

Sermon:
1 John 2:26-28

The Spirit, the Word, & the Righteousness
that Keep you from Straying

REVIEW: The profile of a Christian vs. a Fake



1 JOHN 2 CHRISTIAN PROFILE

- † Know it's the last hour (Jesus is Christ)
- † Holy Spirit is teaching you truth
- † Given the promise of eternal life
- † See Jesus as source of righteousness
- † Born of God
- † Practices God's righteousness
- † Remains with Christ's church
- † Holds fast the original Gospel
- † Confesses Jesus as Son of God
- † Has relationship w/ the Son & the Father

ANTICHRIST PROFILE

- † Doesn't see ascendancy of Jesus
- † Is a liar
- † Threatened with eternal death
- † Sees man as source of right
- † Sits under the Devil
- † Practices sin
- † Leaves the church
- † Leads others astray
- † Denies Jesus is God or Messiah
- † Does not have God's Fatherhood

Last Sunday we looked at the profile that John paints in chapter 2 of his first epistle of the kind of person he calls “antichrist” – these antichrists have been in and out of the church ever since it began, and we still have them today.

My application to that sermon was basically to identify yourself and other people using this profile from holy scripture and act according to who you are and who they are.

Now in this sermon, I want to move on to the action point that the Apostle John himself gives us. There is only one command in chapter two, and he issues it four times in vs.24, 27, and 28. That's what I want to center on today, but before we do that, I want to spend a moment clarifying the problem which is being addressed:

Problem: Being Led Astray



† V.26 These things I write to you concerning the ones who are [trying to]

- πλανώντων
- seduce^{KJV}
- deceive^{Geneva}
- lead astray^{NIV}

YOU



•I heard a knock at my door one evening around Christmastime, just after I had gathered my family for devotions. Two well-dressed gentlemen greeted me politely and then said, “Did you know that Jesus never claimed to be God?” Their name tags read, “Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.” I didn’t respond so well. I got so angry, I said something like, “You just interrupted me as I was trying to lead my family in worshipping Jesus as God, and I resent you telling people that Jesus isn’t God!” They may have not realized what they were doing, but they were leading gullible Christians astray.

•One of my best friends in college wrote me one day, saying that he could not be a Christian any more because his PhD studies in philosophy had disproved Christianity. He said he wouldn’t explain it to me because he didn’t want to ruin my faith.

•I remember when Franky Schaeffer, whose Christian movies I loved, and whose father was influential in forming my Christian worldview renounced the evangelical faith and went Eastern Orthodox, and, if I remember correctly, later renounced Christian faith altogether.

•Another one of my friends from college who had been involved in the World Christian Fellowship wrote me a while back to say that he had pulled his membership from his church and had become a follower of Harold Camping, who said that all churches except for his were apostate and that Jesus was coming back in September of 2004 or some such date long past. How do good Christians get caught up in these kinds of things?

•Y’all are in the cross-hairs. Ever since the Garden of Eden, Satan has been trying to lead us away from a right relationship with God and from our greatest happiness.

•Then, of course, there are all those missionaries I knew who committed adultery, misappropriated ministry funds, abused their children, or simply tanked into deep depression and had to leave the ministry. History is littered with trainwrecks of people’s lives who gave up the faith.

•Are we any better? Is there anything we can do to keep from shipwreck of our faith? John recommends 3 powerful means to keep us on track: Spirit, Word, Righteousness

#1) The Holy Spirit (v.20)



† χρίσμα = Anointing/unction – root of “Christ.”
Represents influence of the Holy Spirit.

† **V.27** And the anointing which you yourselves received from Him remains in you, and you have no need for someone to be teaching you. But as His anointing is teaching you concerning everything-- and it is true; it is not a lie--just as it taught you, remain in Him.

† **John 14:26** NKJV “But 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 things that I said to you.”

