

“Christ, Antichrists, and Followers of Christ”

(1 John 2:18-27 ~ Part 2)

Introduction

➤ To be sure, any study on the Antichrist (or antichrists), can be a bit unnerving if not outright frightening. Many Christians would undoubtedly prefer to study something more encouraging and joyful. Even Jude resounded such sentiment, and yet knew of the importance of understanding that we are in the midst of a spiritual battle:

Jude 3-4 ~ “Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. ⁴For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.”

➤ The phrase “*crept in unnoticed*” (*pareisduno*) is especially conspicuous and ominous. This translates a Greek word which refers to those who have “secretly or stealthily slipped in alongside.”

Gal 2:4 ~ “Yet because of false brothers secretly brought in [*pareisaktos*] – who slipped in [*pareiserchomai*] to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery”

2 Peter 2:1-2 ~ “But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in [*pareisagō*] destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. ²And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed.”

Matt 7:15 ~ “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.”

Matt 10:16 ~ “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.”

Acts 20:29 ~ “I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock”

➤ As Christians, we need to be warned and reminded that Satan – who “*disguises himself as an angel of light*” (2Cor.11:14) – does not merely attack the church from without, but also from within. In fact, it can be soundly argued that Satan’s most affective assaults against Christians have come under the banner (or guise) of Christianity (or religion), and not from atheists or agnostics outside the church. For Satan employs false teachers, false prophets, false Christians – antichrists and eventually the antichrist – as spiritual terrorists in the church; dressed in the latest “*sheep’s clothing*” of a Christless Christianity.

Matt 23:27-28 ~ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people’s bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.”

2 Tim 3:1-5 ~ “But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ²For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.”

➤ As Christians, such warnings and reminders serve as catalysts of faithfulness, keeping us from being naïve and vulnerable to Satan’s diabolical schemes and destructive heresies. Such teachings can actually serve to bolster our faith in Christ, and galvanize our faithfulness to Christ.

1 John 2:18-27 ~ “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. ¹⁹They 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. ²⁰But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. ²¹I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth. ²²Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. ²³No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also. ²⁴Let 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. ²⁵And this is the promise that he made to us – eternal life. ²⁶I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you. ²⁷But 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.”

➤ In this passage of Scripture, the apostle John addressed the antichrist/antichrists, and true followers of Christ. It reveals various truths about the antichrists, and the true followers of Christ.

A. Who are the antichrists?

- The Greek word translated “*antichrist*” (*antichristos*) literally means “anti-Christ” (plural, “*antichrists*”; vs.18), that which is opposed or contrary to Christ [used five times in the NT, only by the apostle John, and only in John’s epistles (1Jn.2:18^{2x}, 22; 4:3; 2Jn.7)]. In a general sense, the “*antichrist*” is anyone or anything that is opposed to, or at enmity with, Jesus Christ. This certainly includes Satan (2Thess.2:3-10; Rev.13:11-18), but also anything or anyone who is doing the work of Satan (see Jn.8:41, 44; Phil.3:18).
- Scripture is filled, in both the New and Old Testaments, with warnings concerning false prophets, false teachers, and false believers in the church (2Pet.2:13-; Jd.4; 2Cor.11:13-15; Gal.2:4; Acts 20:29-30). We are exhorted to wise and discerning, not foolish or naïve. We must be constantly alert, grounded in the Word of God, on guard against any false teacher or false teaching. We simply cannot afford to be gullible nor ignorant. We have been warned repeatedly to beware of false teachers – even within the church. We must not think that we are somehow immune to, or beyond, being deceived (see Matt.10:16; 1Cor.10:12; Gal.1:6; 3:1).
- Notice that the apostle John (writing words inspired by the Holy Spirit of God; 2Tim.3:16; 2Pet.1:21) wrote that “*it is the last hour*” (vs.18^{2x}). Here he is referring to the imminent Second Coming of Christ. The “*last hour*” (*eschatos hōra*) is simply a reference to an indefinite period of time – i.e. the time between Christ’s First Coming (or His resurrection) and His Second Coming. None of us know how long this “*hour*” will last (see Matt.24:36; Acts 1:7), but we know that we are closer to the Second Coming of Christ today than ever before! All things are in complete harmony with God’s sovereign will, and will the “end times” will happen exactly as God has planned. In God’s Word, we are repeatedly exhorted to always be prepared for Christ’s return (2Tim.3:1; 1Thess.5:2; 2Pet.3:11-12).
- In this passage, we find four descriptions of the antichrists.

