

## Abide pt4

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Ryan Abernathy / General

Abide / 1 John 2:15–27

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How do we really know what we love? We use that word pretty indiscriminately. Especially if we have a passionate personality (guilty) I probably say I love something somewhere around 400 times a day- and only 300 of those have to do with music or food.

But the word “love” in the Bible is very different. It lets us differentiate between different kinds of love and types of love and commitments in that love. And that is good, because we really need to be discriminating in what we give our whole hearts to, and truthfully, who we trust with our love and learning about WHO we should love.

Turn with me back to [1 John 2:15-27](#).

John has just reminded the church about loving one another and about the importance of not hating your brother or sister in the faith. And then he reminded them that they CAN do this because of what Jesus has done in them. And now he makes another pivot, and this one is hitting at one of the reasons why we sometimes struggle to love one another as we are called to and also why we sometimes forget who we are in Christ- as Martin Luther reminded us last week.

*Our unconditional affections for the wrong things will reveal our hearts.*

Look at v15-17- The command is focused on 2 words- love and world.

Love- agape- unconditional love- love without caveat- love that is given with full devotion

World- kosmon- the material world, the current order, things separate from the things of God

### **1, 2, 3 John (1) Beware of the World (2:15–17)**

**an evil organized earthly system controlled by the power of the evil one that has aligned itself against God and his kingdom** (4:3–5; 5:19; John 16:11). In these verses John uses the third meaning. One should note that John is not advocating an ontological dualism or a dualistic cosmology in which the creation is evil. He is advocating a temporal, ethical dualism in which there is a constant battle going on between the realms of darkness and light. That this dualism is temporal and not eternal is made clear by the transient nature of the world and its lust in v. 17

#### **Why not?**

First, this is the kind of love we are to offer to God, in return for how He has loved us. And it is **a love the world is incapable of returning. Love apart from Jesus comes with strings.**

Second, **loving the world in the same way we love God sets up rivalries that lead us away from Jesus-** flesh, covetousness, pride- all these things will become idols that seek to displace the King.

### **1, 2, 3 John (1) Beware of the World (2:15–17)**

One must be careful that this love is going in the right direction and that it acts in a manner consistent with Christian confession. John charges us to love neither the world in general nor the things of the world in particular. The command is comprehensive. *Our allegiance must not be divided. Our affection must be focused and specific.*

### **1, 2, 3 John (1) Beware of the World (2:15–17)**

Because the Father's kingdom is at war with the kingdom of this world, the two will never coexist peacefully. **To pledge allegiance to one side is to declare opposition to the other.**

Third, it isn't eternal. **We are giving eternal love to something or someone that will ultimately come to an end.**

When we unconditionally love the wrong people or things, we are setting ourselves up to be deceived, and as a result, we will fall prey to people who will give us a lesser "Jesus" who loves what we love.

### **1, 2, 3 John (1) Beware of the World (2:15–17)**

The problem is not that God created the material things of the world. The problem is that people have made these things into idols. The three things listed in this verse—"the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does"—should not be seen as a comprehensive list of vices. These are avenues by which sinful humanity is especially prone to pervert the goodness of God's creation

Look at v18-25

**The "last hour" began ticking when Jesus was crucified and resurrected inaugurating His Kingdom's arrival on earth. It is ticking down to the end of the last hour when Jesus will return to take His place in a Kingdom fully realized on earth.**

The term "antichrist" here is someone opposed to the message of Jesus- not what is referred to in Revelation. These are people who have even been in churches- possibly even as leaders- who have left- probably after being confronted or being removed for heresy- and are trying to get others to come with them, rather than repenting of their sins.

### **1, 2, 3 John (2) Beware of the Antichrists (2:18–28)**

John asserts that it is the last hour because of the fact that there were many antichrists that had come. They were trying to lure members of the community into a world that is passing away (v. 17) and into the darkness. This term antichristos is found only in the epistles of John

(2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7) and was likely coined by John himself. The term is unique, and it bears different nuances of meaning. It is singular and plural, personal and impersonal. “Antichrist” carries a similar meaning to terms used both in the Synoptics and Paul<sup>266</sup> to describe the situation that would precede the return of Jesus to earth. **The focus in this verse is not the antichrist (singular) but the antichrists (plural) that had arisen to tear apart the community.**

These individuals, as their designation indicates, are against Christ. **They hold to a heretical Christology and are deceivers whose false views are put forward to lead believers astray and to oppose Christ.** The following verses address their wrong thinking concerning his person

### v19-

#### **1, 2, 3 John (2) Beware of the Antichrists (2:18–28)**

This verse is not meant to scare people into obedience but to strengthen the faith of the Johannine church, which had been torn apart by the actions of the dissenters. **Once again it is clear that having one’s name on the church roll does not necessarily mean that one’s name is written in the Book of Life**