- “The first teaching contained implicitly all that is slowly brought to light at later times... The Spirit...is ever bringing something more of the infinite meaning of [Christ's] person & work in connection with ... thought & observation” ~Westcott
- You already know enough to identify false teaching. ~Gordon Clark
- Don't blindly believe everything preachers preach and write in books. Use your Spirit-directed discernment! ~John Cotton

#1 the HS. What does it mean that the anointing teaches us about everything?

• Does it mean that I should stop preaching because you don't need anyone besides the Holy Spirit teaching you? No. As I noted in my last sermon, John is addressing an audience in the ditch on one side of the road – the ditch of uncertainty, so this is an encouragement that they should take confidence as God's people with the truth and not be sidelined by the new and different doctrines of the antichrists. This was not intended to send people into the ditch on the other side of the road of overconfidence and isolation. Isolation is one of the most common strategies of Satan to derail Christians. If John were writing to the antichrists – which he clearly was not, because they are referenced in 3rd person (“they”) as opposed to the 2nd person (“y'all”) that he is writing to, he would have probably told them that they needed instruction (or else written them off as “enemies of all righteousness” as he did to Elymas!).

• It's possible that the phrase "just as it taught you, you abide in Him" is an explanation of "everything" -- everything is taken care of if you'll just abide in Christ. Westcott wrote along similar lines in his classic commentary on 1 John, "The first teaching contained implicitly all that is slowly brought to light at later times... The Spirit...is ever bringing something more of the infinite meaning of [Christ's] person & work in connection with ... thought & observation."

• Gordon Clark connected it rather with the identification of antichrists--they do not need any further teaching to recognize the heresy of the Gnostics, the point being - not that they don't need teaching but - that they know enough to tell the difference between the true apostolic teaching and the lies of antichrists.

• John Cotton, had yet another perspective, emphasizing the supremacy of individual conscience over human teachings. In his context of the Reformation of the traditions of the Roman Catholic church in the 1500's, the reassurance of the value of one's own spirit-anointed conscience was very important, especially when it differed from the authoritarian, yet human, teachings of Rome. Cotton went on to say that we shouldn't implicitly accept the teachings of preachers or books we read, but should test them all with our anointing. This is because the anointing is "true and not a lie." Popular books and speakers might not be true.

#2) The Word (v.26)



1. John “wrote,” so, reading 1 John (and the rest of Scripture) is intended to keep you from going astray.
2. Remaining in a personal relationship with God, allowing yourself to be “taught” by the direct influence on your heart and mind of the Holy Spirit’s “anointing,” (v.27) also keeps you from going astray.

Ecclesiastes 7:18 “It is good that you grasp one thing and also not let go of the other; for the one who fears God comes forth with both of them.” (NASB)



•#2 The Word: John is writing this letter in order to help the believers remain in Christ and not be deceived by the false teachers/ antichrists they are encountering.

•The writing and reading of the epistle of 1 John is one of the means which John recommends by which to abide in Christ and avoid anti-Christ; the first being the unction /anointing of the Holy Spirit. Both the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit are important – spiritual impressions must be confirmed by the Bible, for we cannot abandon what John wrote.

- The Bible as the vehicle of God’s objective revelation of truth.

- An emphasis on Scripture apart from the Spirits tends to lead people toward formalized religious practices, rules and regulations, and theological nitpicking and away from warm personal relationships with family and fellow-Christians, and away from heartfelt love for God, and causes people to miss new things God is doing.

- An emphasis upon the Spirit apart from the Scriptures tends to lead people towards an erratic course with lots of mistakes, towards an anything-goes, permissive lifestyle, and toward spiritual pride and unteachableness and away from accountability.

- History is littered with Christian movements pushing in one or the other of those directions to correct for the churches’ imbalance one way or the other. Healthy Christianity values both the Spirit and the Word. As the wise old preacher of Ecclesiastes said, “It is good to grasp the one and also not let go of the other, for the one who fears God comes forth with both of them!” (Eccl. , NASB)

V.28 Back to the Command – with an incentive!



