arms when he is fourteen? Some of the things they do just drive you nuts around the house. You see, they come fully equipped. This is what John is talking about, a newborn baby, fully equipped, has all the potential to grow but has not yet had the opportunity. He has just been birthed. He is a brand new Christian.

Their new birth was due to the fact that their sins had been forgiven them. The word "forgive" is in the perfect tense. This is a beautiful picture here. Perfect tense means that something happened back here which is determining the state that you are in right now. In other words, you will never hit a place in your life when your sins are not forgiven you, if you are a believer. That is already taken care of. That is perfect tense. That is in the past. Now I am living in a state where my sins have been forgiven. The word "forgiven" is the word *aphiemi*. It means they were sent away, never to return. It is the picture of the scapegoat in the Old Testament when the priest would come out and declare the sins of Israel on its head and send it off into the wilderness for that goat never to return. They have been forgiven.

Do you know your sins have been forgiven? God is not holding you guilty for your past. That doesn't mean we don't deal with sin. We have already studied that in 1 John. But he wants these little believers, these brand new believers, to understand that they can know that their sins are forgiven them. They never have to worry about that. What Jesus did upon the cross is complete and lasting and eternal.

The Gnostic heresy obviously could throw a young believer off track. Number one, it denied the deity of Christ. Number two, it presented a lifestyle that you didn't even have to deal with sin. Can you imagine? These people had gotten amongst the Christians there. John wants to assure those new Christians that their sins have been forgiven them.

Second, in verse 13 he says, "I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning." John addresses the older believers, the more mature believers, this time. Isn't it funny the extreme here? He goes from the brand new ones with the full potential of growth, all the way to the ones who have matured and have had the experience for all these years. He says in that verse, "I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning." Actually, he says "you have known Him and you know Him now." It is again in the perfect tense. If you will look at the perfect tense and how it is used in the book of 1 John, it is an incredible picture. You knew Him back there. As little babies you had the full potential to know Him and you took advantage of it. Through the years you have known Him. Now today you are in the state of knowing Him.

The word "know" there is the word *ginosko* (1097), which means to experientially know. I want to know Him. John says, "Listen, this is a beautiful picture of what life can be for you and me. We have the full potential. If we will take advantage of it, if we will let life work for us and not against us, it will drive us to Him and to the cross. As we get there, we find a brand new revelation of Him that

we have never known before." You have known Him. You are in the state of knowing Him and experiencing Him day by day.

They have had the advantage. There is no definite article. It says, "You have known Him who was from the beginning." There is no definite article which means before there was ever a beginning, you know the One who lived before then. You are convinced in your heart that He wasn't just born of a woman here on this earth and became flesh at that point. He was preexistent before the foundation of the world. You mature fathers, you have walked with this One who is preexistent and was birthed of a virgin. You know Him now in your heart. You experience Him daily in your life.

Third, in verse 13 he addresses the young men who are in the prime and vigor of manhood. "I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one." The best I can determine, the term that he has used here for young men signifies the toughest age I suppose that a person lives in. It is a time when he can make his choices. It is a time when he has all the strength of his youth. It is a time when he has all the chances and opportunities before him. It is the most trying time of his life because this is when he is pulled more than ever before to get astray and to not honor the Lord Jesus in his life. But he says, "You young men have overcome the evil one." The term "overcome" is the Greek word *nikao*, and it is in the perfect tense. You have overcome him and you are in the state of overcoming him day by day. The word "overcome" means that you have had victory over him. You have conquered the evil one.

The word "evil one" means the one who is out to do you harm. In other words, when you had the full potential to grow like these little ones, you took advantage of it and through the years you have understood that there is an enemy out there and the evil one is out to get you and he is out to harm you, but you have had victory over him. You are now living in victory over him.

What is their secret? How many young men do you know right now who are falling by the wayside? What is their secret? How can they know this victory? Look in 1 John 5:1 and I will show you who the overcomer is and why these young men have overcome the evil one. Verse 1 says, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him." That is the key. That is the principal. They love the one born out of God. Look in verse 5 of that same chapter: "And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" That word "believe" means more than just mental understanding. It means you are willing to submit and obey and do what He has asked you to do. That is what it really means to believe. Look at verse 10: "The one who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him [God] a liar, because he has not believed in the witness that God has borne concerning His Son."

Then 1 John 2:13 reads, "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life." You see, these young men believed in the Son of God. They loved the Son of God, and they loved His Word. They were committed to obey and through their obedience, they had learned to overcome. That is how you overcome the devil. Can you imagine somebody getting up and saying, "Satan, I bind you"? I am sure Satan goes, "Oh, you scare me to death." The way you bind him is to love and obey the Lord Jesus Christ, to love Jesus Christ, to obey Jesus Christ. In doing that, you overcome. You have victory. You conquer anything the devil is trying to do in your life. You young men, you are in the state of overcoming.

Let me ask you a question. Where would you be on this? Would you be a young Christian with all the potential in the world but you haven't had the time yet to grow? Are you an older Christian who has been a Christian for years and now you can truthfully say to your family, to your friends and to the people you work with, "I have known Him. I have lived and experienced Him for years and I am in the state right now of walking with Him day by day."? Are you a young Christian and yet you have grown through? You are in that perfect stage of your life. You have all the opportunities in front of you. Could you say you are overcoming? Well, if you are you are saying, "It's because I am fully obedient to whatever God wants in my life."

In 1 John 2:13 John also brings up one more group. He says, "I have written to you, children, because you know the Father." The word "children" here and the one that was used back in 1 John 2:12 are different words. *Teknion*, used in verse 12, is the word for little child. This word right here, *paidion*, stresses not so much the birth but the immature age. You are a young child. You have been born back here and you are in the state of growing. You are in that potential time, but you are in need of tons of instruction because you are very immature when it comes to the things of God. You see, you are not like the one just birthed in. You are down the road a bit, but you really need a lot of discipling. You need a lot of instruction. You really don't seem to understand the things of God.

He said, "I am writing to you because you are children of the Father." The picture here is His divine family. You are in His divine family. You know the Father.

If you think about it, these are maturity levels that are present in every church. That is kind of comforting. What does John want them to know? As he writes these, you have to remember, they are hearing him on four different levels. That is something that challenges me every time I step in the pulpit. It is different than when I am preaching at a place where people are studying eight to ten hours a week on what you are studying. When you step up and start speaking they come alive and they just mesh with you. They have already studied it ahead of you. They know it better than you do. They are just waiting to see if what you are saying is what the

Scripture said.

It is different when you come to church and people have been busy all during the week and other things have been going on. You step up in the pulpit and you know that there are four levels of maturity out there. But I like what John does. He doesn't water it down. Although there are four levels of maturity, he just says it like it is and knows that the Holy Spirit will interpret that to the hearts of whatever level they are on.

There are some things John wants them to know, three things basically. First of all, in 1John 2:15, 16, 17, the believer is commanded not to love the world. That is what he wants them to know. He kind of changes his whole format. He has been building on what you are and the identifying marks. Now he orders them, he commands them, he says, "You are not to love the world." Look at verse 15: "Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Then he goes on to talk about the things that are in the world that we are not to love. But first of all, the believer is commanded not to love the world.

The word for love, *agapao*, is in the present imperative. The present tense means "don't be loving the world." You are living in a state of loving the world. You have to understand that. The present tense is significant.

There are times in any of our lives when we watch the world going by and it kind of catches our eye. We may even go after the world for a while. It doesn't take us long to find out that is one train we don't want to catch. Immediately we confess and repent, and we come right back.

That is not what John is talking about. He is talking about the person who doesn't catch that train. He is talking about the person who engineers that train. He is riding that train. He loves the world. He lives that way. The things of the world dictate his life. Everything about him speaks of the world. That is what he means when he puts it in the present tense.

