

## DISCERNMENT IN THE LAST HOUR

1 John 2:18-27

### INTRODUCTION

**MESSAGE THEME:** *Living with certainty in an uncertain world by discerning, exposing, and resisting false teachers and the antichrist spirit.*

### REVIEW

- John commends those overcoming the Evil One. 2:13-14
- John exhorts regarding not loving Satan's world system. 2:15-17
- John warns about the antichrists and the epic demonstration in the Antichrist. 2:18

### RECOGNITION OF THE ANTICHRIST SPIRIT vs. 18-19

#### Antichrist and Antichrist Spirit vs. 18

**1 John 2:18** (ESV) *Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour.*

- We looked at the reality of a future epic antichrist figure who will be empowered by Satan and do Satan's bidding.
- Also, John delineated what we called an antichrist spirit in which many antichrists currently are empowered to oppose and try to displace Jesus Christ.
- John was more concerned about the many antichrists currently operating.

#### Antichrists Unmasked vs. 19

**1 John 2:19** (ESV) (1) *They went out from us, (2) but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. (3) But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.*

- John highlights the characteristics of antichrists, which unmasks them and exposes their true identity.
  1. **They went out from us:** Visible departure from the body of Christ, true believers.
  2. **They were not of us:** No internal, spiritual fellowship of life – not truly saved.
  3. **Their leaving demonstrates not of us:** Their leaving demonstrates that they were not truly of us.
    - Did not have the common source of life found in God.
    - Did not receive a new nature of life from God.

Ray Stedman: “Notice that the mark of an antichrist is that he will finally break away from the New Testament Christianity. All such invariably do. And when they do, they will insist that they are the true mainstream of Christian truth and that we are living in the backwaters of Christian doctrine.”

- Those who share the life of Christ, by the Word of God, in the power of the Spirit of God. Heretics will invariably cut themselves off from these people.”

## BELIEVER'S ASSETS FOR DISCERNMENT

### The Asset of the Holy Spirit

**1 John 2:20 (ESV)** *But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge.*

- The anointing is the person of the Holy Spirit, resulting in knowledge.
- The word “knowledge” was previously used by John, meaning *knowledge by experience*; here, he used the word meaning *knowledge by intuition*.

### Historic Nature of Anointing

- In the O.T. the priests, prophets, and kings were anointed with a “set apart oil” or “holy oil” signifying their being set apart by God for their role.
- In Greek, anointing is translated from the Greek word *Chrio*, from which comes the word *Christ*, meaning the anointed One.
- From this comes the word *Christian*.

### New Testament Use of Anointing

- In the N.T. the anointing is not imparted with the sign of oil, but instead that of the Holy Spirit.
- **Jesus:**

**Acts 10:38 (ESV)** *how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. . .*

- **Christians at Salvation:**

**2 Corinthians 1:21–22 (ESV)** *And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, 22 and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.*

- **Mark of Fellowship with God**

**1 John 4:13 (ESV)** *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.*

- The reason for John bringing this point up might be because some of the heretics had been claiming a special spiritual capacity or source of knowing God.
- All have been anointed by God and all have knowledge of God by virtue of their anointing of the Holy Spirit.

### Holy Spirit Revelation in Anointing

**1 John 2:21–23** (ESV) *I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth. 22 Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. 23 No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.*

- The last phrase of verse 20 states that all who are truly anointed, who have the person of the Holy Spirit in them, **“they all have knowledge.”**
- John goes on to say that that is why he is writing to them.
  - They know the truth.
  - They know that no lie comes out of truth, or no truth breeds lies.
  - They can discern the liar **as the one who denies that Jesus is fully God who took on full humanity.**
  - The antichrists deny the Father and the Son.
  - **You cannot have special knowledge of God and deny the Son.**
  - Only when you embrace Jesus as God the Son can you embrace the Father.
- Often, it is said, **“We all worship the same God. You have one name for Him, and I have another.”**
- Here is the question to ask in response: **“Was your God perfectly and fully revealed in Jesus Christ?”** If your God was, then you have the same God. If your God wasn’t, then you do not have the same God as in the Bible.

### The Asset of God’s Truth

#### Regard the Truth vs. 24

**1 John 2:24** (ESV) *Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father.*

- **Christian theology is ever anchored in certain historical events concerning Jesus Christ and the authoritative apostolic testimony to these events.**
  - THAT’S THE BEGINNING!
- The Early Christians sat under the apostles’ teaching and were solidified in their faith.
- John exhorts genuine believers to allow the truth that they first heard to settle deep within them and live in them.
- It is critical to embrace the truth, allow it to live, and dwell freely in it to avoid becoming entangled in false teachings.

- You will also abide in the Son and in the Father, which is absolutely necessary for the Christian life.
- *John will use the word abide six times in these few verses, and the idea is repeated throughout the New Testament.*
- Abiding in Jesus (living in Jesus) is not passive; it is active, and it requires initiative!
- We must give ourselves both mentally and spiritually to living in Jesus.

