

Life That Is Real
“Don’t Be Deceived” (A)
I John 2:18-28
Pt. 5

Introduction - Jesus in his famous Olivet Discourse, Matthew 24, said this in verses four and five, “*Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.*”

John tells us why he is writing verse 26, “*These things have I written unto you, concerning them that would seduce or lead you astray.*”

If we have the life that is real; if we know God, have fellowship with Him; walk in the light; keep His Word; we will not be lead astray.

John has given us two test so we can know true from false:

1. The Moral Test of Obedience, 2:3.
2. The Social Test of Love, 2:9.

After a brief digression warning us not to love the world; John comes back to his principle purpose; the discrimination between the true and false, by means of tests.

He now gives us “The Doctrinal Test!” or belief. It concerns the person of Jesus. It’s the “Christological Test.” (vs. 22) It’s because of the Gnostics false teaching about Jesus.

Now the passage like most of I John defies a logical analysis, yet most give this section three divisions.

I. The Contrast; Between Deceivers and True Believers, vv. 18-21.

John first with his loving fatherly pastor’s heart addresses his readers as “*little children.*” It’s all the believers, not just the young in the Lord!

It’s the Pastor’s job to warn God’s people.

Note: “It is the last time.” Ask, what? The church age, Heb. 1:2, I Pet. 1:20; The time just before the Lord’s coming, vs. 17; one world currency; one religion and one leader, the Antichrist, vs. 18.

Only used by John!

1. A person.
2. A spirit, 4:3.
3. False teachers, Gnostics.

Note, vs. 18, the prevalence of antichrist teachers is a sign of the last hour.

“Prior to 1850, cultist were practically unheard of in America. Today there are well over 20 million American involved in the cults and occult. Some research suggests that among the cults and religious movements founded in the last 150 years, membership has escalated by up to 3,000 percent. A perusal of the contemporary religious scene makes it clear that the cults have truly taken advantage of the great American heritage of freedom of speech and religion to spread their unorthodox and, in some cases, dangerous doctrines.” - Ron Rhodes, *The Challenge of the Cults and New Religions*

Illus.: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1830; The Jehovah’s Witness, 1870; The New Thought Movement & Christian Science founded by Mary Baker Edds in 1879; The United Church of Religious Science founded by Ernest Holmes, 1927; The Unity of Christianity founded by Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, 1891; The New Age Movement, over 12 million Americans, it’s ancient Gnosticism; The Church of Scientology; The Unification Church; The Bahai Faith; Unitarian Universalism; The Davinci Code by Dan Brown; The 3rd Jesus by Deepak Chopra; The New Earth by Eckart Tolle.

The relation to the people of God, vs. 19.

- The tears among the wheat, such as Judas.
- It’s not the Christian that lost salvation.
- They had a false profession.

But contrast the believers, vv. 20-21.

Literally, “*and you all know*” - all the believers.

II. The Contrast and Consequences of Deception, vv. 22-23.

John identifies the falsehood by asking a rhetorical question, vs. 22. It’s literally, “*Who is the liar.*” Answer, “*He that denieth that Jesus is the Christ.*” Ask, What does that mean? From my heart, list what you can’t deny about Jesus.

If you do - note the serious consequences of a fality Christology.

1. You are antichrist, vs. 22b.
2. You don’t have God the Father, vs. 23.

Why Jesus is the only way to know God - John 14:6. So it's no small thing.

“Therefore the Gnostics heresy was not a minor theological disagreement. It struck at the person of Christ, the very heart of the Christian faith, destroying the only way by which man can enter saving fellowship with God. The same is true of such modern counterparts of Gnosticism as Christian Science, Unity, New Thought, and Unitarianism, all of which deny the actual incarnation of the second person of the Trinity.” - Donald Burdick

Verse 23, The Position Statement.

III. The Cure for Deception, vv. 24-28

True believers have a defense against deception.

1. The Word of God, vv. 24-26.

- The Gospel.
- It's all the Scripture's teach about Jesus!

See II Timothy 3:14-17.

2. The Spirit of God, vs. 20, vs. 27.

- All believers have the Holy Spirit, vs. 20.
- The Priesthood of all believers, vs. 27.

3. Abiding in God, vs. 28.

- What is abiding?
- Jesus is coming, are you ashamed?