The imperative mood means that it is a command. Do you realize that is what we have to understand? When you get a new car and drive it up in your driveway, it is so pretty. You just love that thing. Six weeks later you haven't washed it because you have been too busy to take care of it. Then the guy next door drives one in that is nicer than yours. All of a sudden you want to throw rocks at yours and go get his. All of a sudden you don't like what you have. It is insatiable. It is sin. We know it is sin because we are never satisfied with it. God clearly shows us we are in this world but we are not of it. It has nothing to offer you and me.

Therefore, John says, "You are not to love the world." Then he makes a powerful statement in the second part of verse 15. He says, "If anyone loves this world [present tense again, as a lifestyle loves this world], the love of the Father is not in him." He uses the word for "not" there that means absolutely in no way possible is it in Him. You see, the unbeliever is delighted with the world. If you will read Scripture, you will find out that a person who does not know Christ loves this world and lives in its system. In some churches you ought to just choose a night to worship the dollar bill. Just hang a big dollar bill across the front of the church and have everybody come down and bow down to it because that seems like what everybody is pursuing. It takes their time, their energy and everything else. They love this world. They do it as a lifestyle. They drop in church periodically to pay their token appreciation to God and think for some reason that they know Jesus Christ. No sir!

John is asking, "Do you want to know what a believer is? He cannot in any way habitually, consistently, be in love with this world. Whatever else he thinks, he knows the Holy Spirit has separated him and this world is not what is to be pursued." They live for it. The Spirit of God draws the people of the world, but they live for it. The Spirit of God in a believer causes us to be pulled away from the desire of what the world offers and enables us to live in it but not be of it.

Look in 1John 4:17: "By this, love is perfected with us, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He [Jesus] is, so also are we in this world." Gracious! Do you mean to tell me just as He walks totally in oneness with His Father, we can do the same thing in this world? Yes. We are to do that as Abraham said, "seeking a city not made with human hands." Remember, this book is a book of contrasts and you see a contrast right here. You see the people who live in this world and love it, and you see the people who are in this world but definitely are not of it. They are seeking the things that God wants in their life. Every believer is commanded not to love the world. A boat in water is by design. But water in the boat is disaster. It is by design that you put a boat in the water. But it is disaster when you put the water in the boat. We are in the world, but we are not of the world. How about you? Do you love this world?

The second thing is just as significant: we are cautioned as to what it is in the world that we are not to love. You have to be real careful here. You can't say, "Well, there are people out there in the world who live ungodly lives. I don't love them because I am not supposed to love the world." You are cautioned here because he tells you what it is about this world that we are not to love. In John 3:16 he says, "For God so loved the world." He is not talking about the evil system. He is not talking about these things that we are going to bring up. There John is talking about the people who are in it. We are to love them, but we are cautioned as to what it is in the world that we are not to love.

What is that? Well, he says in 1 John 2:16, "For all that is in the world,..." The word "all" is the word *pas*. It means all, but it means

more than that. It means each thing separately that he talks about and all of them together. They are a unit that he is going to bring out. Whatever John is talking about, the whole matter is included. There is no cafeteria style of interpreting this. So when we get into what we are going to look at all three of these things are linked together. You can't just pull one of them out and say, "Well, I am doing pretty good on the first two, but I am not doing too good on the third." No, if you are not doing good on the third, you are not doing good on the first two; because they all are meshed together. It is a whole. It is a unit. We are not to love that in the world.

What in the world is he talking about then? Look with me in verse 15: "Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, [1] the lust of the flesh and [2] the lust of the eyes and [3] the boastful pride of life is not from the Father, but is from the world." John narrows it down and tells you exactly what he is talking about. Love the people who are in the world. 1 Corinthians 5:9, 10, 11 says, "I didn't tell you not to associate with immoral people in the world. I told you not to associate with an immoral brother." That is interesting theology! You can't put the salt in one barrel and the fish in another barrel and expect to win it. Love the people who are in the world. Get out there among them.

But there are three things that are linked together you are never, never, never to love. The Spirit of God will not allow that. You will be the most miserable individual that ever walked the face of this earth if you are trying to go against the grain. Well, let's look at it. First of all he says, "the lust of the flesh." Now the word "lust" is the word *epithumia*. The kind of lust he is talking about is an irregular and inordinate desire or appetite. It derives its meaning from the word *epi* which means extreme concentration upon something. It is an intensifier. You know there is lust in your life when you can't get your mind off of something. It compels you. It is your focus. It is not a lot of things, it is something that is focused.

Second, it comes from the word *thumos*, which means desire, emotion or passion. Now, in itself the word *epithumia* is not a bad word, but in the way John is using it, it is irregular and inordinate. Let me show you the difference. The same word that is used here is used when Jesus intensely desired to eat the Passover meal with His disciples in Luke 22:15. That is the word that was used of Jesus' own mind-set. But it doesn't mean in a bad sense. Using the same word, in Philippians 1:23 (note) Paul intensely desired to depart to be with Christ. Paul intensely desired to be with the believers of Thessalonica in 1 Thessalonians 2:17 (note). It is the same word. So don't get confused. There is a desire. God created us to be concentrated and focused on the things that God has put before us. But when that focus becomes the things of the flesh and pleasing the flesh, that is the lust that we are never to love. That is a lust that did not come from God. It came from this world and the one who rules in it. This lust that John speaks about is an inordinate desire because it is the passion that is intended on pleasing the flesh.

This lust of the flesh is from the world and not from God. There is nothing wrong with money. It is the love of money, the love of whatever the flesh wants that is the problem. You can fill in the blanks. Look in Jude verse 16. It uses a word that shows us what it means to follow after the flesh, to lust after the flesh, to do what the flesh wants. It gives you sort of an example of the character. "These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts." If you ever want to find somebody who is doing that, listen to them for a while. They are always complaining, always grumbling and finding fault with everybody but themselves because they are following after their own lusts.

This lust of the flesh is fed by the next thing he mentions there in 1 John 2:16, the lust of the eyes. In other words, the eyes are bringing in the information that is causing the lust of the flesh to be quickened: "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes." Now the word for "eyes" is *ophthalmos*. We get the word *ophthalmology* from it. It primarily means the physical eye through which the inner perceptions are formed as we view the outer world. What he is talking about here, in the general sense, is when a person can see what he is looking at and he is forming an inward perception. It may not always be exactly right, but he is forming an inward perception.

In the spiritual sense, what our eyes delight to look upon depicts our inner spiritual condition. What do you enjoy looking at? What do you enjoy watching? That will tell you something about what is going on inside. It is feeding it. The more you look at it, the more it feeds the lust of the flesh which wants to be pleased and pampered. The eyes are that part of the body which communicates worldly desires to our souls, thus leading the whole body to immorality. So we are not to look upon that which our flesh desires but upon that which is of God. It was Job who had to make a covenant with his eyes because the eyes were where the problem was. You begin to see something and you form an inner perception. Then it begins to quicken the desire that is within, the desire of the flesh, the lust. The lust begins to go into gear and now you want to please it. You want to pamper it. You want to do what it is calling you to do. That is why these are all linked together. You can't separate them. You can't say, "Well, I am doing good here, but I am not doing good there." No, no, no. If you are doing bad here, you are doing bad in all three. They are hooked together. Eyes feed the lust of the flesh.

Have you ever been watching the television set and you just channel surf? I like to flip from channel to channel. I can tell in a second whether I want to watch it or not. I can be flipping through, and Ohhhh. I have to make a covenant with my eyes because of my flesh. I am never to love that which is of the flesh, that which pleases the flesh. That is not from God. That is from the world. I am not to love it. That is what we all deal with. I don't care who you are. If you point a finger at somebody you are the biggest hypocrite in this

place. Every one of us deal with it. We have to learn that if we are in the world, we are not to be of the world. The flesh is activated by what it sees. Make a covenant with your eyes that you will look on the things that God wants in your life.