1. They are “many” (vs.18)

- First, John noted that “*many antichrists have come*” (vs.18). Again, the (singular) “*antichrist*” (vs.18, 22) is ultimately a reference to Satan (or one who Satan will possess), but also refers to those whom Satan possesses in an attempt to dethrone God – to destroy the works of God and deceive the people of God. To be sure, the final “*antichrist is coming*” (vs.18), but there have been and will continue to be many antichrists who come to wreak havoc on the church of Christ.

2. They are false teachers / false Christians (vs.19)

- Ultimately, in a general sense, any “*antichrist*” is essentially a false teachers, false prophets, false apostles, false messiahs, and false Christians. In speaking of the antichrists who have come, John wrote: *“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”* (vs.19). Here we see that the antichrists are, or at least were, professing Christians! While they were never truly saved, these false teachers proclaim (or once proclaimed) to be Christians.
- It is vital to understand that the antichrist, and the antichrists, will attack the church from within the church. That is, they will identify themselves as Christians and find for themselves positions of “spiritual authority” within Christianity – not necessarily from atheistic or anti-Christian groups (2Tim.4:1-4).

Scripture tells us that they are wolves “*in sheep’s clothing*” (Matt.7:15; cf. Acts 20:29); they are false teachers “*disguising themselves as apostles of Christ*” (2Cor.11:13); they are “*evil people and imposters*” (2Tim.3:13); they have “*the appearance of godliness*” but are in fact godless (2Tim.3:5). Satan’s scheme to lead Christians away from the truth of God’s Word through false prophets and false teachers, has been his M.O. since the creation of mankind (see Gen.3:1-6; cf. Deut.13:1-5; Ezek.34:1-10). According to Jesus, Satan is “*a liar and the father of lies*” (Jn.8:44; cf. 2Cor.11:14). Jesus repeatedly warned His disciples about false prophets who would come trying to lead people away from the truth of God (see Matt.13:18-23).

3. They deny Jesus as the Christ (vs.22)

- A third description of the antichrist, and all antichrists, is that they deny Jesus as the Christ: *“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”* (vs.22). Clearly, this is not some minor or secondary issue or doctrine. The teaching of these false teachers – “*the antichrist*” (vs.18, 22), and those who are “*antichrists*” (vs.18), possessed with the “*spirit of the antichrist*” (1Jn.4:3) – is damnable; it condemns them and will condemn all who follow them (Gal.1:8-9).
- This is because they actually “*den[y] that Jesus is the Christ*” (vs.22). This does not mean they denied the (historical) existence of Jesus (of Nazareth), but they rejected the truth that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God and Savior of the world [“*denies*” (*arneomai*); renounce, deny, disown (vs.22^x, 23)]. That is, they deny the true nature of Jesus Christ as fully God and fully man (Col.1:19; 2:9), and therefore reject Him as the one and only Son of God and one and only Savior from God.
- Furthermore, and consequently, they also “*den[y] the Father and the Son*” (vs.22; 1Jn.2:23; Jn.5:23; 8:42; 10:30; 14:6; 15:23). The rejection of Jesus as the Christ is tantamount to a rejection of God. A person simply cannot have one without the other. The true and sobering point is this: You cannot be ‘right with God’ if you are wrong about Jesus Christ. In other words, you cannot have a right and saving relationship with God, unless you have a right and saving relationship with God’s Son, Jesus Christ.

4. They try to deceive true Christians (vs.26)

- Deception is the “name of the game” for all false teachers. Since they are under the demonic influence of Satan, they are liars and deceivers (see Matt.24:5, 11, 24; Jn.8:44; 2Cor.11:14-15).
- Again, we need to be aware of and vigilant against Satan’s deceptions. We cannot afford to be ignorant, naïve, or undiscerning. This is one reason why we must be prayerfully and humbly steeped in the Word of God (2Tim.3:12-17; Col.3:16).
- We must love the Word of God – both incarnate and inspired! We are called to read it, study it, meditate on it, memorize it, and live it. It is our spiritual sword (Eph.6:17; Heb.4:12), able to defend against the lies and deceptions of the devil.