28) And now, dear children, **stay in Him so that whenever He is revealed [appears], we may have an open conversation [confidence] and not be embarrassed by [ashamed before/shrink from] Him in His presence [at His coming].”**



- Since this is a command, there is obviously work on our part to keep abiding in that relationship with Christ. Filling up on the Bible's words and the Spirit's person is how we do it, as we saw in the last two verses. We must discipline our minds to turn from sin and pursue obedience to God's word; we must discipline ourselves to meditate on God's word and pray rather than following natural thought patterns. We must speak openly of our faith too. We should live such lives that when Christ comes, we will be confident about our relationship with Him, looking forward to His coming, knowing that there is nothing that might upset Him that we're still hiding.

The Greek words containing John's visualization of what might happen at the Second coming are very interesting: The two scenarios are:

1. we might have *parresian* (literally “alongside rhetoric”) - "boldness in speech, freedom in speaking, openness... frankness..." (Pershbacher), The NIV, NAV, and KJV all use the word "confidence," but I tried to convey the strong association of the Greek word with speech, rendering "open conversation."
2. The scenario of "open, unreserved utterance" is contrasted with the scenario of "separation." The wording is literally "ashamed from of Him" or "away from." I chose the phrase "embarrassed by Him."

Which will it be when Christ comes and we stand in His presence and He publicly calls us to account for every deed we've done--good or bad. Will you be confident in your relationship with Christ or will you be shamed? If we are abiding in Christ, we'll be able to be confident and enjoy talking with Him! How awesome that will be!!

#3 Trust in & practice Jesus' Righteousness

V.29a "If you know (εἰδῆτε) that He is righteous..."

- Christ (not you) is the starting point & definer of right.
- Christ (not you) is intrinsically and naturally righteous.

V.29b "... you should also be aware (γινώσκετε) that everyone who does what is right has been born out of Him."

- Only by being born out of Him do you become righteous.
- Only those born out of Him are able to do what is right.



A 3rd way to remain in Christ: Trust in & practice His Righteousness.

- If we abide in Christ and practice righteousness, we will be ready to meet Him "whenever He is revealed."
- This is not self-confidence but a confidence and a righteousness BASED ON CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSENESS. Righteousness is the result of being born of God; it does not come naturally!
- This is probably another refutation of the Gnostic heresy which said that as long as your Spirit is pure, it doesn't matter what sin your body does. The Gnostic teaching is refuted here as John points out that Christ was righteous and that His children will be also marked by "justice/fairness/virtue//righteousness".
- John uses two words for "know" in this verse. The first word, having to do with the knowledge of Christ's righteousness is a revealed or absolute knowledge whereas the second word, having to do with knowing righteous people as being born of God, is a relationship-oriented or experiential knowledge (Westcott 82, Zeller).
- That second word for "know" can be translated in the indicative or the imperative mood -as a statement or a command. I agree with Westcott (82) that it makes a lot of sense as a command. Taken in this way, it drives home the point of the previous verse that we should live a life we won't be ashamed of when Christ comes. "You should know that everyone who does what is right has been born out of Him."
- That picture of being born/begotten/given birth" (Pershbacher) by God is arresting. Having seen several births, the little word "out" in the Greek text (omitted in most English texts) makes it all the more graphic in my mind. I've seen babies coming out of the birth canal, and it is an awesome thing. No wonder John breaks into an exclamation in the next verse! Our being has been formed by God, and everything about the believer is uniquely His and bears His likeness. We are in an incredible relationship with God Himself!

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V.29b **"... you should also be aware (γινώσκετε) that everyone who does what is right has been born out of Him."**

- Only by being born out of Him do you become righteous.
- Only those born out of Him are able to do what is right.

