

Deep Practice Discipleship Guide

1 John 2:18–27 – “Remaining in the Truth”

1. Opening Reflection (Share)

Begin by reflecting together on your practice from last week:

- How did you do with your commitment?
- Where did you sense God’s presence or guidance?
- What was challenging or surprising?
- What did you learn about yourself or about God through that practice?

Encourage honesty and grace. Growth comes through reflection and perseverance.

2. Sermon Outline (Learn)

Sermon Title: *Remaining in the Truth*

Text: 1 John 2:18–27

Big Idea:

In a world full of counterfeits, the best way to recognize what is false is to know and remain in what is true—Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

I. The Urgency of the Hour (vv. 18–19)

A. The Meaning of “the Last Hour”

- John isn’t talking about a countdown clock but an urgent spiritual moment.
- The “last days” began with Christ’s coming and continue until His return (Acts 2:17; Heb. 1:2).
- “The last hour” heightens the sense of decision and discernment — we live in the final act of God’s redemptive story.

Illustration – The Golden Hour

In photography, there's a brief window before sunset called *the golden hour*. The light is beautiful but fleeting. If you hesitate, you miss the shot.

John says we live in that kind of moment — not panic time, but *decision time*. The light of Christ is shining, but shadows grow longer. This is the time to decide where we stand.

B. The Reality of Many Antichrists

- John warns: “Many antichrists have come.”
 - These are people once part of the community who left because they were never rooted in the truth.
 - Their departure exposed what was already true in their hearts.
 - Counterfeit Christianity has always existed—appearing genuine, but lacking the imprint of Christ.
 - The danger: drifting from truth into convenience, comfort, or self-centered spirituality.
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II. The Nature of the Opposition (vv. 20–23)

A. The Adversaries We Face

- Our deepest struggle is not against flesh and blood but against spiritual deception (Eph. 6:12).
- John reminds believers that our adversaries include:
 - **Sin** — corrupts and blinds the heart.
 - **Satan** — deceives and accuses (1 Pet. 5:8).
 - **False teachers** — distort the truth about Jesus.

B. The Falsehood They Proclaim

- They deny Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God.
- They separate Jesus from the Father, destroying the foundation of the gospel.
- This echoes earlier deception (1:8–10): denying sin and our need for grace.
- They remove the cross and replace it with human effort or knowledge.

C. The Heart of Antichrist Teaching

- **Denial of Jesus' sacrifice** undermines salvation.
- **Denial of His relationship with the Father** destroys the Trinity.
- **Denial of His love and grace** replaces dependence on Christ with confidence in self.

Illustration – Counterfeit Currency

A pawn shop appraiser or bank teller doesn't study every fake bill; they study the real one. When you know what's genuine, you can spot the fake immediately.

False teaching works the same way. When we deeply know Christ—His voice, His Word, His character—we can discern what isn't from Him.

III. How Do We Not Succumb to False Teaching? (vv. 20, 24–27)

A. The Spirit's Role in Keeping Us Rooted

- “You have been anointed by the Holy One.”
- The *anointing* refers to the Holy Spirit—our internal guide and teacher (John 14:26; 16:13).
- The Spirit's presence assures us that truth is not merely information but relationship.
- The same Spirit who inspired the apostles continues to teach and guard believers today.

B. Remain in What You Heard from the Beginning

- “Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you.”
- Don't trade the simplicity of the gospel for something new or novel.
- Spiritual maturity doesn't mean moving past the gospel—it means going deeper into it.
- The message that first saved us is the same truth that keeps us.

C. Abide (menō) in Christ

- To abide means to stay connected, dependent, and faithful in relationship.
- Remaining in Christ is both perseverance and presence—choosing to stay near Him when life grows confusing.

Illustration – Lost Child

When I was young, I was separated from my mother in a crowd. Fear surged, but I remembered her words:

“If you ever get lost, stay where you are—I’ll come find you.”

I stood still, and soon she found me.

That’s what John is saying: when you feel lost or uncertain, stay where you last heard His voice. Stay rooted in truth. Jesus will find you.

IV. Continue in What You First Believed (vv. 24–27)

A. Jesus Did Die for You

- His sacrifice breaks sin and deception’s power.

B. Jesus Does Love You

- His love isn’t based on performance but covenant faithfulness.

C. Jesus’ Grace Is Real

- Grace doesn’t mean effort is irrelevant; it means performance is unnecessary.
 - When we fail, we don’t lose truth—the Truth Himself holds us.
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V. Remaining in the Truth (Application)

1. Stay in the Word You Heard from the Beginning (v. 24)

- Revisit the story of Jesus often—His life, death, resurrection.
- Read Scripture not just for *information*, but for *formation*.
- Ask daily: *What truth of Christ do I need to remember today?*

2. Stay in Fellowship with God’s People

- The Christian life is not lived in isolation.
- The Spirit’s anointing is discerned best in community.
- When questions or doubts arise, bring them into the light with trusted believers.

3. Stay Confident in His Grace

- You are not held in truth by your strength but by His Spirit.
 - When you stumble, return to what you know is true:
Jesus did die for you. Jesus does love you. His grace is real.
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3. Discussion Questions (Reflect & Apply)

Remember & Understand

1. What does John mean by “the last hour”?
2. Why does John say that “many antichrists have come”?
3. What is the “anointing” that believers have received?

Apply & Analyze

4. How can we recognize counterfeit teaching today?
5. Why do you think John ties abiding in truth to abiding in relationship?
6. How does the Holy Spirit help us discern truth from falsehood?

Evaluate & Create

7. What does it look like in your life to “remain where you last heard His voice”?
 8. How can your group encourage one another to stay grounded in truth and grace this week?
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4. Storying Exercise (Tell)

Story: *John 15:1–8 – The Vine and the Branches*

Read Aloud:

Have one person read the story slowly.

Retell:

Ask someone to retell it from memory — focusing on the relationship between the vine, branches, and fruit.

Encourage others to fill in details or add what they remember.

5. Storying Discussion Questions

1. What happens to branches that don’t remain in the vine?

2. How does abiding in the vine relate to remaining in the truth?
 3. What helps us “bear fruit” in this relationship?
 4. What might be pruning moments that keep us close to Jesus?
 5. How do you sense God calling you to stay connected this week?
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6. Deep Practice Commitment (Live)

Close by inviting everyone to write a new or continuing **Deep Practice Commitment** for this week:

- How will you remain in the truth this week?
- What practice will help you stay rooted in Christ?
- How will you stay connected to community and grace?

Examples:

- Read one chapter of John’s Gospel each day, focusing on Jesus’ words.
- Talk with a Christian friend about how you stay grounded in faith.
- When anxiety or confusion arises, repeat: *“Jesus did die for me. Jesus does love me. His grace is real.”*

Encourage sharing (if comfortable), then close in prayer for faithfulness and discernment.