B. Who are the followers of Christ?

➤ In many ways, the opposite of the antichrists are true (faithful) followers of Jesus Christ. Specifically, we find four distinct descriptions regarding true Christians.

I. They persevere in the faith (vs.19)

➤ Unlike false Christians – who profess a faith in Christ, but never actually possessed a true faith in Christ (religious but not saved, spiritual but not Spirit-filled, in church but not in Christ) – true Christians do not fall away from Christ but persevere in Christ. Those (professing Christians) who renounce their belief in or allegiance to Christ reveal that they were never truly followers of Christ. The apostle John put it this way: *“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”* (vs.19).

True Christians, though they stumble and doubt, remain faithful to Christ. False Christians, the antichrists and those who live according to *“the spirit of the antichrist”* (1Jn.4:3), ultimately reveal themselves as false Christians when they walk away from the faith in Christ.

Matt 13:18-23 (see Matt.13:1-9) ~ “Hear then the parable of the sower: ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path.

Mark 4:15 ~ “And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them.”

²⁰As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.

Mark 4:16-17 ~ “And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. ¹⁷And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.”

²²As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. (see Jn.15:2, 6)

Mark 4:18-19 ~ “And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, ¹⁹but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.”

²³As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

Mark 4:20 ~ “But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”

➤ The Christian’s perseverance does not merit salvation, it proves it! Just as we cannot earn our salvation by works, neither can we secure our salvation by works. Perseverance is indeed essential, but it is not merely something that we do. Thankfully, God has not left us alone to persevere in our own strength and wisdom. We participate with Him in our own perseverance, relying on His enabling power and spiritual wisdom. Therefore, our perseverance is evidence that we are truly in Christ.

John 15:8 ~ “By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”

Matt 24:11-13 ~ “And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. ¹²And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³But the one who endures to the end will be saved.”

Heb 10:36-39 ~ “For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. ³⁷ For, ‘Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; ³⁸but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.’ ³⁹But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.”

➤ The faith that endures is the sincere and unyielding belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Although no believer is perfect and every believer stumbles and struggles in the faith, this truth is replete in Scripture: True faith perseveres. In other words, true faith in Christ results in a true faithfulness to Christ.

Phil 1:6 ~ “And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”

Phil 2:12-13 ~ “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”

1 Thess 5:23-24 ~ “Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.”

Jude 24-25 ~ “Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, ²⁵to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.”

2. They are Spirit-filled (vs.20-21, 27)

➤ Whereas false teachers and false Christians operate in the “*spirit of the antichrist*” (1Jn.4:3), true Christians are indwelt with the power and presence of the Holy Spirit of God. In verse twenty, speaking to those who are true Christians, we read: “*you have been anointed by the Holy One*” (vs.20). The Greek word translated “*anointed*” (*chrisma*) can literally be translated “ointment” or anything that is applied by smearing. The word “*Christ*” (vs.22; *Christos*), for example, literally means the anointed One or Messiah. In fact, it is Christ “*the Holy One*” (vs.20),

2 Cor 1:21-22 ~ “And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, ²²and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.”

➤ One way the Spirit saves and sanctifies true believers is by enabling them to understand God’s truth. In verse twenty-seven we read: “*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*” (vs.27). This, of course, is not meant to imply that true Christians know “everything” (as if they are omniscient), but that they have accurate and complete saving knowledge of the truth of Christ. That is, through the Spirit, Christians have “everything” they need to know about “*all things that pertain to life and godliness*” (2Pet.1:3-5).

It is through this “anointing” from God that Christians are saved and being sanctified in Christ (Tit.3:4-6).

John 14:25-26 ~ “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. ²⁶But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”

John 15:26 ~ “But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.”

John 16:13-14 ~ “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”

1 Cor 2:10-16 ~ “these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹For who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹²Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. ¹³And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

¹⁴The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. ¹⁶“For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.”

➤ Consequently, of true believers, John wrote: *“you all have knowledge. ²¹I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth”* (vs.20-21). In other words, all lies are fundamentally false and not grounded in truth; that is, the truth of God’s Word:

John 17:17 ~ “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.” (see Ps.19:7-11; 2Tim.3:16-17; 2Pet.1:21).