† **What can we do with this?**

- "The beginning of our righteousness is the confession of sins. Thou hast begun not to defend thy sin; now hast thou made a beginning of righteousness." ~Augustine
- Don't get led astray by manmade righteousness games.
- Depend on Jesus (not yourself) to make you righteous. The more sure you are of His righteousness, the more sure you can be that He will make you right.
- Notice who does and does not practice righteousness, and treat them accordingly either as beloved Christian brothers/sisters or as precious souls which God might use you to save.

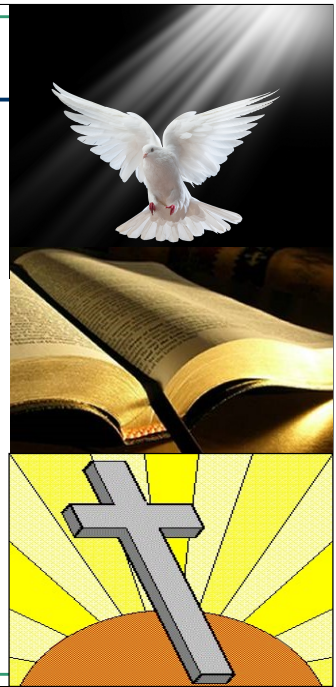


How do you get that righteousness?

- "The beginning of our righteousness is the confession of sins. Thou hast begun not to defend thy sin; now hast thou made a beginning of righteousness." ~Augustine
- That involves recognizing that you are not good enough to hold the standard of right and wrong but Jesus is.
- That involves recognizing that you have broken Jesus' standards of right and wrong recorded in the Bible and pointed out by His Spirit, so you acknowledge your sin and look to Jesus instead of yourself as the source of your righteousness.
- It involves believing that Jesus paid the price that justice required for your sins when He died on the cross, and that He has given you His righteousness and made you a new person.
- It involves following Jesus' leadership and doing what He commanded. That is doing what is right.
- And, as John points out here in his first epistle, it involves recognizing and loving the other Christians who are doing the same thing, and it involves resisting the influence of false teachers who are trying to lead you into a different system of religion apart from the righteousness of Christ.

Conclusion

- † Problem: Being led astray/wandering
- † Solution: Remain in Christ
 - By learning from the Holy Spirit
 - By devoting yourself to the scriptures
 - By trusting in & practicing Jesus' righteousness