It is fed by the lust of the eyes; however, it is driven by the pride of life. The big problem in the whole thing is the last thing he mentions here. He says, "and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world." The word "pride" tells you what he is talking about. It is the word *alazonia*. It means thinking of oneself to be what he is not. This is a problem. When a person begins to get into a mind-set of something that he is not, he becomes a braggart. He boasts to others about himself. The word "life" is the key here. It is not the word *zoe*, which means the essence of life. That is what Jesus is. It is the word *bios*. It means basically that it is life in its concrete manifestation. Let me say it again. It refers to that which one has and that which one does, a boastful pride in who I am and what I have.

I am going to ask you a question. Does that rule your life at all? When somebody comes over to your house for dinner do you wish you lived someplace nicer? Why is that a problem to you? Is the lust of your flesh so strong that you find your identity in what neighborhood you live in and what size house you have or how big your car or your bank account is? That is the boastful pride of life. And that is the driver, the motivator of this whole thing. You have to have something, because you want to boast.

It is not only what a person has but what a person has done and what a person is going to do. This is the boastful pride of life. It drives the eyes to look upon the things that will feed the flesh which can be pampered and pleased. John said, "These are the things that are of this world that you and I are never to love."

All of these, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, work together and they are not from the Father. They are from the world. We are not to love these things that are in the world.

It is interesting that in verse 14 he mentions the evil one. You know who that is. That is the devil. In verse 15 he mentions the world: "Do not love the world." In verse 16 he says, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes." He mentions the devil, the world and the flesh there together in three verses. There is your whole scenario. You see, I have these lusts in my flesh. You do, too. You have them, too. You find a person who says, "I don't have any lust in my flesh," he is either lying or he is dead. Don't pay any attention to him. Every one of us has that. That is what James says. It is the lust of your flesh. That is your problem. All of us have it.

Now the devil is out there. He is the one who rules in darkness. He is the one who knows this flesh. When he convinced Adam to sin he knew the weaknesses of our flesh. He is good at what he does. He knows how to put stuff in your path so that you will look at it and then desire it and go after it. So you have the world, which is the pulpit that he preaches from. You have the devil doing the preaching and then you have the flesh that you have to contend with. You are not to love any of that.

Let me give you a picture of how it works. In James 1:13 (note) it says, "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone."

Now look at James 1:14 (note) which teaches you the process right here. "But each one [underline that, "each one." "Am I included?" Yes, you are. Quit blaming the rest of us] is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust."

Let's look at those two words, "carried away" and "enticed". Have you ever been trout fishing? There is a big rock and you throw your line out. You always fish upstream when you are fishing for trout. You throw it up under that thing and you let that line follow that eddy water. It will go right up under that rock and come on around. Those trout are lying up under that rock. It is safe up under that rock. You and I are safe when we make up our minds that we are going to honor God and live like a believer ought to live, be in it but not of the world. You can watch those little trout. I can think like them. That trout is saying, "Whew! That looks good." The next time it comes down, you just keep doing it because you have to lure him out. You have to continue to entice him out.

That is the whole idea of those two words. It means to come out from under but to do it by being baited, being enticed. About the fifth or sixth time if the water is clear, you will see a trout dart out. Then he will turn back and say, "Boy, that was close. That was close." But if you know something about that trout, you will just keep throwing it. Don't leave. My Dad used to say, "Son, if you will stay in one place for a while you might catch a fish." You keep throwing it in there. Finally, he will come out and he will look. It is so funny if you can see them in clear water. He will come out and boom, he will grab that thing. And when he grabs it, you've got him.

That is exactly the way sin works. You keep walking by something and keep walking by something and keep walking by something. How dumb can we be? I mean, good grief! It is like taking a match and striking it and holding your hand over it. It is not burning, it is not burning... now it is burning. It is amazing how we are all this way, putting ourselves into situations, thinking that it doesn't work against us, it just works against other people. Every one of us has the lust of the flesh to deal with.

Well, James says in James 1:15 (note), "Then when lust has conceived [when the desire and the temptation now have met and you have taken the bait] it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death."

There is not one single thing you and I can do, pursuing the lust of our flesh, that will have any life in it whatsoever. There is a death, a death, a death of relationships, of something every single time. We fall into the trap of letting the lust of our flesh dictate what we do. We are not to love those things that are in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

Not only are we commanded not to love the world and not only are we cautioned as to what it is in the world we are not to love because we love the people, but thirdly, we are challenged as to why we are not to love the world. I want to show you this. This was probably the biggest blessing to me in studying this passage. I have studied the passage before but this really grabbed me for the first time. 1John 2:17 says, "And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever." The Apostle John wants them to know something here and he is making a huge contrast. One part of the contrast is "things that are passing away." It is like a river and a rock. A river is constantly flowing away. It is going away. You can have a little boy put his sail boat in the river and he will watch the sailboat go away and disappear. It is moving away. But a rock is something that is steady and stable and it will always be there. He is drawing a contrast for you.

The world is passing away. Now what does he mean by that? He means the world is passing away every day that the clock ticks. The world is inching that much closer to total destruction. In other words, whatever it is that you are coveting that this world offers you, it is going to burn. Every day you live you are getting closer to the world passing away. Why in the world would you anchor yourself to something that is temporary and passing away? That is what he is saying.

Look over in 2Pe 3:9 (note), 2Pe 3:10 (note), 2Pe 3:11 (note):

"The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness."

Every bit of it is passing away. Not only the world, but he says the lusts are passing away. What does that mean? It means your body is dying. One day you are going to lie in a casket and your body will be in the casket and your spirit will either be with the Lord or in Hades. That body, once it is lying in the casket is not going to desire one single thing. All of the desires that you sought to please are dying.

The desires are passing away. People pursue them and pursue them. John asks, "What are you doing? They are passing away. Anchor yourself to something that is real, not something that is passing away."

Then John goes on in 1John 2:17 and says, "but the one who does the will of God abides forever." Why are we not to love the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life? Why is it? Because all of that stuff is passing away and it offers absolutely nothing for eternity. Anchor yourself to the things that are eternal. One day you will understand that if you don't understand it now.

What is the believer like with the world? He doesn't love the world. He does not love the world. We are commanded not to love the world. We are cautioned as to what in the world we are not to love and we are challenged as to why we are not to love the world. It is passing away.

I don't know where you are but that is some of the stuff I deal with every day. Don't anchor yourself to things that are passing away. "If the world is going to be burned one day," Peter says, "what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and reverence because you are going to abide forever." You are the children of God. Who is a Christian? Who is not a Christian?

1 John 2:18-24

The Believer and the Truth

Dr. Wayne Barber

We have seen so far The Believer and Sin, The Believer and Obedience, The Believer and His Relationships, and The Believer in the World. Now we are going to look at The Believer and Truth. Remember that John is writing to combat the Gnostic heresy and all of the book now is a contrast: these are believers, these are not. Sometimes the waters get a little muddy when you realize that a Christian can sin and can step over here and appear to be not a believer and still at the same time be a believer. But what we are trying to show you is, John is saying, "Look, these are and these aren't."

And it is a series of contrasts through the whole book. The Gnostics had gotten into the church and had confused so many of them.

Many had even lost their joy over what was going on. You know, there are countless warnings that God has given to us in His Word about false teachers who will discredit Christ and will twist His Word to mean what they want it to mean.

Peter in 2Peter 2:1 (note) (cp 2Pe 2:2-note, 2Pe 2:3ff-note, 2Pe 2:18-note, 2Pe 2:19-note, 2Jn 1:7) warns that these false teachers will secretly introduce destructive heresies. In other words, they will bring their error in – that which does not honor Christ but points to themselves, that which does not honor the Word – and they will put it right alongside the truth. Then when you are not looking, they pick up their error and make you think that error is what God is saying.

Jude 1:4 (cp Ga 2:4, Ep 4:14-note) warns us that these false teachers will turn the grace of God into licentiousness. What does that mean? It means they will take God's wonderful favor and grace and make it look as if it is license to where you can live like you want to live, that Jesus doesn't require you to live a certain way.

Paul (Acts 20:28, 29, 30, 31, 32 cp 2Ti 2:17,18-note, 2Ti 4:3,4 - note) warns us that they will come in on us like savage wolves when the teaching is not prevalent. They will come in. And the word "savage" means heavy teaching, burdensome teaching. They will try to add law to grace.