Truth and falsehood, honesty and lies, are fundamentally incompatible (e.g., half-truths and white-lies are just euphemisms for falsity and dishonesty). Those who profess to be Christians but reject the truth of the Gospel (e.g., *“den[ying] that Jesus is the Christ”*; vs.22), are not truly followers of Christ. Their persistence in heresy and apostasy prove that they were never truly saved (see 1Jn.2:19).

1 John 4:3 ~ “... every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.”

➤ “All truth is God’s truth” and every lie, every untruth, is of the devil (Jn.8:44). Through the indwelling presence and sanctifying power of God’s Holy Spirit, Christians know the truth about Jesus Christ and that truth sets them free from the power and presence of sin (Jn.8:31-32). All other “truths” [today people are comfortable with false distinctions like “your truth” and “my truth”] are errors and lies. Everything that competes with and opposes God’s truth is of the devil and cannot save (see Jn.3:18, 36; 14:6; Acts 4:12). The Gospel is not ambiguous, nor is it pliable to conform to humanistic worldviews and secular philosophies. To deny Jesus as the Christ is to reject God’s truth, and God’s only means of salvation.

✓ **Illust:** “No wonder postmodernism, which prides itself on being tolerant of every competing worldview, is nonetheless hostile to biblical Christianity. Even the most determined postmodernist recognizes that biblical Christianity by its very nature is totally incompatible with a position of uncritical broadmindedness. If we accept the fact that Scripture is the objective, authoritative truth of God, we are bound to see that every other view is not equally or potentially valid.

There is no need to seek middle ground through dialogue with proponents of anti-Christian worldviews, as if the truth could be refined by the dialectical method. It is folly to think truth given by divine revelation needs any refining or updating. Nor should we imagine that we can meet opposing worldviews on some philosophically neutral ground. The ground between us is not neutral. If we really believe the Word of God is true, we know that everything opposing it is error. And we are to yield no ground whatsoever to ERROR (John MacArthur; *Why One Way?*; p.62-63).

3. They confess Jesus as the Christ (vs.22-23)

- As we saw last Sunday, non-Christians, as well as false Christians, reject Jesus as the Christ (vs.22) and in doing so they consequently reject God: *“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. ²³No one who denies the Son has the Father. ...”* (vs.22-23).

Quite simply, the opposite of denying Jesus as the Christ is confessing Jesus as the Christ: *“Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also”* (vs.23). True believers readily and unapologetically confess Jesus as the Christ – the one and only Son of God and one and only Savior from God – and consequently have God as their Heavenly Father. The Greek word translated *“confesses”* (*homologeō*) means to profess, acknowledge, or admit, and could literally be translated “to say again” or “to say the same.”

That is, when we truly confess our sins we are saying the same thing about ourselves that God is saying about us (which is why denying that we are sinners is tantamount to calling God a liar; 1Jn.1:10). Likewise, when we confess Jesus as the Christ we are saying the same thing about Jesus as God says about Jesus (which is why disbelieving in the Son is tantamount to calling God a liar; 1Jn.5:10).

- To *“[confess] the Son”* (vs.23) is not just to admit that Jesus existed, but that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. It is to affirm all that Scripture states the antichrists (false teachers/false prophets/false believers) deny (vs.22-23; see 2Pet.2:1; Jd.1:4): true believers confess Jesus as the Christ; true believers confess Jesus as the Son of God; true believers confess Jesus as the Savior from God; true believers confess the sovereignty and supremacy of Jesus Christ.

1 John 4:2-3 ~ “By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.”

2 John 7 ~ “For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.”

- As we saw last Sunday, *“No one who denies the Son has the Father”* (vs.23). The rejection of Jesus as the Christ is tantamount to a rejection of God, as Jesus is (the incarnate Son of God) was sent by God to be the Savior of all who would believe. A person cannot be reconciled to God if they deny the Savior from God. The true and sobering point is this: You cannot be ‘right with God’ if you are wrong about Jesus Christ. In other words, you cannot have a right and saving relationship with God, unless you have a right and saving relationship with God’s Son, Jesus Christ.