1 John 2:18-29

18 Παιδιά, εσχατή ώρα ἐστὶ, καὶ καθὼς ἠκούσατε ὅτι [οἱ TM] ἀντίχριστος ἐρχεται, καὶ νῦν ἀντίχριστοι πολλοὶ γέγονασιν· ὅθεν γινώσκωμεν ὅτι εσχατὴ ὥρα ἐστίν.	2:18 [Dear ^{NIV}] Little children, it is a last hour [time ^{KJV}], and just as you heard that an antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come into existence [are there ^{KJV} /appeared ^{NAS}], by which we know that it is a last hour.
19 ἐξ ἡμῶν ἐξῆλθον, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἦσαν ἐξ ἡμῶν· εἰ γὰρ ἦσαν ἐξ ἡμῶν, μεμενήκεισαν ἂν μεθ' ἡμῶν· ἀλλ' ἵνα φανερο-θῶσιν ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶ πάντες ἐξ ἡμῶν.	2:19 They came out of us, but they were not out of us; for if they were out of [belonged to ^{NIV}] us, they would have remained [contin-ued ^{KJV}] with us; but [this happened] in order that they might be exposed [manifest/shown/plain], because [that ^{ENG}] they are not all out of us.
20 καὶ ὑμεῖς χρίσμα ἔχετε ἀπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου, καὶ οἴδατε πάντα ^{AB} .	2:20 Yet you yourselves have an anointing [unction ^{KJV}] from the Holy One, and you know all [the truth ^{NIV}].
21 οὐκ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐκ οἴδατε τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ἀλλ' ὅτι οἴδατε αὐτήν, καὶ ὅτι πᾶν ^C ψεῦδος ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας οὐκ ἔστι.	2:21 I do not write to you because you DONT know the truth, but because you DO know it, and because every lie is not out of the truth.
22 Τίς ἐστίν ὁ ψεύστης, εἰ μὴ ὁ ἀρνούμενος ὅτι Ἰησοῦς οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ Χριστός; οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἀντίχριστος, ὁ ἀρνούμενος τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱόν.	2:22 Who is the liar, if not the one who is making the declamation that Jesus is not the Christ? [denies that Jesus is ^{ENG}] This man is the antichrist—the one who is denying the Father and the Son.
23 πᾶς ὁ ἀρνούμενος τὸν υἱὸν οὐδὲ [τὸν πατέρα] εχει ὁ ομολογῶν τὸν υἱὸν καὶ τὸν πατέρα ἔχει.	2:23 All who are denying the Son also don't have the Father [the one who confesses/acknowledges ^{KJV} the Son has the Father also.]
24 ὑμεῖς [οὖν TM] ὁ ἠκούσατε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἐν ὑμῖν μενεῖτε. ἐάν ἐν ὑμῖν μείνη ὁ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἠκούσατε, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐν τῷ υἱῷ καὶ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ μενεῖτε.	2:24 [Therefore] what you yourselves heard from the beginning, keep [let abide ^{KJV} /remain ^{NIV}] in you. If what you heard from the beginning stays in you, you will also remain [continue ^{KJV} /abide ^{NAS}] in the Son and in the Father.
25 καὶ αὕτη ἐστίν ἡ ἐπαγγελία ἣν αὐτὸς ἐπηγγέλατο ἡμῖν ^{AI} , τὴν ζωὴν τὴν αἰώνιον.	2:25 And this is the promise which He Himself declared [promised ^{KJV} /made] to us: the life eternal.
26 Ταῦτα ἔγραψα ὑμῖν περὶ τῶν πλανούντων ὑμᾶς.	2:26 These things I write to you concerning the ones who [seduce ^{KJV} /deceive] are leading you astray.
27 καὶ ὑμεῖς τὸ χρίσμα ^{AI} ὃ ἐλάβετε ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν μένει, καὶ οὐ χρειαίαν ἔχετε ἵνα τις διδάσκη ὑμᾶς· ἀλλ' ὡς ^B τὸ αὐτοῦ ^{OK3300} χρίσμα διδάσκει ὑμᾶς περὶ πάντων, καὶ ἀληθές ἐστὶ καὶ οὐκ ἐστὶ ψεῦδος, καὶ καθὼς ἐδίδαξεν ὑμᾶς, μενεῖτε TM ἐν αὐτῷ.	2:27 And the anointing which you yourselves received from Him remains in you, and you have no need for someone to be teaching you. But as His anointing is teaching you concerning everything—and it is true [real ^{NIV}], indeed it is not a lie [counterfeit ^{NIV}] ^{AI} —and, just as it taught you, you remain in Him.
28 Καὶ νῦν, τέκνια, μένετε ἐν αὐτῷ, ἵνα ὅταν TM φανερωθῇ ἔρχομεν TM παρρησίαν καὶ μὴ αἰσχυνθῶμεν ^{AI} αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ.	2:28 And now, dear [little] children, stay [abide ^{KJV} /continue ^{NIV}] in Him, so that whenever He is revealed [appears ^{ENG}], we may have an open conversation [confidence ^{ENG}] and not be embarrassed by [ashamed before ^{KJV} /shrink from ^{NAS}] Him in His presence [at His coming ^{ENG}].
29 ἐὰν εἰδῆτε ὅτι δίκαιός ἐστι, γινώσκατε ὅτι [καὶ ^{ABC}] πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεγεννηται	2:29 If you know that He is righteous, you should also be aware [know ^{KJV} /be sure ^{ESV}] that everyone who does what is right [practices righteousness] has been born out of Him.