So we are warned all through the New Testament that these false teachers are around. They are everywhere and we are going to have to deal with that fact. They are, simply put, forerunners to the epitome of all of them that will come on the scene one day; the one John calls the antichrist. He will one day come on the scene in the last of this age.

Now, I want you to look at verse 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." Now he uses the term "children." It is the word paidion, and it gives us the idea a child is able to learn something. He is open to what you have to say to him. And he is addressing these Christians there in Asia Minor and saying, "Listen, I know you can learn. Let me teach you. I want to tell you something. It is the last hour."

There are two words for last and sometimes we get a little confused on it. There is husteron, a word that means the very last of the last, but that is not the word used here. Then there is the word that is used here that means the last, it is simply referring to the last days. Hebrews 1:1 says that these last days began when Jesus came to this earth the first time. It says, "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last [and the word is eschatos] days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world." So again he speaks of the last days that he was living in at that time.

Sometimes you get confused. How could John be living in the last days? I thought we are living in the last days? Well, the last days began when Jesus came to this earth the first time. There is another word which means the very last of the last days and that is not the word he is using here. One day on the last of the last days there will be a man to come on the scene and that man will certainly be called the antichrist. He will be against everything Christ stands for.

So John says, "Just as you have heard," and that tells us that evidently he has taught us about this before. He hadn't written about it because the only time the word antichrist is used is in John's epistles. Paul calls him something else, the son of lawlessness, the son of destruction. But what John calls him is the antichrist. So by using the term antichrist evidently John had spoken to them about this man before. And he warns them of his coming: "Just as you have heard before." John says that even though he will come on the scene one day, he says the problem is not the fact that he is coming, the problem is we have many of them on the scene already. It is funny, he takes the idea of the deceiving man, the false teacher, these people who get in amongst us and he turns it to where they are pictures of the antichrist to come.

Now the term antichrist comes from two words. One word means in lieu of and the other word means against. Now, if you put those together you have a picture of what he is like. The term "in lieu of" has the idea that when he comes on the scene or when many antichrists come on the scene, they appear to be for Christ but, in reality, are against Him. This is how they can deceive so easily. You know, Jesus seems to allude to that in Matthew 7:21-23 when He mentions the miracle workers of that day.

And folks, I want to tell you something, just because a person mentions Christ and just because it looks like a person is in favor of Christ, notice what his ministry points to. Does his ministry point to himself or does his ministry point to Jesus? Look out. Jesus said in Matthew 7:21, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'"

We live in America and that is our problem. We think that everything supernatural is of God. We don't seem to understand when Moses did the miracles in the Old Testament somebody copied every one of them. And we need to realize that the enemy has that power. And just because a person comes on and mentions Jesus and just because he can do miracles does not in fact mean that he is for Christ or that he stands for everything Christ stands for. He may be leading you down the path of destruction. The word antichrist means "in lieu of Christ". They will come on as if they are for Him but in reality they are against Him. And this is why John

is warning them. We are so easily deceived by these kind of people. They are good at what they do.

1Jn 2:19 shows again that these antichrists were among those of the disciples. It says in Verse 19, "they went out from us." Now, who is the "us" here? John has used the term "we" and "us" to refer to the apostles. They had to deal with it themselves. "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."

You know, I think one of the ones that John probably had on his mind that he had to deal with was a man by the name of Judas. Judas deceived everybody but God. There are those who may join the church, participate in religious activities, but never are for Christ and in reality when you boil it down, are against Him. But they come on as if they are for Him. There will come a time that they will depart from the believers. You know, Judas finally separated himself from those who loved Christ. There will come a time they will depart.

Now, don't misunderstand. I don't mean they will leave our church and go join another. You know, for years I have heard preachers say, "If they had been of us, they wouldn't have departed from us," as if their church is the only church around. Folks, I hope you know there are a lot of good churches. If somebody leaves here and goes there, so be it. Bless God. I hope that God will use them wherever they are.

So when somebody sees things a different way and leaves, that doesn't mean they are against Christ. That is not what we are talking about. What John is talking about is they walk away from the doctrine of Christ. They walk away from any semblance of willingness to obey Christ. They will not associate with you in any way. When the chips are down and when obedience is required, they will separate themselves. Judas did separate himself: "For if they had been of us, they would have remained with us."

The term "with" there is the word meta and it has the idea and really gets the picture. You know, if something comes out of, if something is inside something. Let's say I have something in my pocket. My tie is in my pocket. If I wanted to use the term ek and I took my tie out of my pocket, something is missing out of my pocket and they are very upset because it was a part of them. Now, my tie can be with my pocket but not actually be a part of it. Do you understand? If I had a pen, I could hook it right here and I could say, "My pen is with my pocket," but when you take it away from it you don't take it out of it because it was never a part of it. That is the term he uses here. They were never with us.

You see, they were with us, yes, in body, but they were never a part of us. And so, therefore, now they have left us, they no longer remain with us. So what you watch out for is when the chips are down, you know, when pressure is on because John seems to indicate some of this pressure with all the deception that is there, when a false teacher walks in and you see people follow him out and they don't stay and honor Christ in their life, then you automatically know that there is something wrong in their hearts.

I have always wondered how Christians can be so easily deceived. I am not so sure the people being deceived are really Christians. From what John says, if you have truly bowed before Jesus Christ, have become a part of Him, then there is something different about you and we are going to talk about it in a minute and I don't believe you can deceive a person who is surrendered and obedient to Jesus Christ. That person can catch it that fast. He knows when you are leading him away from who the Truth and what the truth really is.

Well, it says, "But they went out, in order that it might be shown that they are not of us." The words, "that it might be shown" is the word phaneroo, and it is the idea that if you have people among you and you honor Jesus Christ, if you keep honoring Him and keep honoring His Word, they will either leave or if they don't, God will put them on display and expose every one of them before the time is over with. You watch. Mark my word. If they leave for that reason, it shows that they are not of the Truth.

Well, as I have said, we have seen the believer in sin, obedience, the believer in relationships, the believer and the world and now, three things about the believer and truth. Knowing that antichrists, false teachers, deceivers are with us – not a part of us, with us – knowing that they are here, we need to show three things that the believer relates to truth.

First of all, in 1Jn 2:20, the believer has an anointing which gives him the ability to discern truth. He has an anointing upon him: "But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know." Now, that is the New American Standard; the literal reads better: "But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things."

Now in previous studies we looked at two types of knowledge. One type of knowledge is what you must learn, what you must give your time and attention to, what God will teach you as a result of it, what you must experience. The other kind of knowledge is that intuitive, perceived, discerning knowledge that comes with the package. And that is the word he is using here. John is not saying, "Hey, you don't have to learn anything. Don't be discipled. You got saved. You know everything." No, no, no. He means you have the ability to intuitively discern things that you didn't have before. But in the meantime you need to keep on growing and learning about the Word and the things of the Christian life. But you have something you didn't have before, something that gives you the ability to discern truth.

Now what is this anointing? It is the Holy Spirit of God that has been given to us. You see, the moment a person becomes a believer, the Holy Spirit moves into his life. The term "anointing" is the word **chrisma** (5545). This is derived from the word chrio (5548), which means to anoint. Now chrisma, the ma at the end of that word means the result of that anointing. In other words, you live in the result of this anointing, something God has done to you life.

The word chrio means to anoint. When you take the Old Testament and put it into the Greek, you call that the **Septuagint** and if you go back in the Old Testament, that word chrio has the idea of when you would consecrate somebody to an office, like you anoint a priest, you anoint a king. 1 Samuel 10:1 says, "Then Samuel took the flask of oil, poured it on his head, kissed him and said, 'Has not the Lord anointed you a ruler over His inheritance?'" 1 Samuel 15:1, "Then Samuel said to Saul, 'The Lord sent me to anoint you as king over His people, over Israel.'" And that was always done with oil, every time you see it in the Old Testament. 2 Samuel 2:4, "Then the men of Judah came and they anointed David king over the house of Judah."

