

## The First Epistle of John

*...so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ (1John 1:3)*

1John 2:23 - 27

Review

Where is John writing from?

What heresy was he addressing?

What flavor of Gnosticism was John specifically dealing with?

What did the heretics teach?

How does John deal with this false teaching?

1John 1:6-10

Someone read vv 2:20-28

Someone read v23.

Cerinthus, a contemporary of John in Ephesus and whose teaching may have influenced the heretics who were stirring up trouble in John's audience, drew a sharp distinction between the man and the Christ-spirit that the man took temporary possession of.

This lie is deadly because it is only in the Christ, the Son of God, who came in the flesh that eternal life is to be found.

See 1Jn 5:11.

It is doubtful the heretics were expressly denying the Father – but they certainly did not mean what Christians mean when they say the word “Father.” For Cerinthus and those who followed him, the Father was unknown before Jesus came. It was only after the ‘Christ’ descended on Jesus that He “explained” this unknown God.

For John, the Father is He who have revealed Himself uniquely and fully in the incarnate Jesus. Not only in His ministry of Word and works, but equally so – indeed supremely so – in His death on the cross.

This is not to say there was no revelation before Jesus; indeed there is  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the Bible! But the Father is revealed perfectly in His One and Only Son (Jn 1:18).

Those who denied the incarnation of the Son and who saw no revelatory element in His passion refused that revelation of the Father which is imparted in the Gospel. In denying the Son, they denied the Father too.

This is an extension of the passages in the Gospel of John which teach that the knowledge of the Father is inseparable from the knowledge of the Son (8:19; 14:7) or as in Jn 5:23. Someone please read this verse.

To deny the Son is to deny the knowledge of the Father which He unfolds, and so to deny the Father himself.

Indeed, the earlier forms of divine revelation in the prologue of the Gospel of John were brought to perfection when the Eternal Word became incarnate in the Son, so that it is no longer possible to confess the Father except as He has made Himself known in the Son, while it is impossible to believe in the Son without acknowledging the Father whom He has made known.

Someone read GJohn 14:1. How many “beliefs” are in view?

Someone read v24.

Which “beginning” is this?

= Gospel

“Abide” means to remain, endure, dwell, stand, continue in. Notice that one must allow the gospel to abide, it does not do so on its own. If one does this - allows the gospel to dwell in one’s heart – one will experience spiritual intimacy with The Son and The Father – and this intimacy is made effectual by the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the entire Godhead, each member of the Trinity, will be present with us wherever we go and whatever we face.

Someone read v25

This is written as an encouragement to remain in an intimate relationship with the Father and Son. The awful consequence of abandoning this fellowship is to abandon both the Father and the eternal life He promises.

It is interesting to note that the word “promise” occurs only here in the Johannine writings.

It refers to promises in the OT that were already fulfilled or were sure to be fulfilled.

Of course, the same is not true of the words *thz zwhn ths ainwnion* = “eternal life” (literally THE LIFE OF THE AGE-LONG). Or the “Age to come”.

Occurs 7 x in this book alone!

For John, it is important to recognize that eternal life begins NOW!

Read Jn 17:3. Notice that Jesus includes Himself in this “definition” of eternal life.

John’s readers must remain in fellowship with the Father and Son (which entails living out the Gospel daily) to obtain the blessing of this promise. And the only way to remain in that fellowship is if the Father has given you to the Son (Jn 10:27-30).

Read v26

What does “these things” refer to?

Previously, John had described the heretics as being opposed to Christ and the proclaimers of falsehood. How does he describe them here?

Read Mark 13:22-23

What does “if possible” mean?

When was this prophecy fulfilled (at least in part)

The fact that John’s readers had not been led astray was proof that their Anointing remained. But it was not enough for them to recognize there were heretics around them, it was vital they know that the heretics were an active danger to themselves.

Can Christians succumb to false teachers? What are some examples?

Note: If they are one of the elect, they will eventually return.

And what is the origin of these lies?

Read v27

Doesn't this say one doesn't need teachers in the church? Isn't John himself teaching?

Then what does actually mean?

There two points to make in this context:

1. The teaching needs to be evaluated by the inward council of the HS.
2. If the teachers also have the anointing, they can provide insight into the Scriptures that would otherwise be missed.

This last point may include the idea that no one teacher has all the truth, and so believers may encourage one another in small group studies

Here are two safeguards against error: The Word and The Holy Spirit.

You have heard the word, and you have received the Spirit. Both are received at conversion. You received the word from us (from the apostles, originally, or through another believer – Jn 17:20); you have received the HS from the Holy One (JC).

One is objective, the other is subjective. Both are necessary if we are to continue in the truth. And both are to be inwardly and personally grasped.

Do some Christians get these two safeguards mixed up or out-of-balance?

John says that the only armor against lies is the Word we have heard from the beginning, and anointing we have received from God. It is by these old possessions, not by new teaching or new teachers, that we shall abide in the truth.

Any new doctrine which is not in harmony with the Word, and confirmed by the HS, is self-condemned.