There is no other way to be saved, no alternate path to God. For Christ is the one and only Savior sent from God (Jn.3:16). He is not only the only one who did die for your sins, but He (as fully God and fully man) is the only one who could have died for your sins. Salvation comes through God’s grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone! (Jn.14:6; Eph.2:8-9; Acts 4:12).

1 John 2:23 ~ “No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.”

John 5:23 ~ “... Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.”

John 8:42 ~ “Jesus said to them, ‘If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me.’”

John 14:6 ~ “Jesus said ... ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’” [note the definite article 3x; “no one” (*oudeis*) not even one, not a single person]

John 10:30 ~ “I and the Father are one.”

John 15:23 ~ “Whoever hates me hates my Father also.”

➤ Consequently, the opposite is also true: *“Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also”* (vs.23). Just as a rejection of Jesus as the Christ is a rejection of God, a true confession of Jesus as the Christ is to be reconciled to God. There is no hope of salvation apart from receiving Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. For Jesus is the one and only Son of God, and one and only Savior sent from God. The Christian is saved by God’s grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

1 John 4:15 ~ “Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.”

Matt 10:32-33 ~ “So everyone who acknowledges [*homologeō*] me before men, I also will acknowledge [*homologeō*] before my Father who is in heaven, ³³but whoever denies [*arneomai*; 1Jn.2:22-23] me before men, I also will deny [*arneomai*] before my Father who is in heaven.” (see Rom.10:9-10)

Acts 4:12 ~ “And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

4. They abide in God and God in them (vs.24-25, 27)

➤ The word *“abide”* (*menō*) is used six times in this passage (vs.19, 24^{3x}, 27^{2x}). The word can mean “to stay, remain, continue or endure.” As we’ve seen, those who are truly in Christ remain (abide) in Christ and those who do not remain (abide) in Christ were never truly in Christ (1Jn.2:19).

John then described a deeper aspect of what it means to abide in Christ: *“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. ... ²⁷But 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”* (vs.24, 27).

➤ Notice, in just these few verses, all that abiding entails:

- ♦ The truth of God abiding in you (vs.24^{2x}) – *“let what you heard ... abide in you”* and *“if what you heard ... abides in you”* (see 1Jn.3:18; 3Jn.4; Jn.8:31; Col.3:16; 1Pet.1:23)
- ♦ You abiding in God the Son (vs.24) – *“you too will abide in the Son”* (see Jn.15:4-11)
- ♦ You abiding in God the Father (vs.24) – *“you too will abide ... in the Father”* (see 1Jn.4:12-13; Jn.17:21)
- ♦ God the Spirit abiding in you (vs.27) – *“the anointing ... abides in you”* (see 1Cor.3:16; Jn.17:23; 1Jn.4:13)
- ♦ You abiding in God the Son/Spirit (vs.27) – *“abide in him”* (see 1Jn.2:6, 28; Rom.8:9-10)

1 John 3:24 ~ “Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.”

➤ God’s Word teaches us that the true Christian’s salvation is secure in Christ, because every true believer is in Him and He in every true believer – every Christian in the Triune God, and the Triune God in every Christian!

As the Christian is not saved by good works, so too they cannot secure their salvation by good works. Thankfully, the Christian’s justification, sanctification, and glorification are all secure in the sovereign love and saving grace of Almighty God, through Christ and by the Holy Spirit given as a deposit guaranteeing their inheritance (see 2Cor.1:22, 5:5; Eph.1:14; 1Pet.1:4-5).

1 John 5:13 ~ “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.”

John 10:27-30 ~ “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. ³⁰I and the Father are one.”

Rom 8:1, 38-39 ~ “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ... ³⁸For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

➤ This is exactly what we read in verse twenty-five: *“And this is the promise that he made to us – eternal life”* (vs.25). Notice that this *“promise”* (*epangelia*) is from God – who does not and cannot lie (Heb.6:18; Tit.1:2). God’s promise of *“eternal life”* (vs.25) – not temporary life – is given and realized through His Son, to all who truly receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

1 Peter 1:3-5 ~ “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1Thess.5:23-24; Jd.1:24-25)

Conclusion

➤ As Christians, our eternal life in Christ is secure because it rests on the promise of God, given to those who truly believe.

1 John 4:4 ~ “Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.”