So, it was an anointing, but it was an anointing with oil in the Old Testament. And it was a consecration, it was a setting apart, it was to officially determine a position that God had raised a person to.

But in the New Testament it doesn't mean that. It is not an anointing with oil. It is an anointing with the Holy Spirit of God, the oil being a picture of that in the Old Testament. So when you come to the New Testament, don't think that when somebody gets saved or when somebody is set apart to do whatever, you have to put oil on him. All you are going to do is make him greasy! The Holy Spirit is what anoints a person in the New Testament. Luke 4:18, Jesus said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden."

Now, the Lord anointed Him, but no oil. If you will look in Acts 10:38 Peter determines what it was. He says, "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil." How did He anoint Him? With the Holy Spirit and with power.

So this anointing that is upon us, this that we have to be able to discern truth, is the person who lives in our life. We have the Holy Spirit of God. He says this anointing is from the Holy One, and from the context it cannot be anything else but God the Father and God the Son. When you receive Jesus into your life, He gives you the anointing of the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit of God. And because of this anointing, which means the Holy Spirit lives in us, then now we can perceive and discern all things.

This is why I am saying to you, I am not sure that a lot of these people being deceived are truly believers because the Holy Spirit of God lives in us to give us that discernment. The only way they are being deceived is that they are not adhering to God's Word and not obeying Him on a daily basis would be the only reason I could think of.

1Jn 2:21 gives us the context of what they can perceive, what they can discern. "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." John tells his audience that because they had His anointing and knew the truth, that is why he is writing to them. He says, "I am in no way insinuating you don't know. I am not embarrassing you. I am not belittling you. I am writing this because you do know. I want you to know that I know that you know." And the word there means I am not trying to mislead you in any way. There is no lie in the truth. And a believer knows that. And, of course, the truth that the context is talking about is the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ being God's Son and what He came to this earth to do. So the believer knows the truth because of the discerning power of the Holy Spirit in him.

You know, in seminaries what is happening today, it was going on when I was there, they try to separate the historical Christ from the Christ of your faith, as if they are two different things. This is what was really confusing to me when I went to school and I was thinking, what are you talking about? The same historical Christ we talk about is the same Christ that comes to live in our hearts. But you have to be real careful, folks. When you have the Holy Spirit living in you, He gives you discernment.

Years ago I was preaching in the fastest growing, biggest sign gift church in West Texas. I preached the whole time I was there on the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ, the fact that when you receive Him you get everything you will ever get. On Saturday morning I told them to quit chasing after experiences, the Holy Spirit already was in their life, the Holy Spirit was the Spirit of Christ that came to live in them when they got saved. Saturday morning at 9:00 there were almost 500 people in the auditorium and at 11:00 when I left, they gave me a standing ovation when I walked out of the church! A lady ran me down and she said, "Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Something in my spirit told me that what I was getting into was wrong, but I just didn't have the truth to listen to."

I want to tell you something, folks, what is going on in a lot of these so-called revivals, you had better watch it like a hawk. It is not built around Christ. It is built around the Holy Spirit. Look out. Look out. Anybody that takes away from who Jesus is and from what He came to do is automatically a heretic. Remember that until the day you die. That is what John is saying.

I want to tell you something, friend, you don't insult the Holy Spirit by saying what I just said. The Holy Spirit said, "When I come, I will not speak of myself. I will only speak of Him." That is what He came for. There is more confusion in America. And I will tell you

what; a lot of these people are nothing more than antichrists. Hear me loud and clear. They can do it well, they can woo you and wow you, but look who they are leading you to. And if it does not lead you to Jesus, friend, that is the forerunner of the one who will come and deceive the whole world one day called the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction, the antichrist. But thank God we have the Holy Spirit of God that lets us know that something is wrong here. You may not have it all figured out, but you know something is wrong.

That reminds me of a story about the fellow that his wife called him and said, "Something is wrong with the car." And he said, "What is wrong with it?" She said, "There is water in the carburetor." He said, "Honey, you don't have a clue what a carburetor is." She said, "Trust me. There is water in the carburetor." He said, "Tell me where it is on the car?" She said, "Trust me. There is water in the carburetor." "Where is the car?" She said, "It is in the swimming pool."

And the reason I bring that up is because this discernment works that way. You might not know all the different pieces here, but something inside of you says you can discern and perceive all things. God didn't leave you as an orphan. God let you know what Truth is all about. You may not be able to argue it with anybody. They may be able to debate you to make you look foolish. But in your spirit you know that is wrong. We have an anointing from the Holy One.

Second, because of this anointing the believer must examine what people say about Christ. And when it doesn't match up to what God says, then he knows that person is a liar. Verses 22-23: "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. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also."

Now John says "the one who denies," and he uses a verb tense here to make sure you understand. Deny here is in the present tense – continually, consistently denies that Jesus is the Christ. I imagine every one of us at some point or another in our life has denied Him either by what we have said or what we have done somehow. Peter did. But he didn't consistently live that way. Any of us can have a bad day and perhaps in a stupid moment say something that we are sorry for, but what John says is this person consistently, by what he says and by what he does, denies Jesus is the Christ.

Here come the Gnostics again. Remember what he is doing now. Don't ever divorce that from 1 John. Everything he is saying here is combating what they are having to put up with constantly by these people leading them astray, which is in Verse 26, a little ahead of us. The word for Christ here is the word Christos, which means the anointed one. They deny that Jesus is the Christ. You see, they said Jesus was the son of Joseph and Mary because God would never inhabit a human body. And John says, "Buddy, if anybody ever denies that Jesus was the God-man, the anointed one, the Messiah, the promised one, the one who came to take our sin away, that person is a liar." John says that the one who denies the Father and the Son is the antichrist. This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.

You have to understand something here. Jesus and the Father are one. On a plane going to Atlanta not long ago, a lady was sitting beside me. She was a private detective, of all things! And I was real interested in that. I would love to be a private detective. I just think it would be so much fun. I have a curiosity. I would love to follow people around and figure out what they are doing. I was talking with her for a little while and then she said, "What do you do?" And I told her I was a pastor. She said, "Oh, good. I've got some questions." I said, "Wonderful. Maybe I will have an answer or two."

She said, "The thing that bugs me is you have God but then you have Jesus. Jesus gets in my way. There is one God." I said, "Oh, that is a great question. But the thing you have overlooked is that Jesus is God." "What?" "You see, it is God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. One God in three persons." Then I showed her in Colossians where it says that Jesus is the fulness of the Godhead bodily. I said, "This is all of God manifested though to where we can see Him as He came to this earth in human flesh." We landed quicker than I wish we had landed. I have to believe the fact that some sow, some water and some give the increase. I have to believe that somebody is going to come along and pick up from there. But I was talking a mile a minute trying to get in as much as I could before we had to get off that plane.

You see, if you deny the Son, you have just denied the Father. Think of the religions of this world that do that today. "Oh, we believe in God, but we don't honor Jesus." You know, this is what John is saying. If you ever deny that Jesus is God's Son, the Christ, the anointed one, the one who came for the express purpose of taking our sins away, of dying on the cross, resurrecting on the third day, you have just denied the Father because Jesus and the Father are one.

That's what it says in John 10:30, "I and the Father are one." In John 14:9 when they asked Jesus, "Show us the Father." He said, "Have I been so long with you and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father. How do you say, show us the Father?" The Gnostics denied Jesus. They would hang on to the truth about God but not Jesus.

Anyone who denies Jesus denies the Father, so John adds in Verse 23, "Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also." You see, this has been some of the confusion. People think that you get parts of the

Godhead at different times. You get saved and you get Jesus. Later on you get the Father. And then if you are real fortunate, you get baptized in the Spirit and you get the Spirit.

