

Book of 1 John Series
Message 9
April 28, 2024

Opening Prayer

I want to start today with a story about shower pans. Seems innocent enough, but there is a tie-in to this story in just a bit. As a contractor, we did bathroom upgrades and many people wanted to remove tubs and replace them with showers. Sometimes the spaces for these were not standard size or shape. So it meant building a custom shower pan with a rubberized liner and concrete and special drain that all had to work together. I remember the first one I was faced with and had a guy working with me that had done them before and so we said yes to this job. I was so nervous, it seems like an almost impossible task to do correctly. I was “mystified” and had built the process up to be some huge unattainable process. As he broke it down into the individual parts it became less “magical” and the whole thing was “demystified.” I went on to do a number more of these with confidence and taking care to follow the correct steps toward completion. The other point to this story is SLOW DOWN AND GET YOUR WORK DONE End of story.

We started 1 John with understanding that Jesus is real and He continues to impact us daily not just during His time as deity in flesh
We talked about light and the power of light to drive out darkness and that mankind often prefers darkness and hiding our deeds to being exposed to light.
We looked at both the blood of animals and the blood of Jesus that purifies us from all sin.
Then to what we actually believe and having to live it out.
We talked about getting it right in relationships
Then on to stages of life and maturity

We are far enough into 1 John where the cyclical nature of this writing is beginning to show. John will be referring to things he has talked about earlier in the book and even though it has taken us many weeks and messages to get this far, it is still a single writing from his hand. Also we need to remember that John is the author of the Gospel of John and Revelations. These will be referenced and as all of us have “ways” and “life philosophies” so does John and his writings reflect the issues that are important to him.

Today we come to 1 John 2:18-27

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

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

²⁴ As for you, see that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ And this is what he promised us—eternal life. ²⁶ I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. ²⁷ As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him.

18. The term “last hour”

Theologically, they connected this period to the new age associated with the coming of Jesus, marked by His death and resurrection. Before this there were no antichrists because Jesus had not yet come.

19. These were people that left voluntarily, they were not thrown out, they left as the beliefs they held were no longer in line with the church. They were not “bought in” to the truth of Jesus. This is certainly a statement we can make today as well. Not just individuals, but as a society.

We have to go back to the times and remember who John is directly addressing – the Gnostics and dualism. Spirit is good and material is bad and they are separate and unconnected.

20. John is addressing a group of people that claimed to have an exclusive ritual anointing that gave them knowledge (gnostic), as opposed to the anointing that came from the Holy One a reference to the Holy Spirit.

John 16⁷ But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹ about sin, because people do not believe in me; ¹⁰ about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; ¹¹ and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

¹² “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.”

22. John is not addressing the Jews who deny that Jesus is the Messiah, but those who denied that Christ came in the flesh. This group probably included the idea that the “true Christ” merely appeared in human form to bring eternal life, that His human existence was without real significance.

By denying Jesus true sonship, these opponents denied the Father as well.

Zondervan “Little wonder that John designates them “antichrists”.

They rejected Jesus. They rejected their own sinfulness and need of forgiveness (1:8-10), the life of love (2:4,6,8) and their “fellowship” with the Father and Son (1:1-4, 6-7)

It is a scary thing to think about the anti-christ, so let's look at what John is actually talking about.

John could have said "anti" but probably a better interpretation is against/ "opposer of Christ"

Let's take a moment to "demystify" the meaning of antichrist.

Slow down and get your work done!

We can build this up to become an unattainable force of evil, so let's look at what John is talking about here.

Ryrie Study Bible delineates as such:

There are 3 separate things John is addressing here:

1. The spirit of antichrist which refers to the demonic forces behind antichrist teaching and activity.
(4:3) and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; and this is the spirit of antichrist, of which you have heard that is coming and now it is already in the world.
2. The Antichrist of the apocalypse also referred to as the beast in the book of Revelation (Rev 6:2, 11:7, 13:1, 14:9, 15:2, 16:2, 17:3 and 13, 19:10 and 20:10)
3. Many antichrists are present and active in his time and throughout church history. The ones to whom John is speaking belonged to the visible church but were not believers. They denied the reality of the incarnation of Christ and His relationship to the Father. (vv. 21-23)

AntiChrist – Christ vs. knowledge

Dualism – spirit and body separate

Knowledge is superior and can be achieved vs. all wisdom is from God.

The statement of:

Jesus, Son of God, fully God and fully man, incarnate deity, lived a sinless life, willingly gave up His life, died on a cross, became the once and for all atoning sacrifice for sin, took the keys of hell and death and was raised from the dead and sits at the right hand of the Father interceding for us and will return as the conquering King to establish His eternal kingdom.

This statement was polarizing in that culture as well as it is in our current day!

The beginning of chapter 2 was an ethical/moral test – do your actions line up with your words
Now in this section he adds a theological test: They must hold a proper view of Christ.

Let's go back to the story of the shower pan.

I had built it up in my mind as an unattainable, focused on the impossible, mystifying, undoable thing.

Addressing this scripture we need to do the same thing.

Focus not on the unattainable, big scary, built up in our minds as unovercomeable, but on what it takes to bring about the proper result.

Demystify antichrist – one who opposes or is against Christ

We have to also understand that God will give us at the right time His power to defeat him.

What opposes Jesus?

If we go back to Genesis and understand that when Satan was thrown out of Heaven, he became an orphan and committed to doing whatever he could to hurt the heart of God. This makes much more sense.

Do you see that Jesus is the polarizing issue here?

Acts 4:12 **Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”**

Not only Jesus, but whether or not you believe that He is the Son of God?

Do we believe that He is God incarnate, come to earth and that He is/was God and man and that during His time on earth had to be in order to fulfill the plan of God from creation?

IVP commentary - These verses would counter equally well a non-Christian Jewish opposition and a Cerinthian opposition to the Christian faith.

Compromising the absolute uniqueness of Jesus as the Christ and the only way to the Father would probably permit Jewish believers to remain in the synagogues – thus delivering them from the direct challenge of the imperial cult and threat of persecution.

Cerintus, (100 AD) believed that the Christ – Spirit came on Jesus, but was not identical to him; as was a common teaching of the Gnostics.

We need to not focus on the bad guy, but to get it correct we need to focus on the truth of who Jesus really is.

Acknowledge that this is spiritual

Often, we want to solve triune problems with biune answers and cut out spirit.

The key here is to recognize the triuneness of our being and that sometimes the answer resides in the spiritual; body and soul are not able to do the work on this.

God, thank you for making us in your image: Body, Soul and Spirit and that each one has a role being complete. Help us not be gnostic in our beliefs, thinking that Spirit is not necessary and that we stand with Christ.

Questions:

Are you settled in your heart about who Jesus is?

Is there a big scary thing that you have catastrophized? – we can pray with you

Does “slow down and get your work done” apply to any current area of your life?