John tells us how to identify them- gauge them by the truth. (v20-21)

**Discernment is a vital need in our day and time. We have SO many options for who we listen to and where we get teaching and facts from. And the problem is, we are also less and less able to assess whether or not someone has the capacity to give us correct information because anyone can call themselves anything- shoot you can even be elected to Congress lol**

So that means we need to be more and more students of scripture. When someone begins making a scriptural claim, we need to check it, before agreeing with it. And we are not going to be able to be satisfied with a proof-text, is it borne out in the entirety of scripture? And to do this, **we need to be able to pay attention and really study the Word, not just skim it or get a verse here or there. Because even Satan can misquote a verse- temptation of Jesus, anyone- but a follower of Jesus knows that rings false.**

### **1, 2, 3 John (2) Beware of the Antichrists (2:18–28)**

A connection between the word and the Spirit is possible in light of Old Testament teaching, where the Spirit is breath and can be placed in parallel with the word (Ps 33:6). Due to this cohesion between the Spirit and the word, it is best to see these entities as companions that always work together. **The Spirit will never lead the believer in a direction that contradicts the teaching of the word of God**

And at the heart of those lies, will always come down to a single question, do you believe Jesus is who He says He is, because if you do, you have to take His Word seriously, even if it makes you uncomfortable or is hard to put into practice.

*“It is because they possess an anointing, and can therefore discern the truth, that he is concerned to instruct them further in the gospel.”*

*Truth and error are incompatible. Indeed lies have their source in what is false, not in what is true. **In this verse the truth is equivalent with the Christian gospel that has both theological content and ethical character. The truth and the lie (error) are mutually exclusive. They have no part with one another.** John is no theological relativist in spiritual matters.*

As Smalley asserts: "The knowledge which John's orthodox readers possess, but which the secessionists (docetic or otherwise) lack, is the truth about the identity of Jesus: that he is the Christ, and that he is by nature one with man and one with God (cf. [John 8:45](#); [14:6](#)). This knowledge, moreover, is not simply intellectual; it is also part of a relationship between man and God through Christ." **The knowledge that the secessionists have does not make the believers ignorant; it makes the secessionists liars, confirming the assertion of v. 19 that they were never truly a part of the believing community. These are strong but necessary words.**

**Daniel L. Akin, 1, 2, 3 John, vol. 38, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 120.**

Look at v22-23

If Jesus is not who He says He is, none of this is important, but if He is who He says He is, then it is ALL important, even what makes us mad. Or calls us to change. That was what John was facing in this church (the Gnostics called Jesus' divinity into question) and that is what we face today- all or nothing, this isn't a buffet or Burger King.

**The secessionists, the Gnostics, wanted to make Jesus fit into their philosophy or logic, we face the same today. But when we remake Jesus in our image, we are no longer worshiping Jesus. We are bowing to a mirror.**

**1, 2, 3 John (2) Beware of the Antichrists (2:18–28)**

Although it is not possible to know what the secessionists affirmed exactly/publicly (John does not tell us), it is clear that in some sense they denied that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God in any vital and permanent incarnational understanding.

**They affirmed and accepted Jesus as significant and important in some manner, but their theology was wholly inadequate in its grasp of his person and ultimately of his work.** As Marshall explains: “For John the height of heresy is to deny that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God and Savior. To reduce Jesus to the status of a mere man, or to allow no more than a temporary indwelling of some divine power in him is to strike at the root of Christianity. **Modern thinkers may have more refined ways of stating similar denials of the reality of the incarnation. It may be doubted whether they are any more immune to John’s perception that they take the heart out of Christianity**

And what we have to do, in those moments, is be reminded of what we started with- we needed a Savior, Jesus saved us. When that exchange happens, we moved addresses...and where we now live things are different and our eternal destination is different. (v24-25) (gospel presentation here)

And John reminds them- you live somewhere different now, because someone New lives in you! (v26-27) And as such, you do not have to fall prey to lies and false loves any longer. You are free from falsehood, you can KNOW truth!

### **1, 2, 3 John (2) Beware of the Antichrists (2:18–28)**

He exhorts them to continue to stand strong in the faith by drawing upon the strength that is theirs through reception of the Spirit of God (the anointing), first mentioned in v. 20. The connection between the anointing the believers have received and the abiding nature of the message (v. 24) they have heard is brought to the forefront of this discussion so that they will understand that both of these abide in them and both of these will fortify them in their battle against the heretics. This connection would lend support to the idea that the abiding chrisma encompasses both the Spirit of God and the word of God.

So live in the Truth!