I am going to say it one more time. Folks, there is one God. You can't separate them. You get Jesus, you get the Father and the Spirit. You get the Spirit, you get Jesus and the Father. I mean, they are all together. They go together. They are in the same package. You can't unwrap them and put them in different groups. So, the Gnostics' doctrines are being whittled away because of what John is saying. The antichrist denied that Jesus is God and thereby they denied the Father.

What John is saying is, first of all, you Christians, thank God because you have truth in you. You have an anointing and you have the ability to discern what is error and what is right. And it all, second, has to do with what people say about Christ. That is the key. Listen to what they say about Christ, not just what they say but how they live in response to Him. If there is no obedience, if there is no humility, if there is no surrender, look out. You have just put your finger right on the problem.

Then third, the believer remains in the truth that he has received. Verse 24 says, "As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning." I think this goes back to what John has been saying: I told you once. I have written my gospel and nothing has changed. Now, if you have received Christ and that which you have heard from us, you remain in it. You continue to remain in it. "If what you heard from the beginning abides in you [and it will if you are a believer], you also will abide in the Son and in the Father." They all go together.

If you received the truth which pointed you to Jesus who is the embodiment of truth and you received Him into your life, then you are not going to turn away from the Word and you are not going to turn away from Him because the truth is going to remain in you. Also, He will remain in you and you will remain in Him. That is what he is talking about.

That is why I go back to what I said originally. How many people that are being deceived these days have never received the truth to start with? Maybe some have, I know that. But I am just wondering if John is not trying to drive another nail that I had never thought about. A lot of people are deceived because they never were enlightened and they are perfect targets for that because they have never received the truth, never bowed and do not seek to remain in the Lord Jesus Christ. "That which you have heard from the beginning", to me, is what John talks about in the first part of the book.

Well, we will remain in that truth. And then verse 25 says here is the result of that. Here is the person. This is what we have to be thankful for today. If we are remaining in Him and His truth remains in us – and it will if you are truly saved – then in verse 25, "And this is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life."

Now I want you to understand something. Eternal life is not just quantity but it is also quality. The quality of life that we have day by day is something that we ought to be thankful for from now on. We have received Jesus. He has put His Spirit within us. He has given us the ability to discern when people are trying to lead us astray. Anything they say or how they treat Jesus is the whole clue. And not only that, when we remain with that truth and don't turn from the apostles' doctrine and we continue to remain in Him, we experience the quality of life that is more abundant than we could ever express to anyone.

Truth is important to us, folks. I had a person say to me one day, "Don't tell me what the language says. I really don't care. I know what I have experienced." That is true of so many in America today. You get a person to have an experience and they will walk away from truth so fast it will make your head swim. They never stop to realize that your experience doesn't back up the Word of God, but the Word of God better back up your experience. That is the key.

And so what John says is, use what you have. Use what you have. You know enough. You have the Holy Spirit. These people have come in to deceive you. Stand where you are. Remain in what you know. Don't walk away from our teaching. And not only will you be able to discern the ones that are in error but you will live a quality of life that you never thought possible daily.

1 John 2:25-29

The Believer and the Holy Spirit

Dr. Wayne Barber

Turn with me to 1 John 2. The title for this message is "The Believer and the Holy Spirit." Now I know every time we start it sounds like a broken record, but I think we continually need to keep in front of us why the book of 1 John was written. It was written to combat false doctrine. As a matter of fact, look in 1 John 2:26: "These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you." Now there were those who had gotten into the church and obviously the Gnostics of that day, the Gnostic heresy was one that denied the Lord Jesus ever being the God-man. Of course, they believed that all flesh was evil and the spirit was good, therefore, God would have never taken upon Himself a human body. Of course, John sets out to tear that doctrine down.

The particular brand of [Gnosticism](#) that we are dealing with in 1 John is that which came from a man by the name of [Cerenthus](#), called the Cerentian heresy. Cerenthus said that Jesus really was the son of Joseph and Mary and that at His baptism the Spirit came to indwell Him, then at His crucifixion the Spirit left Him. So he never really was God except for that period of time the Spirit came to live in Him, indwelt Him, but then left Him. The Docetic heresy came out of that Cerentian heresy which said that Jesus was a ghost, He was an apparition, He never had a body to start with, He just looked like He did. Therefore, they denied everything the Lord Jesus came to do.

Obviously, you will have no sin to deal with because the flesh is evil. The Gnostic heresy allowed for sin. You can't help it anyway. You live in a body. Why you just live in a carton and you are spiritual inside that little carton and whatever the carton does, your body, you are not responsible for, you don't have to deal with sin. Of course, obviously that is wrong but that is what the Cerentian heresy said, the Gnostic heresy of Cerenthus.

Well, John writes, "Listen, this is a believer. This is an unbeliever." And in doing so in such a beautiful way he just erodes all of that false doctrine that had gotten among the believers. So far we have seen the believer and sin in 1:6-2:2. We have seen the believer and obedience in 2:3-6. We have seen the believer and relationships in 2:7-11. We have seen the believer and the world in 2:15-17. And the last time together we saw the believer and truth in 2:18-25. And now I want you to see the believer and the Holy Spirit of God especially in the matter of discerning against truth and error, how to make the decision, is this really true or is this error? How does the Holy Spirit help us?

Now John picked up on the thought of verse 20 of chapter 2: "But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know..." Now remember, that word "anointing" is the word [chrisma](#) and it comes from the word [chrio](#) and that is a spiritual anointing. There are two words for anoint. One word means simply to massage, almost in a medicinal way. That is the word used in James 5. But this word here is that spiritual anointing.

That is what the Apostle Paul said in Acts when he said the Lord Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit of God. Now, in Romans 8:9 (note) it nails it. If you don't have the Holy Spirit of God, friend, you are not a believer. Romans 8:9 says, "However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you, but if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him." So the anointing is the person of the Holy Spirit of God that comes to live in our life the moment we receive Christ.

Now verse 27 of chapter 2 picks up on that word "anointing" again and it doesn't mention Him as a person, it just calls Him the anointing. It says in verse 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."

Now, we want to look at the Holy Spirit, this anointing that came into our life when we got saved, enabling us to do what we couldn't do before. Remember, the context is in verse 26 that I read earlier. You cannot force these verses from the context that they are in. Verse 26 says, "These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you." So we are in the context of people coming in with false doctrine. We are in the context of false teachers. And that is where we find this anointing and we find Him being the Holy Spirit of God and we find our relationship to Him and how He helps us in understanding the difference between truth and error.

There are two things that I want you to see. First, the Apostle John wants us to know that the Holy Spirit is the one who gives us discernment concerning false doctrine. That is who it is that lives in us. When we are around false doctrine, it is the Holy Spirit that is going to let us know, yes, no, whatever. He is going to always give us that discernment concerning false doctrine. We have already read Verse 27: "And as for you, the anointing, [remember that anointing is the Holy Spirit] 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."

Now, the Apostle John, in trying to show us that we have the Holy Spirit, we have a tremendous help when it comes to false doctrine, makes a point about the doctrine of the Holy Spirit that is needed in our day. I want to tell you, folks, if you can't see this, you have missed the whole thing. This is really not his point, but in making another point, he just sort of skips over something that has hung people up for years in America particularly in the 20th century about the Holy Spirit. He says, "And as for you, the anointing which you received."

Now the tense of that is aorist active indicative. Now what does that mean? Well, aorist tense means at a certain point in time you received this anointing. Indicative mood means that it is a certain fact. You can write it down. It is historically true. It took place. Active voice means you were totally involved in the encounter. You yourself received the anointing at a certain particular point in time. Now, according to verses 12-17, who is he talking about? You see, in the doctrine that is going around these days, you get Jesus but you don't get the Holy Spirit or if you do get the Holy Spirit, you don't get the anointing. They say that the anointing is one thing and the Holy Spirit is something else. What I am trying to show you is the anointing and the Holy Spirit are the same thing. And

the anointing is the enablement of God to do what God has assigned to each individual.