#### **Embrace the Promise** vs. 25

**1 John 2:25** (ESV) *And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life.*

- John is saying this is the promise that He Himself (Jesus Christ) made to us (the Apostles): *eternal life*.
- You can live with certainty and confidence when you embrace and are secure in your eternal destiny.

**John 14:6** (ESV) *Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

**John 17:3** (ESV) *And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.*

**John 14:23** (ESV) *Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.*

#### **Expose the Antichrists** vs. 26

**1 John 2:26** (ESV) *I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you.*

- No matter what the false teachers and antichrists tell you, this is how you have a relationship with God.
- Know the truth, resist the lies, and expose the false teachers.
- Don't let them deceive you!

#### **Recognize Your Anointing** vs. 27

**1 John 2:27** (ESV) *But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in him.*

#### **It's Reality**

- John tells the faithful ones of his community that the anointing they have received remains in them.

- Those who are truly children of God have a safeguard. It is an anointing that was received at salvation.
- John's emphasis is on the *enduring* presence of the anointing.

### ***It's Benefit***

- Is vs. 27 saying that we as Christians do not need the ministry of teaching in the church?
- Is it saying that we do not have a need for those with the spiritual gift of teaching to exercise their gift in the church?
- Is it saying that teaching is not part of the mission of the Church?

**2 Timothy 2:24** (ESV) *And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil,*

*Ephesians 4:11* (ESV) *And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,*

*Matthew 28:19–20* (ESV) *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*

- John is saying in this verse that God has given us the anointing to distinguish between truth and error.

**APPLICATION – The Church (Christians) is Critical in the Last Hour Times.**

***We must live with discernment regarding the antichrist spirit!***

### **1. Be Grounded in the Firm Foundation of Scripture**

- We must study it and let it live in us. It is to be our sole authority for our faith and practice.
- John said to let it abide in us, live in us, exist in us, and control us in our thinking, understanding, and practice.
- Do not think that God's Holy Spirit will work in your life apart from the objective truth of God.
- It guides us into all truth, it protects us, it gives us discernment against error, it gives us wisdom for living life.

**Hebrews 5:12–14** (ESV) *For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, 13 for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. 14 But solid food is for the mature, for those who*


*have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.*

## **2. Be Empowered in a Holy Spirit-Energized Faith**

- We must have a strong biblical understanding of the Holy Spirit's work and role in our lives as Christians.
- He is the significant link in our relationship with God.
- It is by the Holy Spirit we understand and receive God's truth and discern truth versus error.
- It is by the Holy Spirit we are guided and receive spiritual strength.
- The Holy Spirit effectively enables us to witness to non-Christians concerning the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- We need to live with a greater understanding of and sensitivity to the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- We need to increasingly recognize when He prompts and guides us in life for guidance and discernment against error.
- We need to become more sensitive when we grieve Him, quench Him, and even resist Him.
- We have two great provisions in our lives to help us withstand and discern error. May we grow in our appropriation of both in our lives, God's Word and the Holy Spirit.

***Navigating end times*** *uncertainty requires discernment to recognize and expose false doctrines, false teachers, and antichrist spirit.*

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*LIVING IN DISCERNMENT AND CERTAINTY IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD*

MESSAGE THEME: *Live with certainty in an uncertain world by discerning, exposing, and resisting false teachers and the antichrist spirit.*


1

RECOGNITION OF THE ANTICHRIST SPIRIT      vss. 18-19  
Antichrist and Antichrist Spirit              vs. 18



*1 John 2:18 (ESV) Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour.*

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Antichrist and Antichrist Spirit	vs. 18
Antichrists Unmasked	vs. 19

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*1 John 2:19 (ESV) They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.*

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4



RECOGNITION OF THE ANTICHRIST SPIRIT  
BELIEVER'S ASSETS FOR DISCERNMENT

vss. 18-19  
vss. 20-27



The Asset of the Holy Spirit

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RECOGNITION OF THE ANTICHRIST SPIRIT  
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vss. 18-19  
vss. 20-27



The Asset of the Holy Spirit

*Historic Nature of Anointing*  
*New Testament Use of Anointing*



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Jesus

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*Acts 10:38 (ESV) how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. . .*

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Christians at Salvation

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## Mark of Fellowship with God

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## BELIEVER'S ASSETS FOR DISCERNMENT

vs. 20

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### The Asset of the Holy Spirit

*Historic Nature of Anointing*

*New Testament Use of Anointing*

*Holy Spirit Revelation in Anointing*

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*Embrace the Promise* vs. 25

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12

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vs. 20-27

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The Asset of the Holy Spirit

The Asset of God's Truth

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*Expose the Antichrists* vs. 26

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## The Asset of God's Truth

<i>Regard the Truth</i>	vs. 24
<i>Embrace the Promise</i>	vs. 25
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It's Reality  
It's Benefit

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**APPLICATION – A Healthy Church is Critical in the Last Hour!**

We must live with discernment regarding the antichrist spirit!

1. Be Grounded in the Firm Foundation of Scripture

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APPLICATION – *A Healthy Church is Critical in the Last Hour!*

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We must live with discernment regarding the antichrist spirit!

1. Be Grounded in the Firm Foundation of Scripture
  2. Be Alert to the Holy Spirit in You.
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