

# The First Epistle of John

## (Week 22 – 1John 2:18-23)

### I. Review:

- A. Most likely, the term “*last hour*” is another way of saying “*last days*” or the New Testament era. (Heb. 1:1-2; James 5:3)
- B. The antichrist, in context, is referring to the heretical group known as the Gnostics
- C. Guidelines to watch for:
  - 1. Beware: Satan works in the realm of religion (cf. 2Cor. 11:14-15; 1John 2:19)
  - 2. Beware of those who form new groups around new theology
  - 3. Beware of those who bring new “truths” that the NT writers have missed.

### II. Avoid Spiritual Deception (part 3)

- A. 1John 2:18-19, “*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. (19) 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.*”
  - 1. Some believe verse 19 is teaching “*once-saved-always-saved*”
    - a. They say that anyone who goes out from the Church but does not continue with the Church are said to have never been saved at all.
    - b. But anyone who go out from the Church and continues with the Church without ever falling away are said to be truly saved.
  - 2. Once-Saved-Always-Saved (OSAS) Inconsistencies:
    - a. Some OSAS teachers say that if a professing Christian falls into blatant sin, he was never saved to begin with.
    - b. On the other hand, other OSAS teachers would never question the salvation of a professing Christian who strays into blatant sin, as in the case of King David who knowingly committed adultery and pre-meditated murder.
  - 3. **Question: Does the Bible teach that a Christian can lose his/her salvation?**
    - a. Yes!
      - i. John 15:1-6 speaks of certain branches (disciples) in the vine (Jesus) being cut off.
        - You can’t be cut off from something unless you were once part of that something.
      - ii. 2Timothy 2:12 says if we deny Him, He will deny us.
        - Paul uses the pronoun “*we*” referring to himself, Timothy and all other Christians.
      - iii. Hebrews 10:26-29 says if we go on willfully sinning, there will be no more sacrifice of sin!
    - 4. **Question: In context, what is John saying in verse 19?**
      - a. John is addressing the Gnostics, who started out in the fellowship but came out of the fellowship, teaching false doctrines.
      - b. John is basically saying what Paul warned would happen to the Ephesians in Acts 20:28-30!
        - i. Men will rise up within their own, distorting the truth in order to draw away disciples to themselves!
      - c. 1John 2:19 does not say these were never saved to begin with nor does it say they were saved then fell away. But we know that other passages do teach that a Christian can apostatize!

- B. 1John 2:20, *“But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge.”*
1. Anoint – Greek word *“chrisma”* which means to smear or rub (oil)
  2. **Question: How does a person receive the anointing of the Holy Spirit?**
    - a. When they repent and are baptized (Acts 2:38)
    - b. Paul said we are sealed with the Holy Spirit after we heard and believed the gospel (Ephesians 1:13 – repentance and baptism implied).
  3. **Question: How is one taught by the Spirit of God?**
    - a. By hearing/reading the Word of God, the Bible
    - b. Or, as in the case of the first century, some Christians were given the miraculous gift of knowledge (1Cor. 12:8)
    - c. These Christians knew enough truth to recognize the falseness of Gnostic doctrine in regards to the person of Christ.
      - i. These true Christians were taught, at their conversion, that Jesus is the Christ who came from the Father.
      - ii. These Gnostics were teaching differently (vs. 22).
  4. Today, many professing “Christians” claim that they are being instructed and led by the Holy Spirit apart from the Scriptures.
    - a. They use 1John 2:20 as their proof text!
    - b. Notice the following inconsistencies of those who claim to be led by the Spirit:
      - i. Many who claim to be taught and led by the Holy Spirit deny baptism as being essential to salvation, yet the Holy Spirit, in the Bible, says baptism is essential (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:39)
      - ii. Some who claim to be taught and led by the Holy Spirit deny the trinity, calling it a concept of the Devil (Oneness Pentecostal) yet other Pentecostal groups who claim to be taught and led by the Holy Spirit believe the trinity to be true. Who is right?
    - c. In the first century, the Spirit taught exactly what is written in the New Testament.
    - d. Today, many teach and believe doctrines that are contrary to the Scriptures, yet they refer to their beliefs as being “Spirit-taught!”
- C. 1John 2:21, *“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.”*
1. **Question: What truth did they know?**
    - a. That Jesus is the Christ (cf. 1John 2: 22)
    - b. That Jesus came in the flesh (cf. 1John 4:2)
    - c. That Jesus is the propitiation for our sins (1John 2:2), not some secret knowledge
    - d. By implication, they knew that baptism was essential
      - i. According to 2<sup>nd</sup> century Christian writer Iranaeus, the Gnostics denied the essentialness of baptism.
- D. 1John 2:22-23, *“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.”*
1. The Gnostics were the antichrist because they denied Jesus as the Christ!
    - a. Peter confessed Jesus as being the Christ! This truth was revealed to Peter by the Father (Matthew 16:16-17).
    - b. Therefore, denying His Christ-ship is denying the Father, who made His Son, the Christ (Acts 2:36).