Now who is he talking to? Verses 12-17 say there are four different groups. There are babes in Christ, those who are growing in Christ, those young men in the very prime of their life and then the old men, all of them in spiritual connection here. We are talking about spiritual children, every one of them at a certain point received the anointing of the Holy Spirit of God. It is amazing to me how simple that is, but how many people make it something else. "Oh, have you received the anointing of God?" Yeah, I did. When I got saved I received it. And I want to tell you something. Every time He is empowered in my life, that anointing continues to work. It is His enablement to carry out the assignment God has given to each one of us. They all received the anointing. Boy, that puts a dent in the doctrine of the 20th century.

And as for the anointing which you received, he goes on to say in the verse, "from Him." From whom? From Christ. What we have from Christ, folks, could never come from man. We have an enablement. We have an anointing. We have the Holy Spirit of God. Man cannot give someone else that. God gave Him to us. You see, Jesus made us a promise in John 14:16-18. He says, "And I will ask the Father and He will give you another helper that He may be with you forever, that is the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive because it does not behold Him or know Him. But you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you."

Now you know the context of John 14. That is chapters 13-16. It is the special time that He had with His disciples before He went to be crucified. Chapter 17 is His priestly prayer, 18 starts the events that take Him to the cross. Judas had been dismissed because Judas was really not one of them. He went out from us, as we saw the last time. And so now He has this precious group around Him and He is trying to explain to them in these verses, "I must go to the Father. If I don't go to the Father, then you don't understand how much better it is going to be if I go to the Father. If I stay here with you, I can only be in one place at one time. But I am going to be with the Father and then I will not be with you, I will be in you. Which would you rather have? Would you rather have Me with you or would you rather have Me in you."

You see. And He is telling them that in chapter 14 and He says there in verse 16, "I will send another helper." Now there are two words for another. The word heteros, which means another of a total different kind. We get the word "heterosexual, heterogeneous" from that. Then there is the word allos, and we get the word ally which means another of the exact same kind.

Oh, folks, you see, there is only one God in three persons. What He is saying is, "I am going to come back but I will come back in the person of My Spirit and I will live in you." How long will He stay with you? He says, "I will send you another helper that He may be with you forever." And then in verse 18 look at what He says, "I will not leave you as orphans." Now look, "I will come to you." Now wait a minute. Do we get two or do we get one? How many do we get? Jesus is simply saying, "I am coming back, but I am coming back in the person of My Spirit called the anointing and I will come to live in your life and I will come to anoint you with power."

Now we go back to 1 John 2:27, "The anointing which you received from Him abides in you." Present indicative active. Present tense means constantly, daily, all the time. He, the Holy Spirit, the anointing, is living in us. I remember I was teaching on the Holy Spirit one time and I was showing them how the Holy Spirit comes to live in the life of a believer and this one elderly lady just sat there and looked at me in awe the whole time I was teaching. I noticed it. I noticed it because she was captured by what we were saying. And afterwards she came up to me and she put her little feeble arms around me and she said, "Bro. Wayne, you are the first person in my whole life that ever told me that God actually lives inside of me. When I go home tonight in my little trailer that I live in with my daughter, I know that when my daughter leaves, I am never alone again. He lives in me. He lives in me!" And she said, "I come forward tonight just to let you know that I want Him to rule my life and I want to be surrendered to Him as long as God leaves me on this earth." She was 84 years old. I want to tell you one thing, friend, I guarantee you from the day she was 84 until the day she met Jesus was probably one of the most exciting days of her entire life to know that God did not leave us as orphans. He sent His Spirit to live in us and He consistently abides in us.

That is exactly what John is saying. You have the Holy Spirit of God that lives within you daily, moment by moment. Oh, how exciting. Not with us but in us. Verse 27 says, "And you have no need for anyone to teach you." Now you have to be real careful here. This gets tricky. Be real careful. As a matter of fact, I hope this is as exciting as it was to me. John wrote in his gospel in John 16:13, "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth." In other words, you want to know truth, someone has come to live in you to lead you into truth. That is why the Apostle Paul says, "Be controlled by Him. Let Him do what He came to do. He wants to lead you into truth. He will show you the difference of error. He will show you the difference of truth."

The Holy Spirit is the one who does two things that are so important. First of all, He enables us as verse 20 tells us, to know all things. He says in verse 20 again, "But you have the anointing from the Holy One and you all know..." Now that word for "know" in verse 20 is the word oida. And that word means intuitive knowledge. It is not something you have to learn. It is something He gives to you. When people on television sometimes and they stop in the middle of it and say, "God, did you say something to me? What? What? I had a word of knowledge." Well, if that knowledge was true knowledge and found in scripture, it would have to be the word oida because that is something you don't learn. That is something God gives to you at the moment. It is discernment. It is

perception. And I'll tell you what, in 1 Corinthians 12 when it says "the word of knowledge" that is not the word that is used.

There is another word *gnosis* and *ginosko*. That is the kind of knowledge that you have to learn. You have to go to school. In other words, the anointing of the Holy Spirit comes in to give us that discerning knowledge, that perceived knowledge. But that doesn't mean we don't grow as Christians, we don't have to learn the word, we don't have to listen to others as they teach the Word. The Holy Spirit is the one who gives us the ability to learn, the ability to be taught, but the ability to discern and be perceptive of what we are hearing. The Holy Spirit gives us that. A person without the Holy Spirit is a lost person. A Christian has that wonderful opportunity. He is our teacher, the one living in us that gives us true discernment.

Now, but about what? And this is where you have to be real careful. If you are not real careful you are going to miss what John is saying here. Since he teaches you all things and you have no need of anyone to teach you, then how come we have preachers and how come we have teachers? Let's just get rid of them all. But he is not saying that. He is not saying to get rid of all preachers and teachers. That is not his point at all. You've got to be careful to see what this verse is saying. I know you are going to say, "Where have you been, Wayne?" But I saw this for the first time while I was studying it today. It just knocked me out of my chair. It is so simple, but I have made it so difficult over the years.

Look here: "And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; [now watch this] but as His anointing teaches you about all things." The word is *peri*, and the word *peri* means concerning all things. Oh, it dawned on me what he is saying is, He doesn't teach you everything, but He gives you discernment about what you are listening to as you are being taught. The Holy Spirit lives in you to do that.

You are going to hear teaching until you die. You are going to hear teaching constantly. You should be. We all need to be taught, but the Holy Spirit teaches you concerning all things. In other words, when you are listening to someone and the Holy Spirit is operative in your life in the sense that you are surrendered to Him and open to Him and you hear somebody touch on something that is not truth, you may not even know the verse, you may not even know the place to turn to, but something in your Spirit says, No, that is wrong. That is wrong.

That is the Holy Spirit of God and that is what He was given to us for and that is exactly what they need to hear in the book of 1 John. They are dealing with false teachers. How are we going to know? You have an anointing of God and He lives in you and He will teach you concerning all things. Obviously God has gifted others to teach. It is the Holy Spirit, however, that gives you understanding.

But what He is talking about here is concerning all things, about all things. We have the wonderful Holy Spirit of God living in us who is consistently seeking to teach us about all things that some are seeking to teach us. You catch that? He is teaching us about it. He is giving us discernment as we are listening. Is that error or is that truth? Is that error or is that truth? Therefore, we can know all things. We can discern all things as verse 20 says. We don't know all things. You just get saved, you don't know all things. But you can know all things through the Spirit in the sense of that discernment He will give to you. This is why when you watch somebody like that, as I said, you get that feeling inside and you are thinking, "No, this is not right."

Now friend, I want to tell you something, we have a spirit, we have the Spirit of God living in us so that we don't get totally off track just because somebody can do something emotional and somebody can do something they call miraculous. Hey, that is the big tragedy of living in America. We think everything that is supernatural is God and we forget somebody mimicked every miracle Moses did.

