

COPYRIGHT 2019 Paul Kemp and Christ Church, all rights reserved. Feel free to make copies for distribution in personal and/or small group Bible Study.

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible, New International Version®. NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com

KNOWING THAT WE KNOW HIM

THE LAST HOUR || JOHN 2:18-27

When we see the words “last hour” and the “antichrist” in the same sentence, our imaginations run wild. More than anything else we want to know who is the “antichrist?” Is it Vladimir Putin, Barak Obama, Donald Trump... Justin Bieber? Where are all those crazy creatures we read about in the book of Revelation? Why are we still here?

If John thought he was living in “the last hour” nearly two-thousand years ago, did he get it wrong? Nothing that dramatic happened in the last two thousand years, and there doesn't seem to be anything particularly spectacular on the horizon. It's pretty much business as usual.

If we envision the “last hour” as the final moments of history somewhere in the distant future, we have probably seen one too many Kurt Cameron movies, and are in danger of missing the point altogether.

John wants us to know that we are already living in the “last hour” and that the antichrist is already at work in the world. The fact that we are living in “the last hour” should dramatically shape the way we live and worship. John offers us three practical suggestions to keep us on track—beware of the antichrist, cling to the truth, and listen to the Spirit.

BEWARE OF THE ANTICHRIST (vv. 18-19)

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.

1. What do you think John means by “the last hour?”
2. Interestingly, the word “antichrist” only shows up five times in the New Testament, and all five occurrences are found in John's letters. Read the

following passages and describe what John has in mind when he speaks of the antichrist.

1 JOHN 2:18 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.

1 JOHN 2:22 Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son.

1 JOHN 4:2-3 This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

2 JOHN 7 I say this because many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist.

3. The word “antichrist” means “instead of Christ.” Any time we substitute the Christ of our imagination (or personal preferences) for the Christ of Scripture, we are playing into the spirit of the antichrist.
4. What were some of the ways John’s opponents were denying the Christ of Scripture?
5. What are some of the ways we deny the Christ of Scripture in popular culture?
6. What are some of the ways we deny the Christ of Scripture in the church?
7. How can we ensure that we are embracing the Christ of Scripture rather than a Jesus that looks and feels a lot like who we are and the values we embrace?

HOLD ON TO TRUTH (vv. 20-25)

²⁰But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. ²¹I 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. ²²Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son. ²³No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

²⁴As for you, 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. ²⁵And this is what he promised us—eternal life.

1. How does John describe the truth in these verses?
2. How is John’s understanding of truth different from a worldly perspective?
3. According to John, what is the truth that lies at the very center of the gospel?
4. What do you think John means when he says, “Jesus is the Christ?”
5. According to John, what are the results of embracing “Jesus as the Christ?”
6. What are the results of rejecting “Jesus as the Christ?”
7. What are some practical steps you can take to ensure “that what we have heard from the beginning remains in you?”

LISTEN TO THE SPIRIT (vv. 26-27)

²⁶I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. ²⁷As 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.

1. Christ literally means “the anointed one.” The word John uses for “anointing” is used in the Old Testament to describe the dedication of the tabernacle and its furnishings by anointing them with oil, and the dedication of prophets, priests and kings for service to God. The oil represented the pouring out of God’s Spirit to make the tabernacle holy and empower God’s servants for the task to which he had called them. John is clearly referring to the gift of the Spirit, as described in the New Covenant promises in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. What does the gift of the Spirit have in common with the Old Testament Idea of anointing? How is it different?
2. How can we tune our hearts to be responsive to the Spirit’s guidance?
3. How can we discern whether we are being led by God’s Spirit or our own (or some other) spirit?
4. According to John, what is the one thing the Spirit always teaches us?
5. How does God’s Spirit enable us to “remain in him?”