

1, 2, 3 JOHN
THIS IS THE LIFE
SMALL GROUP STUDY #5
STICK TO THE ORIGINAL TEACHING
1John 2:18-27

Ice Breaker: Does the advertising slogan “new and improved” appeal to you? Why?

INTRO: When John wrote this letter, a “new and improved” doctrine was sweeping through the Church and creating a buzz. It was called Gnosticism. The Gnostics took the truth of scripture and blended it with popular philosophy. Their “new and improved” teaching shipwrecked a lot of people’s faith.

John dealt with the tendency of people to be drawn away to the latest thing by teaching disciples of Jesus to stick to what was taught in the beginning. Today we face the same temptation... people trying to sell Christians on the latest worship fad, church building technique or “hidden truth”. As believers, our real task is learning how to apply the truth we already have, not rush to some “new and improved” teaching or technique.

READ: 1John 2:18-27

*18 Dear children, **this is the last hour**; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now **many antichrists have come**. This is how we know it is the last hour. 19 **They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us**. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.*

*20 **But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth**. 21 I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because **no lie comes from the truth**. 22 **Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist—he denies the Father and the Son**. 23 No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.*

24 See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. 25 And this is what he promised us—even eternal life.

*26 I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. 27 As for you, **the anointing you received from him remains in you**, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But **as his anointing teaches you** about all things and as **that anointing is real**, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, **remain in him**.*

Q: What did John mean when he said, “this is the last hour”? What have you heard or been taught about the “last days” or “last hour”?

- There are lots of different views on “the last days” or the “last hour.” Some of the more interesting views claim the last days have only recently arrived or

are yet to begin. However, John says the last hour was in there in his day, 2000 years ago.

- Does what you have heard or been taught seem like the original teaching of John, or a “new and improved” doctrine?

Q: Who or what is the “antichrist”? What have you heard about the “antichrist”?

- John says there is more than one antichrist. According to verse 22, anyone who denies Jesus is the Christ is anti Christ.
- Does what you have heard or been taught seem like the original teaching of John, or a “new and improved” doctrine?

Q: The Greek word for “acknowledge” in verse 23 is the same word John used in 1 John 1:9, which is translated “confess”. It means to agree with, to say the same thing, or see something the same way. How is this different from merely identifying Jesus as Lord?

- A demon once identified Him as Lord in Mark 1:23-24.
- Just saying Jesus is Lord is not the same as acknowledging Him or confessing Him!

Q: John refers to his readers having an “anointing” 4 times in this section (once in vs. 20, and 3 times in vs. 27). What is this anointing and how does it affect you?

- The Greek word translated “anointing” here is *chrisma*, which means “the special gift of the Holy Spirit.”
- John says the Holy Spirit teaches you (vs. 27) and allows you to know the truth (vs. 20).

Q: Throughout his letter, John gives several warning signs to help us guard against false teachers and those who claim to be Christians but are counterfeit. What is the warning sign in each of the following verses:

- 2:9 Hating a brother
 - 2:15 Loving the world
 - 2:19 Walking away from a good church (see 1Cor. 11:18-19)
 - 2:22 Denies that Jesus is the Christ
 - 3:10 Doesn't do what is right
 - 4:3 Doesn't acknowledge Jesus as Lord
 - 4:5 Have a worldly point of view
 - 4:6 Doesn't listen to the apostles
 - 4:20 Claims to love God but hates his brother
- A false teacher or antichrist will show many of these signs, but not necessarily all of them.
 - Just because a person has one or more of these signs doesn't necessarily mean they are antichrist. What they do when confronted with the truth will say more about where they really stand.
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APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT: *Answer the following questions as best you can, then get with your discipler/discipleship group and discuss your answers.*

1. What “new and improved” teaching have you encountered?
 - a. Have you been guilty of teaching any?
2. Do any of John’s warning signs apply to you? (Verses: 2:9, 2:15, 2:19, 2:22, 3:10, 4:3, 4:5, 4:6, and 4:20.)
 - a. If so, which one(s)?
 - b. What will you do to address these?
3. If someone presents a “new and improved” teaching to you, how would you respond? Could you explain clearly and lovingly what the apostles taught? See if you can give a clear one-minute answer to each of the following: (Be sure to cite the scripture reference for your answer.)
 - a. What is God’s nature?
 - b. What is humanity’s basic problem?
 - c. What is God’s solution?
 - d. What must a person do to be made right with God?