Well, verse 27 goes on and says, "Just as it has taught you, you abide in Him." What has the Holy Spirit taught us? What do we know because the Holy Spirit lives in us? Here is the security every believer needs to know about. The verb for abide is future indicative. It means you shall always, regardless, remain in Him. Once you are in Him and He is in you, you shall always remain in Him. What God did for us in sending the Holy Spirit to live in us can never be taken away from us, even if we at some time we are led astray, that does not deny the fact that we are in Him and He is in us and that is an eternal principle. He has taught us that. So we can put our feet on that solid ground. The Holy Spirit, God's anointing in us will always be present to give us the discernment we need to survive the false teaching in this world. We have someone living in us. You don't have to go to a hundred classes to know that. The Holy Spirit lives in us to be our divine protector when these things come our way.

Second, John wants us to know we must consistently abide in Christ and His Word or the discernment of the Spirit will not work for us. Now He is there to do it, but there is a key to this thing and I knew it was there, I just stayed with it. But look at 1Jn 2:28. "And now little children, abide in Him." You see, the difference of the abiding in Him in 1Jn 2:27 and the abiding in Him in verse 28, in verse 28 it is a command. And any time you see that command, oh, he is telling us something right there. You want to the Holy Spirit to operate within you and give you that discernment of truth and error, be careful. If you are not seeking to abide in Christ, what happens is, you shut the process down and your senses grow dull and all of a sudden you might be led astray.

In the last passage we looked at, I wondered if these people being led astray were even Christians to start with. It kind of looked that

way. It says we all have an anointing from the Holy One. It looks to me like if you are being led astray, you must not even know Christ. But I think I have been answered in this verse. Because he says in verse 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."

Let me share with you my thoughts on that and just let you check it out as the Bereans would check it out. The command to abide in Him is the command to abide in Christ because it says, "So that when He appears." We know the Him has to be Christ. Abide in Him, in His Spirit. Alright, obviously it is Christ. Alright, the verb is present imperative, I have already said that. To me, John is leveling a warning at the believers. You see, to abide is described very clearly in John's gospel and I want you to go with me there in John 15. John has already written a gospel and that gospel has this stuff just nailed down. He doesn't get into it in detail in his epistles as much as he does in his gospel.

What does it mean to abide in Christ? What is my responsibility in abiding in Christ? John 15:4 says, "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." Now that is very significant. We must abide in Him or remain in Him, dwell in Him, live in Him. Jn 15:7, "If you abide in Me," now here is one of the keys right here, "and My words abide in you." Oh, you mean to tell me that if I am not in the Word, living by the Word, that I can't say I am abiding in Christ?" That is exactly right. You cannot say that because if you love Him you are going to love His Word and it is the Word of God that teaches us to know Him and to walk with Him. We abide in Him that way.

It says, "Ask whatever you wish and it shall be done for you." That doesn't mean you get every desire you want, it is the desires He has given you and you ask them back to Him. Look in Jn 15:9,10, "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love." Now watch. How do you abide in His love? "If you keep my commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide [live, dwell, exist, remain] in His love."

Now, John says it differently in chapter 1. He doesn't say abide in Christ, he says walk in the light. Paul would say it differently in Ephesians 5. He says, "Be filled with the Spirit." Peter says it differently in 2 Peter 1:5ff (see notes). He says, "Work out of the faith you already have." You don't need anything else, but see to it that it is supplied in your life. You see, it is all the same thing. As I abide in Him, it means I surrender to Him. The sphere of my life is surrounded by His Word and His will. I am energized in His Spirit and I simply just want to do whatever He wants me to do.

Now, when I live that way, I will have confidence when He comes to stand in His presence. I won't shrink back in shame (cp 1Jn 2:28). In other words, there won't be a lifestyle that I am ashamed of and I won't have been led astray because I will have been filled with the Spirit, therefore, I will have been led by the Spirit and God will give me that discernment as I go through. One day Christ is coming back. No wonder so many Christians are deceived. How many of us really live out of the Word. How many of us let the Word lead us to Christ. How many of us? You see, the more I know of the Word, the more the Holy Spirit can give me the perception and discernment of what is error and what is not error. If I am not going to be in the Word at a point that is going to grow dull because I won't know the difference.

And folks, listen, the people that are most susceptible to error are not disobedient people. They are people that are hungry for God but they are not in His Word. They are not abiding in Him. His Words are not abiding in them. And these are the people chasing after some of these weird things that are going on. It is all in their emotion. Not because of what the Word of God is giving to them. If you have the Holy Spirit living in you, the Holy Spirit living in you will let you know when there is error. But if you are not going to abide in Christ, in whose Spirit lives in you, if you are not going to do that, if you are not going to let the Word of God get into your life, then what is going to happen is, the false teachers are going to get you. You are easy prey.

If you are not going to get in the Word, friend, if you think you can just come to church and get it and that is enough for you for the rest of the week, then you are not going to live surrendered to the Holy Spirit of God. If that is what you have chosen to do, then friend, listen, you are on dangerous ground. That is what the Apostle John, I think, is saying here to put the balance to it. The Holy Spirit is there, yes, but if you are not going to abide in Christ, then what is going to happen is, you are going to be led so astray you are going to live a lifestyle that is so far off center that when Christ does come, you are so ashamed and you shrink back at His coming. So the balance is, I have to make sure that I am listening to Him and being filled with Him and submitted to Him daily so that He can operate and give me that discernment that I am so desperate for in my life.

It says in 1Jn 2:29, "If you know that He is righteous," and he uses the first word for "know", intuitively, "then you know" and here he uses the second word for "knowledge", "you have learned that everyone else who practices righteousness is born of Him." If you know, how are you going to know? Because remember, the Holy Spirit gives you that kind of knowledge. And if you are not letting Him do in your life what He wants to do, you don't really have this knowledge.

But you know that Jesus is absolutely inherently righteous. He goes on. It says, "You know," and this is by experience, "that whoever practices righteousness is born of Him." And this is what that said to me. When I am living up under the power of the Holy Spirit of God, treating Him as Holy and understanding that He is righteous and He is God, I am bowing before Christ Himself, then when I am

living that way, then I learn to put other people up next to the one that I am submitted to in my heart. And it doesn't take you that long to figure out who is false and who is right. When you start matching their lifestyle to His, then you know immediately who the fakes are. It doesn't take you long.

I was listening to a man on television one day and he was saying that Jesus was never poor. He said that when it said that He had no place to lay His head, He had really already made reservations down the road and had a nice place already kept for Him. He just simply said the inns were already full where He was and He was headed on down the road to a reservation He already had. That is the type of message that you can watch every night on some stations. And I want to tell you something, friend, when you put that up next to the one who is Holy, the one who emptied Himself of His glory and came to this earth and lived the life He lived to die a horrible death on the cross and you start saying that kind of garbage, you put them side by side and, friend, it doesn't take you long to figure out which one is right and which one is wrong.

You see, we have someone living in us that will tell you what error is. If you are not going to get in the Word, forget it because you are going to be so confused you don't know when He is speaking and when He is not speaking. But the more you sensitize yourself to Him, the more sensitive you become by being in His Word and obedient to His Word, the quicker He speaks because you know He is absolutely Holy and righteous and when you start hearing some of this stuff that doesn't match to His Word and doesn't match to His character, it doesn't take you long to figure it out.

You see, we have a divine protector who lives within us. The anointing, the Holy Spirit. He lives in your heart and He lives in my heart. The more you stay in the Word, you will pick it up on errors in teaching so fast it will make your head swim. Don't buy into it or friend, it will lead you down a path of living that one day you will have no confidence even to stand in His presence when He comes. You will shrink back. Do you know why? Because they have led you into a doctrine that says you can live for yourself and still call yourself spiritual in the last days. When you see Him, friend, you are not going to want to stand in His presence having lived that way, you see.

Well, I don't know if it meant anything to you, but boy, it blessed me. I didn't realize He taught us concerning all things. He doesn't teach us all things. He is the one who gives revelation, certainly. He teaches the deep things of God. We have teachers, though. You don't throw away all your teachers and don't fire all the preachers. God can work through people that honor His Word, but He will give you a perception and a discernment at all times whether you are hearing truth or whether you are hearing error.

NOTE: There are no sermons available on 1 John 3-5